

RECREATION OF WOMAN THROUGH
WORD IN THE WOMAN WARRIOR,
MEMOIRS OF A GIRLHOOD AMONG
GHOSTS BY MAXINE HONG
KINGSTON AND FANTASIA, AN
ALGERIAN CAVALCADE BY ASSIA
DJEBAR

Thesis submitted to the

Institute of Social Sciences

in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

English Language and Literature

by

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February 2011

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*To my family,
my husband,
and
my son...*

APPROVAL PAGE

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1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

2. The program of advanced study of which this thesis is part has consisted of:

- i) Research Methods course during the undergraduate study
- ii) Examination of several thesis guides of particular universities both in Turkey and abroad as well as a professional book on this subject.

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ABSTRACT

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February 2011

RECREATION OF WOMAN THROUGH WORD IN THE WOMAN WARRIOR BY MAXINE HONG KINGSTON AND FANTASIA BY ASSIA DJEBAR

In this thesis, I will focus on novels, *The Woman Warrior*, *Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* that was written in 1976 by Maxine Hong Kingston, who is a female American writer of Chinese origin and *Fantasia*, an Algerian Cavalcade that was written in 1985 by Assia Djebbar, who is a female francophone writer of Algerian origin. These novels are autobiographies that deal with post colonial and feministic issues. *The Woman Warrior* is the story of a girl, who was born of Chinese immigrant parents, growing up in America during the 1950s. It consists of a series of mythic and autobiographic stories. *Fantasia*, an Algerian Cavalcade blends historical accounts of French colonization of Algeria, the Algerian war of liberation and Djebbar's personal life. Despite of their different post colonial backgrounds; the meeting point in their writings that makes me to study these two works is *female self*. Both works focus on the problems that are faced by females and the subtle ways language and history enforce them. They fight against the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses and their histories to recreate the silent and erased women through feminist language and *herstory*. While forming their female self; they enter in the lives of the other women, Kingston and Djebbar write in autobiographical genre that is complexified by their feminist attention and this autobiographical writing serves them to reconstruct female identity, and their stylistic devises bring the marginal to centre.

Key words:

Postcolonial, patriarchal, identity, colonization, immigration, race, female self, feminist autobiography

KISA ÖZET

Derya BİDERCİ DİNÇ

Şubat 2011

MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'IN THE WOMAN WARRIOR VE ASSIA DJEBAR'IN FANTASIA ADLI ESERLERİNDE KADININ KELİMEYLE TEKRAR YARADILIŞI

Bu tezde Çin asıllı kadın Amerikalı yazar Maxine Hong Kingston'ın 1976'da yayınlanan *The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* ve Cezayir asıllı frankofon yazar Assia Djebbar'ın 1985'te yayınlanan *Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade* adlı romanlarına odaklanacağım. Bu romanlar, post-kolonyal ve feminist konuları işleyen otobiyografik yazılardır. *The Woman Warrior*, Çinli göçmen bir aileden gelen, 1950lerde Amerika'da yetişen bir kızın hikâyesidir. Kitap, bir seri mitolojik ve otobiyografik hikâyeler içermektedir. *Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade*, Fransız işgalinin tarihsel raporlarını, Cezayir bağımsızlık savaşını ve Djebbar'ın otobiyografisini harmanlamıştır. Farklı post-kolonyal bağlamlarına rağmen, beni de bu eserleri çalışmaya iten onların buluşma noktası *kadın karakteridir*. Her iki eserde, kadınların karşılaştığı ve dil ve tarihinde desteklediği sorunlara odaklanmaktadır. Susturulmuş ve yok sayılmış kadınları tekrar yaratmak için ataerkil ve ırkçı söylemlere ve tarihlerine karşı feminist söylem ve tarihle savaşılmaktadır. Kendi kadın kişiliklerini oluştururken, diğer kadınların yaşamlarına girmektedirler. Onların feminist yaklaşımları tarafından karmaşıklaşan otobiyografik türde yazılmaktadır ve bu otobiyografik yazma kadın karakterinin yeniden oluşmasını sağlamaktadır ve onların üslupları marjinali merkeze taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Postkolonyal, ataerkil, kimlik, sömürge, göç, ırk, kadın karakteri, feminist otobiyografi

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Assistant Professor Phillippe A Constant Barbe both for his guidance and support throughout this thesis process. I would like to thank him again as he is a friendly and self-sacrificing lecturer in his courses and daily life.

I would like to thank Assistant Professor Carl Jeffrey Boon and Assistant Professor Lucie Tunkrova for being on my jury.

Next, I would like to thank my parents, Metin and Keziban, my sisters, Ülkü and Hilal; and my brother Ersin who helped me by devoting their love and energy to my son while I was busy with my thesis and motivated me throughout the whole thesis process. Special thanks go to my dear husband, Adem for his endless understanding and support.

I would like to thank my son, Alper Berat who has given me the biggest part of the support by motivating me with his existence. Finally, I would like to express my thanks to the other lecturers in departments English Language and Literature and American Culture and Literature.

I am indebted to my friends for sharing their experiences and sources with me. This thesis is the product of more than one person.

INTRODUCTION

In my thesis, I study women's literary re-creation in The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts by Maxine Hong Kingston and Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade by Assia Djebar. In my thesis, I analyze while searching for their identities, Kingston and Djebar, these two feminist enter the world of *word* by creating different strategies. In their autobiographical works, Kingston and Djebar use history, culture, myths, language, and testimonies to give power, places and voices to females in their fight against the racial, colonial and patriarchal powers. I focus on the importance of the language. Language has become the dominant tool of the racial, colonial and patriarchal systems to reign *the other*. It is through language that we become aware of our own identities and language is constructed by the ones who have the power as a world view. Identity is always problematic for these writers as they are in between two different cultures, they find themselves constantly on both sides of the boundaries. They try to embrace simple and unitary identities for their fragmented selves.

Both Kingston and Djebar's projects involve a series of novels; a quartet or trilogy. Maxine Hong Kingston is one of the most outspoken feminist writer and highly acclaimed memoirist. Kingston is the author of three books which integrate her ancestral Chinese tradition with American culture, life styles and literatures. The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts was published in 1976, which experienced immediate success upon its publication; it won National Book Critics Circle Award. China Man that is counterpart of The Woman Warrior is published in 1981, it won the American book award, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Tripmaster Monkey: His

Fake Book, an encyclopaedic novel, was published in 1989. Kingston is best known for her novel The Woman Warrior. Kingston is a girl who grows up in Chinese American culture, she blends her Chinese heritage with her American life. In The Woman Warrior, Kingston integrates autobiographical elements with legends, fiction, history to deal with the cultural conflicts that the Chinese American confront. It focuses on the female identity by blending myths, history, culture and autobiography. She seeks to reconcile eastern and western conceptions of female identity in her unconventional autobiography, The Woman Warrior.

Assia Djebar is an Algerian novelist, translator and considered to be one of North Africa's most famous writers. In 2005, she is honoured by the Académie Française which is a prestigious institution for protecting the heritage of French language. She is the first Maghrebien writer to reach such success. She has other prestigious prizes, in 1996, she won Neustadt Prize for contribution to world literature and in 1997, and she won Yuorcenar Prize. In her works, her subjects are the tragedies of Algerian history and the condition of Algerian female in Islam. She writes about the Muslim Algerian females women's world in its complexities, they live in a society that is intolerant towards women. She is fighting for social emancipation of the Muslim women. She deals with the issues of the oppression of female through patriarchal language and history and the impact of independence war on female. I study her novel Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade, it mixes out the historical accounts of French conquest of 1830, the Algerian independence war and Djebar's personal life. It is the first volume of a quartet which continued in Ombre Sultane (1987, A Sister to Scheherazade), it is the story of two females, Loin de Médine (1991) explores the lives of women in the life of prophet. In Fantasia, Djebar's experiences deal with the

issue of female identity, Djébar links her own life as an educated westernized woman with the traditions of females and with the history of Algeria. she shows in which ways language affects women.

I deal with these authors' projects by paying attention to their differences, as well as their similarities. They stand between several traditions and cultures. I insist on the importance of contextual analysis in exploring the complexities of the texts' different positions. Kingston and Djébar write their books in the context of post colonialism, they are from different contexts but they share similar themes in their autobiographical works. One of the similar themes is the reality of the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses' oppressing and silencing females. Kingston and Djébar aim to find individual and collective freedom, they use some strategies to achieve freedom, they apply to history, language and culture for the development of female identity in their autobiographical works. 'Autobiography now had much to offer subjects and communities of subjects in search of ways of articulating a new sense of identity' (Stephens, 2000:187). They criticize the dominant languages and their histories in the name of all women in their autobiographical writings. They try to give voices and identities to females. This thesis closely examines the females' construction of the female characters' identities in their autobiographical works.

They share many similar themes such as autobiography, dual identity, history, collectivity, talk story, culture, language, potential power of female's body and the reality of female oppression by the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses. I try to study these authors' feminist engagements with the autobiography while recreating female identity through *word*.

Autobiography is a fashionable study for these feminist writers because both autobiography and females challenge the traditional boundaries and definitions, these boundaries and definitions are the central studies in their feminist projects. The traditional ideal autobiographer is privileged white male writers. The book When Memory Speaks which gives the history of female's writing autobiography, is a help one to understand how a woman writes an autobiography when writing autobiography requires both using a language which denigrates the female and a genre which celebrates the experience of the western male. According to dominant discourses, woman is marginalized so she does not fit in writing autobiography easily. Female is categorized as "objects" by the patriarchal cultures so writing autobiography gives a change to female to create her feminist discourse by bringing together many different disciplines, literature, history, sociology and cultural studies. Their feminist autobiographies are not easily defined as autobiographical genres because they are not confined in a literary genre, they bring together many different disciplines.

Kingston and Djubar have liberty with the traditional genre of autobiography, they include fictional elements in their narratives that are offered as fact. They fictionalize the details in some events in their autobiographies but you have to write real events in an autobiography. In the book Feminism and Autobiography it is stated that '[t]he realization by feminists of the further categories of difference such as race, class, sexual orientation, nationality, and age -sometimes as a consequence of challenges to their own presumption of universality- has complicated and enriched understanding of autobiographical writing and practices' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:3). Their autobiographical works, that do not follow linear

ways, are between fact and fiction, personal and social. They mix their stories with the stories of the other females.

The idea of the explanation of female self has made autobiography an immense interest to these feminists. Their feminist autobiographies focus on the constructions of the *self*. It is stated in Feminism and Autobiography that 'feminism's engagement with the genre has, in turn, contributed to a critical re-evolution of its own long-standing concerns including subjectivity, knowledge and power, differences and collective identity' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:2). Their feminist autobiographies unlike the traditional autobiography include focus on the other women's experiments. They are vital sources of their creation of females' identities, knowledge, awareness, power and voices. Female self is remade by these women autobiographers.

Another similar theme that I search in my thesis is dual identity. There are discussions of the difficulties of situating a self between two cultures. Kingston and Djébar put the issue of female identity in question, the reason for this is their being in between two cultures and languages. In my thesis, I reveal out how they make the identity as a matter of becoming as well as being. They prove that identity forms itself according to the time, history, culture and place. And identity develops under their effects.

I reflect that they succeed to give us what is the sense of being *the other* in racial, colonial and gendered terms. Kingston lives in an ethnic society and Djébar lives in a post colonial society so they try to reinvent female identity by drawing our attention to their racial, colonial and patriarchal environments and by shifting boundaries which divide men from women and westerners from the Orientals. Kingston and Djébar pinch their ideas in their texts with *the words*. They pursue a way through *words* as their weapons to

fight against socially constructed discourses such as racism, colonialism and patriarchy.

Women are deprived of writing therefore the females in their societies use the oral story telling tradition. Kingston and Djébar succeed in using *the written words* to declare their feminist views. Cheung's description about Kingston's writing 'serve as a "mouth piece" –taking cues from [her] mother tongue. It dissolves the boundary separating the spoken from the written word and percolates their prose with vigour often absent in formal writing' (Don't Tell, 1988:170). This statement is similar to Djébar's writing. I analyze the reasons of their using their pens in the name of the females in their communities.

Collectivism is central to their personal stories. Their stories are not confined to a single subject's narration of her life. Their identities develop through their relations with their mothers and female relatives. Their subjects are females; grandmothers, mothers, aunts, daughters and other female relatives and ancestors. As quoted from Smith and Stanley in Feminism and Autobiography, '[t]heir selfhood and what it can report will not be so simple: fiction, and the biographies of others, will enter into their 'autobiographies'' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:2). These writers are females who are close to their female communities while forming their identities. These writers conceive themselves in collective ways. Kingston and Djébar write their autobiographies in relation to both remembering and retelling of certain important parts of their lives and to the collective nature of Chinese and Algerian women. By listening to other women's words, they bring the suppressed memory to the surface. Their writing collective autobiographies that are based on the relationship between their personal narratives and the other women's stories. Kingston and Djébar define

themselves in relations to the other women, these relations come out as the result of women's oppression and silence and they supply the writers a possible strength. As quoted from Waugh in Feminism and Autobiography:

women writers are beginning . . . to construct an identity out of the recognition that women need to discover, and must fight for, a sense of unified selfhood, a rational, coherent, effective identity. As male writers lament its demise, women writers have not yet experienced that subjectivity which will give them a sense of personal autonomy, continuous identity, a history and agency in the world. (Cosslett, Lury, and Summerfield 6)

Waugh sees collectivity as an advantage for women to come over their silence. The relationships between the protagonists and their female relatives are the focuses of their writings. They depict us their own Chinese-American and Berber-French experiences and blend these with other women's experiences in their racial, colonial and patriarchal societies. All of the women are surrounded with these dominant powers.

Kingston and Djébar's autobiographies like other feminist autobiographical works go along with the collectivity and oral history. There are important developments between their autobiographies and oral histories. Kingston and Djébar, like other feminist writers, have seen themselves as recovering women's lost voices and histories, Chinese and Algerian women's radical voices and private tales are inscribed within a vast tapestry. They use these females' experiences as categories in the histories, there are not any more *histories* who have created a world of dichotomies but rather there are *herstories* about reconciliations in these books. They present their *herstories* by piecing together a variety of oral and written, historical and fictional sources. Their *herstories* are not linear narratives.

In The Woman Warrior and Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade, these writers recreate women as the woman warriors. They search for females' voices and freedom. They take their roles as spokeswomen for all of the Algerian and Chinese women.

My thesis will consist of three big chapters; the first one will focus on The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston. The second one will focus on Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade by Assia Djebar. The third one will consist of the comparison of these works. My thesis will move around those themes that I have mentioned above.

CHAPTER 1

THE WOMAN WARRIOR, MEMOIRS OF A GIRLHOOD AMONG GHOSTS

1.1. Introduction of the Themes In The Woman Warrior

In Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior, main character that remains nameless undergoes many changeable experiences. She tries to overcome gendered, cultural and racial obstacles. She moves from silence to speech and gives voice to all of the Chinese females who are doubly oppressed by patriarchal and racial cultures. She is a post colonial figure affected from Anglo-American feminists who 'valorise voice and speech indiscriminately' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:1). Kingston tries to explore her identity as a Chinese American female. She breaks the traditional rules of autobiographical writing to recreate Chinese women. She blends her autobiography with the stories of other Chinese females, traditions, talk stories, myths, legends, fantastical events and personal musings.

She uses a very effective narrative technique in her writing. While it is written in first person to give the impression that it is a memoir but it is not easy to classify Kingston's writing as an autobiography. It is a mixture of genres such as short story, fiction, essay, me and mum genres. Autobiography means the life story of a person narrated by him but in Kingston's memoir there are life stories of other females; Brave Orchid, No name woman, Fa Mu Lan, Tsa'i Yen, Moon Orchid, the crazy woman, the silent girl in third person narration. This is commonly used by postcolonial feminist writers, for example; Jamaica Kincaid's The Autobiography of My Mother tells the autobiography of the mother by the daughter. She writes

'this realization of loss and gain made me look backward and forward: at my beginning was this woman whose face I had never seen' (Kincaid, 1989:3). Like her, Kingston looks back to the lives of her foremothers; her beginning starts with the story of these women. Her mother share the role of protagonist with Kingston and dominates much of the memoir with her talk stories. It is a collective autobiography of the Chinese females, the female Chinese immigrants and America born Chinese women.

In The Woman Warrior, Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts, Kingston tells a Chinese American girl's growing up in California. Kingston looks for 'an unusual bird' (Kingston, 1989:49) that can guide her on her quest for her identity and her freedom. Kingston has grown up in America so she depicts her difficulty in understanding her mother and her Chinese background by presenting different parts of her life. Her life's part are portrayed through No name woman, Fa Mu Lan, Moon Orchid, the quiet Chinese girl, Ts'ai Yen and Brave Orchid. She tries on different identities that belong to these females. She is under the influence of other Chinese females and her American and Chinese schools. As a result of their influences on her, she quits her search for a guide like a bird to formulate her female self, 'birds tricked us' (Kingston, 1989:51).

Each of these females and her experiences at these schools represent Kingston's struggle to adopt herself to American society and to understand Chinese traditions. She is in between two cultures so she has difficulty in defining her identity.

Maxine unlike her mother has roots in America. Though strongly attached to and influenced by her mother she cannot be her mother; nor can she be Fa Mu Lan or either of her aunts. With all of these women fused into her consciousness she must develop her own identity, an identity that grows out of her American birth and Chinese ancestry, out of the suffering and isolation

necessitated by the juxtaposition of conflicting heritages, and proclaim her voice. (Wang, 1985:28)

And talk tales and the female figures in these tales are important for her to define her identity. Kingston gives place to fiction in her autobiographical writing. The stories of ghosts and the fanciful images like swords flying through the air, extraordinary people such as old couple, big eaters exist in her autobiography. Her mother's stories are unambiguous and confusing for Kingston so she did not understand them clearly when she was a child girl. She becomes aware of the importance of talk stories and their impact on her life in her adult age.

The Chinese culture and the history are transformed to the next generation through oral traditions because the characters in The Woman Warrior are females who are deprived of writing. The Woman Warrior's structure is based on the stories that are narrated by Brave Orchid. Brave Orchid purposes to teach her children Chinese traditions and to give important life lessons through her oral stories. For example, in "No Name Woman", Kingston states that '[w]henver she had to warn us about life, my mother told stories that ran like this one, a story to grow up on. She tested our strength to establish realities' (1989:5). Brave Orchid passes the Chinese values and traditional roles of Chinese females to Kingston.

Kingston's memoir is a feminist work because it raises gender issues; the subjugation of women in the patriarchal Chinese culture and American racial culture at the centre of her writing. The role of a Chinese woman in these cultures is to be submissive, obedient and silent 'because quietness is associated with the feminine, as is the "East" in relation to the "West" (in Orientalist discourse), Asian and Asian American men too have been "feminized" in American popular culture' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:2). This brings one's mind M. Butterfly by David Henry Hwang in which

a western man has sex with a Chinese man without being aware of his being a man. The reason for this is the sexist and racist clichés of the west for the east. Kingston's memoir is full of references to these sexist and racist clichés. Kingston sees inferior position of Chinese women, that is effective for her.

Kingston exposes to the unequal gender discrimination in the traditional Chinese society. There are many examples in the book that celebrate boys more than girls. They celebrate the birth of a boy while they kill girl baby. Fa Mu Lan wants to give a boy to her husband. Kingston writes about a crazy woman who is very happy to have a son to bring up although he is her husband's illegitimate son. Girls are only the outsiders who bring no economic benefit for their families. She experiences silence and discrimination in the American school and culture. She questions the power of language and danger of silence. She articulates the imposed silence on the Chinese and the Chinese American women. She deconstructs the languages of the dominant powers. In the first chapter, she deconstructs the patriarchal language, in the second chapter; she deconstructs the racial language in addition to patriarchal one as a post-structuralist feminist. At the end, she succeeds in reconciling these cultures.

Anticipating poststructuralists, they not only question received knowledge but accentuate their own fictionality. To undercut narrative authority they frequently resort to such devices as dream, fantasy, and unreliable point of view; or even project their anxiety as authors onto demented characters. (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:4-5)

1.2. The Life of The Chinese Women In China

"No Name Woman," "White Tigers" and the half of "Shaman" are the chapters of The Woman Warrior that I study in this part of my thesis. These three chapters of the novel take place in China and cover the lives of females

in China. Kingston breaks the traditional rules of writing autobiography by blending her autobiography with the biographies of the other Chinese females. She combines their stories and experiences with her own life experiences in America. 'Straddling two cultures, Maxine, the author/heroine has to confront the reality or fiction of her Chinese heritage that reaches her mainly through her mother's mythical yet authoritative "talk-stories" and the equally puzzling realities of her American birth, education and experience' (Wang, 1985:23). In these chapters, females that are narrated in her mother's talk stories are shaped by the patriarchal and racial discourses. These females have effects on Kingston's creating her Chinese American female self which is between two extremely different cultures.

The narrator, Kingston is a daughter of a Chinese immigrant family, she reinvents her family's China along with her mother's talk stories; she relies on her mother's tales about her female relatives in China. Kingston manages to create "mum and me" genre because Brave Orchid's talk stories make a great impression on Kingston who use them. The realistic and magical aspects of her talk stories carry both confusing and inspiring aspects for Kingston, when she is 'in the presence of great power, her mother talking-story' (Kingston, 1989:20). Brave Orchid uses talk stories to teach the narrator Chinese traditions which she follows blindly. The meanings that are intended by her mother are lost for the narrator, she analyses them and attributes different meanings to them. Kingston writes against the traditional story telling which is the product of the Chinese patriarchy. Kingston states that '[w]henver she wants to warn us about life, my mother told stories that run like this one, a story to grow up on. She tested our strength to establish realities' (1989:5). She steps in the words of traditional patriarchal discourse, she tries to give meanings to the words in her mother's talk stories. She places the marginalized females into the centre of the Chinese society and history by translating and rewriting their experiences. She recovers the

inequality in the traditional gender dynamics and in the historical experiences of the voiceless females. She articulates untold stories of Chinese females to restore them to their rightful places in their culture and in the national and family histories. This discusses the beginning of a young Chinese American girl's silence who intends to discover her identity through memory and imagination.

The narrator's development of identity begins with Brave Orchid's talking about the forgotten memory of an aunt. She is 'beginning her autobiographical quest for self by tracing lost memories' (Park, 2007:146). Brave Orchid's story of No name woman attributes a crucial help to Kingston to discover her national, cultural and family histories and to form her Chinese American identity. Brave Orchid narrates that Kingston's paternal aunt got pregnant after her newly-married husband left for Gold Mountain, as a result of her infidelity to her husband, Chinese villagers ransacked her family's house, killed all of their livestock, and destroyed their crops, 'a scandalous 'no-name' woman is recovered by transgressive naming from shame and oblivion' (Ramsay, 1996:799). The aunt gave birth to a girl baby in a pigsty, she felt alone and committed suicide by throwing herself and her child down into the well 'because it created another (female) mouth to feed in a time of scarcity' (Outka, 1997:453). On Kingston's first menstruation, Brave Orchid states that the aim of her telling the story of No name woman is to warn her daughter not to have a sexual relation before marriage and bring humiliation on her family like her forgotten aunt. 'Kingston's mother, in using the tragedy as a means to communicate with her adolescent daughter, explains the implication of the story, situates it in a Chinese patriarchal cultural context, and explores its relevance to the daughter' (Shu, 2001: 207).

Brave Orchid starts out the story of No name woman with the theme of silence. The first word of Kingston's memoir's, her saying, '[y]ou mustn't tell anyone' (Kingston, 1989:3) proves that women in Chinese tradition are

expected to behave with silence and obedience. It is a warning story, Brave Orchid warns Kingston not to tell anyone about her indecent aunt. Brave Orchid has another intention in telling this story to the narrator, she teaches her daughter Chinese traditions and the lives of Chinese females. After hearing her aunt's story, patriarchy does not allow her to talk about her aunt with anyone loud again. "Don't let your father know that I told you. He denies her. Now that you have started to menstruate, what happened to her could happen to you. Don't humiliate us. You wouldn't like to be forgotten as if you had never been born. The villagers are watchful" (Kingston, 1989:5). The subject is forbidden by the patriarchal discourse but it awakes the narrator's attention that there is a secret thing and increases her curiosity about her aunt. As a Chinese American girl, she feels herself in confusion at the narrated part of her aunt's story in the patriarchal version. Kingston sees this story as an example of gender inequality in Chinese tradition. She explores the privileging of males and the harsh suppression of females in the traditional Chinese society. As Ruthven indicates that

the earliest recorded list of binary opposites is attributed by Aristotle to the Pythagoreans: it sets 'male' against 'female', 'right' against 'left' and 'good' against 'evil' in such a way that the list appears to be tacitly promoting a first-term sequence (male/ right/ good) at the expense of a second -term sequence (female/ left/ evil). The slide here from structural parity into semantic disparity signals the presence of another force at work, which first centralizes masculinity by marginalizing femininity, and then valorizes the former by denigrating the latter. (1984:41)

The binary system classifies people as strong, rational, male and weak, irrational, female. All the negative adjectives in this system are attributed to female. The Chinese tradition uses patriarchal discourse to make women submissive and silent. Kingston's desire to unmask the oppressive nature of

stereotypical representations is criticized by Chinese American male writers, one of them is Shu who criticizes her with the following words; Kingston

fails to produce the affect of what Michel Foucault calls "the diverse discourse", a discourse which tries to demand its legitimacy by developing the very same vocabulary and categories under which it was previously disqualified. Foucault focuses on unequal balance of power among discourses in a society . . . The dominant and the marginal discourses are often related but not necessarily exchangeable in a dialectical sense. (2001, 212-13)

Kingston desires to criticize the patriarchy, which imposes silence by writing her memoir and telling everyone about her aunt in it, she does not keep silent, she reveals a family secret and the place of Chinese women in the Chinese society to her readers. While her mother gives voice to the Chinese traditions in oral words, Kingston does it in the written words. Her mother empowers her feelings and thoughts by supplying the cultural and family heritages to her.

Kingston rewrites her aunt's story from her Chinese American feminist perspective, her rewriting her aunt's story depends on her understanding of the patriarchal Chinese society. She uses her own talk story to guess the reasons of her aunt's behaviours. She does not accept her aunt as a failure in her feminist writing. She depicts her aunt as a strong woman beyond the limitations of Chinese traditions.

Her mother's story about No name woman seems a real story as Kingston tries to find out what really happened to her aunt. But Kingston knows nothing about the details of her aunt's story so she has to speculate about her mother's story of her aunt. Kingston reflects an important dichotomy; fiction is opposite to the reality in the chapter "No Name Woman." From her feminist perspective, she decides to create a detailed story of her aunt in her

book by filling the gaps that are left by her mum. She uses the techniques of intertextual writing, Kingston overloads new meanings to her mother's story of her aunt and reinterprets it according to her Chinese American feminist point of view. Cosslett comments about the relationships between the female autobiographer and her mother and her other relatives,

there is instead a move to restore subjectivity to the mother, and other female relatives, as well as merely to show their influence on the protagonist. For various reasons (they are dead, illiterate, not writers) they can't tell their own stories- the autobiographer writes for or as them. (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:142)

She writes for or as her dead aunt in her autobiography. Kingston has no information to describe her aunt, she does not know her name as she was erased as an indecent and shameful woman as if she never existed by her family, the narrator gives her a name "No name woman" to give her an identity and an existence in her family history. Naming belongs to Adam, who represents the divine authority of patriarchy on earth, he has power over the woman to shape her. As a feminist, naming is crucial for her to create her feminist discourse, her aunt becomes a transgressive woman that represents all of the Chinese women who do not have identities in the patriarchal and racial societies, 'the narrator's resolution to name the unnameable and the unspeakable was a way of recreating identity of her people in as much as name was one of vital importance to assert one's identity yet Chinese American had hidden their names to get along with Americans (Sha, 2009:36).

The narrator lets her imagination about her aunt free by creating her own scenes about her aunt. In one of her imagination, her aunt was a shy woman who was ordered by a rapist. 'She first speculates upon what adultery could really mean to her as a Chinese woman, who might have been caught in a cultural dilemma of whether to violate the patriarchal law of chastity or to

submit to the patriarchal value of women's obedience to men' (Shu, 2001:208). She states that her aunt's sexual partner 'wasn't a stranger because the village housed no strangers' (Kingston, 1989:6). In another imagination, her aunts cared for her appearance to attract a man although she was married. She expressed her individuality by revealing out her forbidden passions for love and romance. These made her a female that transgressed the traditional borders. Kingston believes that her aunt is a strong woman that decides her destiny during the Chinese New Year rather than being only a victim of the patriarchy and racism, '[s]he dreamed of a lover for fifteen days of New Year's. . . she cursed the year, the family, the village, and herself' (Kingston, 1989:10). The Chinese celebrate the Chinese New Year traditionally, their activities during that time define their activities in the rest of the year.

Kingston sees No name woman as a victim of the patriarchal social life in China, the political situation in the feudal China and the racism in America. Chinese patriarchy attributes inferior roles to females so they blamed her aunt for being responsible for the adultery. If it is assumed that she was raped by a member of her patriarchal society, this society did not intend to punish this rapist. Kingston blames the patriarchal society for her adultery and sees her aunt as a victim of it because it did not allow her to experience her feelings and her individuality as a woman. She was seen as a burden to her family so she married young with a man whom she did not know, she saw him on their wedding night and he had a sex with her, women are seen as 'sex objects': they exist as characters only as than focus of male attention' (Selden, 1989:145). After their marriage, her husband left for "Gold Mountain." She had to stay with her husband's family and serve them, 'taking a daughter in law' (Kingston, 1989: 7) is a Chinese tradition after the marriage. 'Submissive and helpless, she must expect to drift from one kind of

dependency to another without ever exercising her autonomy, her consciousness of which has never been raised' (Ruthven, 1984:80).

Another feminist writer who attributes sexuality to female is Angela Carter, she shows that female's sexuality supplies a power to female. In her version of traditional fairy tales, females revolt their traditional roles. Like Carter, Kingston recreates females who resist their traditional roles that are described in her mother's talk stories. In her women centred writing, female sexuality is not seen as dangerous as her mother states.

The individual's expression of freedom and the community's need for controlling its members are reflected out by Kingston. If it is assumed that her aunt expressed her sexual desire, she became an outcast by her family and her society because she threatened the social order. All of the members of the Chinese society have to function for the benefit of their community so she had to be punished for breaking the roundness of the community, a Chinese female's indulging herself in whims is very dangerous. The narrator imagines China as an oppressive society in which people cannot have their private lives and express their individual needs and feelings.

No name woman, like Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid, is the victim of political situation in China because her husband left for "Gold Mountain" and many other men in their village left their farms because of the crop failure and the economic crisis in China, they travelled to America to seek work and better life conditions,

in 1924 just a few days after our village celebrated seventeen hurry-up weddings-to make sure that every young man who went 'out on the road' would responsibly come home- your father and his brothers and your grandfather and his brothers and your aunt's new husband sailed for America, the Gold Mountain. (Kingston, 1989:3)

The Chinese immigrants gave America a nickname; "Gold Mountain" because they wished that they could have good living in America by working in the gold mining and the rail road building.

Kingston knows her aunt's social existence was shaped by the patriarchal Chinese culture and her victimization by patriarchy was intensified by the racism in America, Chinese women were the victims of racism in America because they were left in China and they were not allowed to go to America to be with their husbands by the Chinese exclusion act. Her aunt had to live away from her husband because she 'could not follow him to the US because of various immigration restrictions, and her husband would not be able to return to China for exactly the same immigration and financial reasons. She must live like a widow' (Shu, 2001:210). In Chinese American cultural history, men lived alone like widows and their patriarchal society permitted them to have sexual relations with other females in America, they were not blamed for expressing their feelings but her aunt lived like a widow and her expression of her sexual desire made her an outcast.

There was a social chaos in China during 1920s. Although communists declared they would create a social life that everyone would share everything evenly. Soldiers and workers, who defended this ideology, got the bigger part, Kingston approaches this system ironically, Kingston writes that 'Chairman Mao encourages us to give our paper replicas to the spirits of outstanding soldiers and worker, no matter whose ancestors they may be. My aunt remains forever hungry. Goods are not distributed evenly among the dead' (Kingston, 1989:16). The Chinese suffered from the political violence and chaos in China, even after their death. Her aunt was one of the victims of this ideology. Kingston imagines that her aunt's ghost suffers from hunger and begs for scraps from the gifts that are given to other ghosts.

From Kingston's point of view, her aunt's sexual affair did not represent a big crime, there was some social, political and economical reasons for her being punished by the society, she ironically writes that

If my aunt had betrayed the family at a time of large grain yields and peace, when many boys were born, and wings were being built on many houses, perhaps she might have escaped such severe punishment. But the men-hungry, greedy, tired of planting in dry soil-had been forced to leave the village in order to send foot-money home . . . Adultery, perhaps only a mistake during good time, became a crime when the village needed food. (Kingston, 1989:13)

Kingston describes that adultery could be only a mistake during abundant times but it was a great crime when people were in hard times and in need of food. The villagers' aim was not to punish her for crossing the circle, their real intention was to raid her family's farm and house to get their food. Her family was seen as responsible for their daughter's adultery so they suffered from the villagers' attack. This reveals the social and political reality that their country was in bad situation. The social and political contexts in which these decisions were made are important to understand the reason of their raid. Though Kingston makes the previous statement, Shu criticizes Kingston by these words: 'Kingston ignores an opportunity to educate white readers about an already misconceived China: instead she fuels Orientalist discourses with a confirmation of their stereotypes' (2001:208-09). Kingston is blamed for being a part of the westerners' discourse that shows Chinese people as irrational, violent without giving any rational reason for villagers' attack. Kingston refers to a historical reality that the western industrialization and imperialism exploits China.

Kingston highlights that her aunt was erased from the historical existence as the memory of the Chinese patriarchy ignores the Chinese women's suffering from the political chaos and racism, Kingston 'reclaimed histories of

the needed women, objective intellectual version of history. Challenges hegemonic notion of "man-making" history. While subaltern memory, when excavated, becomes possible transformative for later generation's self-discovery'(Park, 2009:25). Her story highlights a gendered forgetting in the Chinese American history and it also proves Chinese women are the parts of the Chinese American national history. Kingston writes against this gender discrimination in her culture and in the Chinese American history. Kingston intends to write against the contemporary masculinist nationalism in which women's subjectivity and agency are denied. She rearticulates her nation by placing her aunt as a participant to Chinese America's history and culture. She creates a history in which women are at the centre, in other words, she creates *herstory*.

Kingston does not describe her aunt as an indecent woman. She relates her mother's story about her aunt to individuality and motherhood. She identifies herself with her aunt and imagines her as a forerunner or a friend across the ancestral line. 'Her "vision of the past" is, as it were, profoundly inlaid with the present' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:75). Kingston states similarity between herself and her aunt, she imagines her aunt 'brushed her hair back from forehead' and 'looped a piece of thread knotted into a circle between her index finger and thumbs' she writes "my mother did the same to me and my sister' (Kingston, 1989:9).

The tragic story of her aunt who lived in China in 1920s gives an insight into a Chinese girl's life in American. Kingston's fantasies have direct impact on her real life. Kingston describes No name woman's experience of giving birth in a pigsty. Her body's broadness became her own words that rebel to the oppressing society. Her aunt became an outcast by her family and her society, Kingston imagines that her unnamed aunt felt the pain of being humiliated by society and the real pain of giving birth. She imagines that her aunt '[f]layed, unprotected against space, she felt pain return, focusing her

body. . . For hours she lay on the ground, alternately body and space' (Kingston, 1989:14). She was left alone and lost in wilderness, her separation from her family and her society gave her a pain and she felt herself relaxed with her thoughts of her family and felt her fear of loneliness. 'It was good to have a fence enclosing her, a tribal person alone' (Kingston, 1989:14). She sought a refuge in the pigsty to give birth to her baby, this refers to her being in need of being a part of a community. It represents the narrator's desire to be a part of a social structure. Kingston draws a parallel between her aunt's situation during giving birth and her feeling the sense of having no cultural background as a daughter of Chinese immigrants. Like her aunt, she intends to be a part of her Chinese heritage and at the same time, she desires to be cut off from it. Her aunt exploded to the society with silent words by her giving birth to her baby. The narrator seems to satisfy her desires for releasing her anger for the insecurity and suppression on her through her aunt's story. She feels that her aunt decided to kill herself and her baby together in order not to leave her baby without a family in a society which is hostile to girls. Kingston states that the baby might be a girl who is considered useless to society. The Chinese rules about women that punished her aunt confine the narrator in America. The term *Necessity* loses its real meaning for the protagonist who tries to understand patriarchy's unequal treatment of females. She refuses to be part of the roundness in the patriarchal society like her aunt, 'Maxine metamorphosis No name woman in to a historical and past version of herself' (Elnagger, 2002:181).

In the chapter "No Name Woman", Kingston writes '[t]hose of us in the first American generations have had to figure out how the invisible world the emigrants built around our childhood fits in solid America' (Kingston, 1989:5). China becomes an invisible place for the protagonist and the other America born Chinese as they reinvent China through reimagining what their China born parents tell them about it. America is a solid place for them

because they physically live in it and they desire to fit in it and have relationships with the Americans unlike their parents. Like her aunt, she is in between two different worlds; she is oscillating between the Chinese tradition which does not permit privacy, individuality and the American tradition which is tolerable to one's expressing his inner feelings. Her mother's messages about Chinese traditions are difficult to adopt to her American life. Her aunt's story helps her to reconcile these two different cultures; her Chinese past and present America which have conflict with each other. She feels strength as she learns about her national, cultural and family history.

Kingston rewrites the US as a site in which memories are reinvented and rearticulated against hegemonic discourses. By making visible the forgetting of immigrant trans-Pacific moment. Kingston claims her own subjectivity as a Chinese American woman writer in the revisioned history of US as well as Chinese American. (Park, 2007:134-35)

As a woman, No name woman provides a patrilineal help for Kingston. As a feminist autobiographer, Kingston forms a matrilineal heritage for her main character who conceives herself according to her relations with her female relatives, these females are important for her to define her Chinese American identity. Kingston uses matrilineal heritage when she narrates her mother and Moon Orchid. There is a good statement in Feminism and Autobiography that is similar to Kingston's constructing her female self by matrilineal heritage; She goes from one female figure to another ones,

this reformulation of the Oedipal triangle: I have felt the age-old triangle of mother, father and child, with the 'I' at its eternal core, elongate and flatten out into the elegantly strong triad of grandmother, mother and daughter, with the 'I' moving back and forth flowing in either or both directions as needed. (qtd.in Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:143)

Kingston intends to create a heroine from a victim unlike the patriarchal cautionary tale of her mother and the Chinese American national history. For Kingston, her aunt is a heroine, a woman warrior that fought against the traditional expected roles of Chinese female. In her rewriting, her aunt did not become an indecent woman by refusing to be part of the roundness in the tradition. Her sexual affair out of marriage made her different from other females who stay within the boundaries of patriarchal society. She is a heroine who disrupted the existing circle of social order and revolted against the patriarchy's taboos. Kingston gives an autonomy to her aunt in her feministic memoir. Although Kingston's aunt was silenced within the patriarchal and racist discourses, Kingston demands an individual voice for her aunt to save her from silence in her rewriting. She was not really a silent woman, 'although constructed as a passive victim in Kingston's story, the No name woman demonstrated her own sense of courage, honour and rebelliousness. Refusing to tell the name of the villager and to collaborate with the patriarchal rule in the village, the aunt took the blame entirely on herself' (Shu, 2001:210), with her silence, she said many things and revolted against the imposed silence of patriarchy, her silence made her a part of her family, her society and Chinese American history. She makes a comparison between her aunt's silent revolt against the community and her own revolt. Kingston presents that her aunt fought for defining herself as an individual, but it is so difficult for a woman to exist as an individual in community oriented patriarchal society so her aunt committed suicide.

Kingston feels sorry for Chinese females who suffer from subjugation like her aunt. And she refuses to obey her mother's warning not tell anyone about her aunt. Kingston imagines that she is a lonely ghost and her war goes on, she fights for food.

No Name Woman could easily be renamed "No Food Woman," an ur-female figure who represent the savage

punishment meted out upon the female body for expressing physical desire of any kind a punishment that economically and brutally reduces the aunt to a set of desires that brought upon her punishment in the first place. (Outka, 1997:453)

Although her family decided to erase her from their collective memory, Kingston does not take part in her punishment and she writes about her tragic story by mixing memory and fiction, 'my aunt haunts me - her ghost drawn to me because now, after fifty years of neglect, I alone devote pages of paper to her' (Kingston, 1989:16). Her aunt haunts her to tell her story. She does not suppress her aunt's memory. Her rewriting her aunt's story is a way of revolting against her aunt's punishment by the patriarchy. She lets the reader know her aunt's story. No name woman 'gives voice to Maxine's darkest fear, fears that she will be forgotten that she will lose herself that she will not be fed by her family' (Outka, 1997:452). Her feminine features inspires Kingston to talk the story in the written words. 'This haunting silence is precisely what gives wings to the niece's imagination, allowing Maxine to test her own power to talk story and play with different identities. Not the aunt's but the narrator's subjectivity is unfurled' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:85).

By devoting pages to her with fiction, Kingston presents love, pride and personality to her. She re-inscribes her aunt into family, cultural and national histories as a woman warrior, 'parental and historical silence spurs creativity' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:24). All of the "no name women" in China whose collective stories are represented by Kingston's No name aunt, Kingston makes them visible. And she gives them voices and places in the patriarchal, cultural and national histories.

The chapters "No Name Woman" and "White Tigers" provide a person the reasons of Kingston's behaviour and feelings. The traditional silent, subservient and disgraced female figures in Chinese society are effective for

Kingston to formulate her female identity. She fears to be a silent and useless female who is similar to the girls in her mother's traditional talk stories and she feels pity for the females whose roles are defined by the patriarchy, the chapter "White Tigers" begins with the statement that '[w]hen we Chinese girls, listened to adults' talk story; we learnt we failed if we grew up to be but wives and slaves' (Kingston, 1989:19). She recalls her mother's saying that girls are raised to be only wives and mothers. Kingston is not ready to take these traditional roles,

Traditionally women's lives have been imagined in relation to men's lives, as the daughters, mothers, mistresses, wives of men. They have inconsequence been imagined either in terms of a single role psychologically important to men (virgin, temptress, bitch, goddess) or in terms of their single social and biological function in male society (preparing for marriage, or married). (Ruthven, 1984:73)

There are two choices for Chinese girls: to be appreciated or to be disgraced by their patriarchal Chinese society. This idea is reflected in the entire book, in the previous chapter, the patriarchal society's dramatic humiliation and ignorance of female is reflected out through her No name aunt. As a contrast to her aunt's story, she writes about Fa Mu Lan's story which illustrates that female's self denial for their society is celebrated by the patriarchal society. The chapter "White Tigers" has two paradoxical functions for Kingston, it gives her an inspiration that Chinese girls can achieve success but their families and communities put pressure on them to achieve this success. This is reflected through Fa Mu Lan who took her father's place by disguising her as a man and fought against the enemies for her family and community.

The narrator is not sure about the patriarchal society's behaviour against a woman. The mythical female avenger, Fa Mu Lan functions a foil to No name woman. They interacted with their societies differently. Fa Mu Lan's

relationship with her society was different from No name woman's relation with her society. When she returned to her home after training for fifteen years with the old couple, her parents greeted her as if they welcomed home a son in a happy way. Fa Mu Lan's departure from her community was completely different from No name woman's departure. When Fa Mu Lan was about to leave her village to fight against the evil emperor and tyrannical barons, the villagers appreciated her and gave their sons to her. By rewriting Fa Mu Lan's story, Kingston intends to overcome her rage, confusion, suppression and insecurity that she feels in her Chinese American female identity.

In the chapter "White Tigers", while growing up, the narrator hears many talk stories from her mother, Kingston writes that nights after nights, her mother can talk story until she falls asleep. She recalls her mother's singing about the woman warrior, Fa Mu Lan from the traditional Chinese legend in one of her talk stories. Fa Mu Lan is a classical heroic female figure in Chinese folk story; "The Ballad of Mu Lan" that was written in fifth or sixth century by a Chinese anonymous poet. The female figure Mulan in Chinese folk is one of the central themes in Kingston's memoirs. This Chinese folk tale is the tale of freedom, patriotism and at the same time it is the tale for Chinese female to be subservient. In which a Chinese woman warrior fought against the injustices in life. It gives the details of a woman's learning martial arts from a hundred years old of couple, she gathered an army to fight against the dishonest government in the place of her father, she returned back to her family and resumed her traditional life as a mother and a wife after the war ended. She becomes an archetypical female figure for Chinese females in patriarchal China. This talk story is the most recognizable one for her.

In her novel, Kingston composes a different version of this ancient story that is derived from Brave Orchid's talk story. Brave Orchid's purpose in

telling both stories of No name woman and Fa Mu Lan is to provide Chinese traditions, Chinese sensibility, and morals for her daughter who lives away from China. For Brave Orchid, Fa Mu Lan means a Chinese woman's filial piety. But Kingston interprets her mother's stories differently than her mother's intention. Kingston overloads different meanings to them by relating them to her Chinese American context. For her, Fa Mu Lan means female's success over the gender discrimination in the patriarchal and the racial societies. Her rewriting this mythological story shows her cultural and generational difference from the Chinese immigrants.

The Woman Warrior that Kingston writes is a memoir, as we see in the subtitle Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts but she breaks down the genre of memoir because she weaves her mother's Chinese story of the legendary swords woman in the Chinese myths together with her the autobiographical notes.

The first part of the chapter "White Tigers" tells about Kingston's childhood fantasy of being a woman warrior. She imagines herself as a legendary Chinese woman warrior, Fa Mu Lan and she imagines herself in the position of an important and a successful girl. Through Fa Mu Lan, Kingston tries to prove that Chinese women can be more than slaves and wives. The narrator refuses to be a wife and a slave, she promises to be a warrior woman. She says that 'I would grow up a wife and a slave, but she taught me the song of the warrior woman, Fa Mu Lan. I would have to grow up a warrior woman' (Kingston, 1989: 20). She tells Fa Mu Lan's story in the first person narrator, she narrates her imagination in the simple past tense so her imagination seems to tell about the real events. She imagines herself as a woman warrior but being a woman warrior is not easy for her in her community in which she was born as a female. In China and in the Chinese American community, girls are considered to be worse than useless and a

burden to their families, the narrator experiences this through her family's disrespect of her. The sexism in her Chinese American community creates a feeling of fear in Kingston. She burns food and refuses to clean dishes to reject the traditional roles of wife and mother. The Chinese patriarchy thinks that women are not able to do anything apart from these roles. While discovering her own identity, her community's treatment of female as inhuman is painful for her, so she creates a fantastical world in which a female was successful, admired and celebrated by her community and she crossed the gender discrimination. She wishes to be a woman warrior to fight against the reality of female's oppression. She is critical to Chinese traditions at the same time she desires to embrace it.

Kingston's fantastical female figure, Fa Mu Lan mixes two irrelevant roles, she is a traditional Chinese female figures of mother and wife and she is also a transgressive female, woman warrior. Kingston imagines herself as a female avenger who has feminine feelings of love and kindness. After she gave birth, Fa Mu Lan kept her baby under her armour, she felt pity for her enemies' wives and she expressed her love to her sweet heart, 'I would have for a new husband my own playmate, dear since childhood, who loved me so much he was to become a spirit bridegroom form my sake. We will be so happy when I come back to the valley, healthy and strong and not a ghost' (Kingston, 1989:37). Apart from her feminine feelings, she took the role of the man warrior who left her feminine feelings when she set out to avenge the emperor and fight with the evil baron, Fa Mu Lan is a good model for Kingston to follow because she was able to express her individuality. Her story helps the protagonist to transgress the boundaries of socially and culturally defined gender roles in both traditional Chinese and Chinese American cultures. Kingston uses this story to be a powerful and independent woman.

The whole chapter is not about Kingston's fantasies, it also contains the factual details of her life that is connected to the mythological woman warrior's heroic struggle. Fa Mu Lan is the second effective female figure that helps her to find her identity. Through her, the narrator tries to understand her personal life. Kingston creates a contrast with Fa Mu Lan's success and victory with her own disappointments in her American life and this shows that this story is not so much useful for her American reality. She notices the sexual discrimination in Chinese American society. 'Her fantasy about woman warrior though a form of imaginary battle against patriarchy' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:86). She claims that, '[t]here is a Chinese word for the female *I*—which is 'slave.' Break the women with their own tongues!' (Kingston, 1989:47) She dislikes the tradition that Chinese women's feet are bound to make them dependent on men, but this is a symbolic bound, they are bound by their roles as mothers and wives. She wishes to be more than a slave or wife so she can become untraditional woman like her aunt and a woman warrior like Fa Mu Lan, but her aunt became a outcast and the days of Fa Mu Lan were magical and Kingston fears to be an outcast and she cannot achieve Fa Mu Lan's opportunities in her life in America, her 'American life has been such a disappointment' (Kingston, 1989:45). In her fantasy, Fa Mu Lan was trained to have skills by the old couples and her family love, support and respect her, but her fantasy is so different from her real life; her family do not care about her skills and her education, her family consider her as useless. She needs to be loved by her family so she recreates her family as the kind old couple in her fantasy.

Kingston rereads this myth in the context of the racism and the patriarchy. The narrator cannot be a female avenger in the patriarchal Chinese American society and in the racial American society. She proves that Chinese women are the active victims of the Chinese patriarchy and the racism in Chinese American national history. In her fantasy, Fa Mu Lan succeeded to be a

female avenger by beheading the baron who spoke to her about raping and stealing women. But in her real life, the narrator cannot resist her racist bosses who are the real barons in her Chinese American life. When she attempts to stand up to one of them as a heroine, she simply gets fired by her racist boss. In her fantasy, Fa Mu Lan accomplishes to be the liberator of her nation as a woman but in her real life, the narrator cannot fight against the Communists in China that kill her relatives to save them, there is not any real Communist in America, Communists are in China so it is difficult for her to fight with them. She is not powerful like Fa Mu Lan that she cannot help her family against the American racists, 'when the urban tore down my parents laundry. . . did nothing useful' (Kingston, 1989:50). 'Kingston expands her idea of female avenging by grounding her female subjectivity in the history of US gendered racialization' (Park, 2007:173). The last few paragraphs of the chapter compare the powers of Kingston with the powers of Fa Mu Lan. Kingston's words are equal to the powers of Fa Mu Lan.

The swordswoman and I are dissimilar. May my people understand the resemblance soon so that I can return to them. What we have in common are the words at our backs. The idioms for revenge are 'report a crime' and 'report to five families.' The reporting is the vengeance—not the beheading, not the gutting, but the words. And I have so many words—'chink' words and 'gook' words too—that they do not fit on my skin. (Kingston, 1989:53)

The narrator identifies herself with this fantastic female figure to form her Chinese American identity. She is a feminist version of Fa Mu Lan, she can be called modern female avenger. At the end of the chapter "White Tigers", Kingston accepts that both of them are fighting for the welfare of their people, and both of them are burdened with words. Before her parents allowed her to leave to take her father's place in the army, they let Fa Mu Lan kneel before the family's ancestral shrine and her father used a knife to carve a 'list of grievances' (Kingston, 1989:35) into her back. Fa Mu Lan's

body was used as a social text and as a testimony that consist of the written words of the patriarchy. This is another good example of a patriarchal society's violence to woman's body. Her villagers' grievances were tattooed on Fa Mu Lan's back. This is similar to her mother's imposing the traditional Chinese talk stories on the narrator's brain.

Kingston is a woman warrior that fights against the socially constructed discourse such as racism and patriarchy and she also against the paradoxes in her life with her powerful words in her written stories. Like Fa Mu Lan, she uses a sword but her sword is her pen. With her words, Kingston creates new ideas.

Foucault claims about discourses. 'We must make allowance for the complex and the unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.' (Sellers,1991:101)

Kingston creates this hindrance by retelling the story of the Fa Mu Lan through fiction. She reverses Chinese tradition of gender division, she rewrites gender roles from her feminist point of view; while Fa Mu Lan left her home to fight with the enemies, her husband in the narrator's fantasy left battle to return home to care for her son like a woman and while the women with feet bound joined the army to fight like men, the men that were captured in the fight are described as slave girls. Through written words, she fights against the invisibility of Chinese women in the racial discourse in which Chinese are treated as yellow negro, chink and gook. Although she cannot protest against the racists, she speaks with vengeance. 'For Kingston, female avenging is rewriting hegemonic histories and representations by another language of women's experience' (Park, 2007:174). She writes her vengeance against the discourses on her novel.

Kingston and Fa Mu Lan represent the power and determination of women as they give decisions about their own destinies. They do not let the others do it. After taking the country's evil emperor from the power and killing the evil baron, Fa Mu Lan decided to reside in her traditional roles, no one forced her to do so. Fa Mu Lan embraced her traditional Chinese female obligations; wife and mother. She returns to her home to fulfil her duties to her husband's family. She knelt at her parents-in-law's feet, and she declared to them, '[n]ow my public duties are finished. . . I will stay with you, doing farm work and housework, and giving you more sons' (Kingston, 1989:45). Cheung states about Kingston's creating Fa Mu Lan in these words, Kingston is 'trying to conform to both the feminine and the masculine ideals of her imaginary Chinese society. Maxine-as-warrior grapples with a double bind' (Articulate Silences, 1993:87). There remains an important difference between these female avengers, after taking her vengeance, Fa Mu Lan returns to home, but Kingston struggles on the vengeance of the discourses by her words. She has so many words to deal with that 'they do not fit on [her] skin' (Kingston, 1989:53). It can be said that Kingston starts her journey as a writer with her novel The Woman Warrior and her fight goes on. Both No name woman and Fa Mu Lan's stories do not satisfy Kingston's desire to live in America as her aunt is dead and Fa Mu Lan is a mythological female figure. Her mother inspires and empowers her because she is a living female figure, she is both a wife and a warrior.

The chapter "Shaman" is the story of Kingston's mother's individual struggles against discrimination in the patriarchal and the racial discourses. Brave Orchid's biography is told by her, Brave Orchid is 'a kind of oral autobiographer. In doing so, she makes a room for a Chinese women's agency against the prevailing notion of third world women as incapable of self-representation' (Park, 2007:161) Subjectivity is restored to Brave Orchid apart from the autobiographer, Kingston writes her mother's biography

within her feminist autobiography. This is a feature of feminist autobiographical writing, 'the mother's emerges varies in autobiographical practice and is more or less enabled by particular cultural practices' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:4). And this chapter explores their mother and daughter relationships. We can call this book as a mum and me genre. Through her mother's biography, the narrator learns about her cultural, national and family histories and she tries to reconstruct her subjectivity as a daughter of Chinese American immigrants.

This first part of the chapter takes place in China, and portrays a Chinese woman's battle with the patriarchy. It focuses on the individuality of a Chinese female. This section inspires the narrator with the idea that Chinese women can have victory over the gender discrimination in the patriarchal society. Brave Orchid is described as a powerful and a wise Chinese woman with respect by Kingston. Her mother's life makes Kingston proud because her mother became the maker of her own destiny. This supplies Kingston an inspiration that she can make her own destiny if she has a determination to be an individual woman like her mother. A statement written by Jackson proves that women tell about their lives of upward mobility because they are proud of their achievements and they assume their daughters to build upon their accomplishments. 'Mother's aspirations' have been identified as key variables influencing upward mobility in their children' (qtd.in Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:132).

Kingston writes down her mother, Brave Orchid's life in China after her father left for "Gold Mountain." After her two children died in China, at the age of thirty seven, Brave Orchid gained an admission to a Chinese medical school in the city of Canton to become a doctor with the money her husband sent her, 'she decided to use the money for becoming a doctor'(Kingston, 1989:60). Through her imagination and her feminist point of view, Kingston recreates her mother's school experience. The narrator looks at her mother's

diplomas and her graduation photographs that she took from her midwifery medical school. Kingston imagines that Brave Orchid looked very seriously in the pictures and writes '[m]y mother is not soft . . . my mother is not humorous. . . I can't tell if she's happy' (Kingston, 1989:58-59), she was not happy because her husband was in New York City. In her picture, she looked directly as if she was looking to America, 'in this picture too my mother's eyes are big with what they held-reaches of oceans beyond China-land beyond oceans' (Kingston, 1989:59). Brave Orchid had to live alone in China, like Kingston's unnamed aunt. She was a victim of political and economical situation in China and she was also a victim of American racism which did not allow women to unite with their husbands with the exclusion act. Her mother's life in China helps Kingston to reinvent China and the Chinese American history, she gives a place to Chinese women in the patriarchal narration of the Chinese history.

Brave Orchid's story proves that women can be more than slave and wife, Brave Orchid succeeded in escaping her traditional roles as housewife and mother and she became a woman of incredible powers and intelligence. When she left her village for school, she took with her only a few private belongings such as pens, ink box, an atlas of the world, her ruler, her tea set, writing paper, envelopes. This referred to her desire for learning a profession and have a joy in life. She left 'some troublesome valuables behind in the family's care' (Kingston, 1989:61) such as jewellery, clothes, photographs which were her feminine objects. Brave Orchid's leaving them behind symbolized her leaving her traditional female life behind in her life.

Brave Orchid describes her own life as a heroic life. Her husband immigrated to America fifteen years before her, left her alone in a society which sees females as passive objects of males and as unsuccessful figures. Kingston narrates that her mother gained her individuality by experiencing privacy, pleasure, independence and success at To Keung School of

Midwifery. Unlike her aunt and Fa Mu Lan, Brave Orchid was responsible only for herself so she achieved individuality when she was away from her village. The life in the school was a special experience for Brave Orchid and her female classmates. They were different from the other Chinese females because they had the opportunity of having personal space and time, they did not interfere with the pleasure and privacy of each other. In other words as described by Kingston, they live 'the daydream of women-to have a room, even a section of a room, that only gets messed up when she messes it up herself' (1989:61). Females at the school were free from their patriarchal society's oppression and servitude to it. In China, their lives can be described as a dream for the females who have to live according to the social norms and whose lives are defined by their relations to the patriarchy.

Brave Orchid is both an imaginary and a real female fighter. She is a living Amazon for Kingston. She established herself as a real woman warrior at the medical school, she fought against "A Sitting Ghost" which was the symbol of the oppressive patriarchy and like a rapist, it 'rolled over her and landed bodily on her chest. There it sat. It breathed airlessly, pressing her, sapping her' (Kingston,1989:68). When Brave Orchid drove the ghost out, she won over the patriarchy through by both her physical power and her intellectual power. She won over the subjugation of the Chinese woman. After graduating, she became a real woman warrior that fought against the spirits and diseases. Her mother had an amazing skill to heal the sickness of her villagers and to deliver the babies as a medical doctor in China. At the same time, she was respected by her villagers as a magician or a shaman with her incredible skill, she was a mediator between the physical and spiritual worlds and she destroyed ghosts and evil spirits. This highlights that women are not useless and inferior. Brave Orchid was both a modern, marginal woman in her society as she preferred to use her maiden name as a professional woman. Kingston writes 'against the idea of third world woman as illiterate

and pre-modern that seemed to prevail in the west until the 1970s'(Park, 2007:161).

She tells her mother's being a respected woman like Fa Mu Lan and Ts'ai Yen. Kingston imagines her as a heroine and fell in 'heroic action, disguised as in the mythical Fa Mu Lan, the archetypal of Joan-of-arc woman warrior or disguised as in Maxine's mother, Brave Orchid in her dedicated communal services in China' (Wang, 1985:24). She says after graduating from medical school, Brave Orchid returned to her village that '[s]he had gone away ordinary and come back miraculous, like the ancient magicians who came down from the mountains' (Kingston,1989:76). She creates connection between Fa Mu Lan's returning her village after her training in the mountains. Like Fa Mu Lan, Brave Orchid was a woman warrior who transforms from a subservient housewife into a respected doctor and a shaman. This proves that women can be appreciated by the patriarchal society with their ability to save their society. Kingston is lack of this ability to save her people from the racists in America and from the communists in China. Brave Orchid's name is significant that consists of two opposite qualities; her feminine and her warrior sides. *Brave* refers to her being powerful and a brave heroine of her own society to fight for healing world's wrongs and evil spirits like a man and *orchid* signifies her feminine side.

Brave Orchid's stories of female swords women and her life as a shaman and a doctor in China have direct impacts on the narrator's life and give her an inspiration. Kingston takes these women warriors as models to achieve success and to improve her mind scientifically. Kingston tries to adopt her story to her Chinese American life. She identifies herself with her mother, 'I am really a Dragon, as she is a Dragon, both of us born in dragon years' (Kingston,1989:109), in Chinese tradition, dragon represents wisdom, bravery and power, she desires to be a brilliant, brave and powerful woman warrior like her mother.

The narrator has an ambivalent feeling against her mother's life in China and her talk stories. Although she gains inspiration from them and wishes to be a part of her Chinese heritage and appreciates her mother with a respect, she feels uncomfortable with them and distances herself from them. Kingston's feelings towards her mother takes a negative form. There are paradoxes in her mother's stories, their mother and daughter relationship is affected from her mother's talk stories. She feels less confident about her mother's talk stories in the chapter "Shaman". The quotation taken from Plummer supports this idea. 'Story telling can be placed at the heart of our symbolic interactions. The focus here neither on the solitary individual life (which is in principle unknown and unknowable), nor on the text (which means nothing stands on its own), but on *the interactions which emerge around story telling*' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:130). Brave Orchid places these talk stories in Kingston's mind and influences her writing.

When she tells her stories, Brave Orchid turns to a tradition bound mother who is always talking about Chinese traditions and she gives upsetting, frightening and conflicting messages in her talk stories. Brave Orchid reinforces the idea that girls are treated as disappointments by their parents, despite their achievements. She tells the narrator the midwives suffocated baby girls in a box of clean ashes at birth because their parents wanted sons. Brave Orchid's oral stories cause the narrator to have nightmares. She feels haunted by the images or ghosts of these little Chinese girl babies whom she tries to help in her nightmares for the rest of time. In one talk story, Brave Orchid delivered a baby with no anus and its family left it out of the house to die, this story haunts the narrator and she dreams, '[a]s I child, I pictured a naked child sitting on a modern toilet desperately trying to perform until it died of congestion' (Kingston, 1989:86). Her dream represents her anxiety and her painful feelings. This stories seem to be incomprehensible experiences to the narrator who tries to live 'an American normal' (Kingston,

1989:87) life. Brave Orchid tells stories about slave girls who were sold by their families in the market place in China; the girls were seen as objects. The narrator compares her autobiographical notes with her mother's stories about girls, she is aware nothing has changed in the name of Chinese girls in the patriarchal society, her mother does not care for her accomplishments in her school and she fears that if her family return back China, they will sell their girls at the market because of the economic crisis in China. The narrator has an image of China that is place of irrational creatures and behaviours and she does not want to go to China as she knows about it through her mother's paradoxical talk stories.

Whenever my parents said "home", they suspended America. They suspended enjoyment, but I did not want to go to China. In China my parents would sell my sisters and me. My father would marry two or three more wives, who would spatter cooking oil on our bare toes and lie that we were crying for naughtiness. They would give food their own children and rocks to us. I did not want to go where the ghosts took shapes nothing like our own. (Kingston, 1989:99)

Kingston's autobiographical book is full of references to the irrational, fictional, fantastical creatures and events that were brought from China by Chinese immigrants. She is '[r]estoring memories that travel with trans-pacific women' (Park, 2007:145). The ghosts and disgusting food are two important figures in this chapter. They refer to racism and have direct impact on the narrator's life in America. Ghosts play important roles in this section and in the whole book; her mother fought against a sitting ghost in the medical school, the ghosts of girl babies haunt the narrator, her mother tricked the ghosts that preyed on new born babies and she feared away an ape man that attacked people.

The narrator tries to get rid of the influence of her mother's irrational talk stories. She is not eager to hear them, she states 'I did not always listen

voluntarily, though she would begin telling the story, perhaps repeating it to a homesick villager, and I'd overhear before I had a chance to protect myself . . . I have wanted to say, "Stop it. Stop it, "but not once did I say, "Stop it"" (Kingston, 1989:91). It is difficult for the protagonist to make a clear distinction between her mother's telling real or imaginary stories. As a result of these stories, she feels a distance from her Chinese background. She wants to live a normal life in her American life but she is forced to live with the ghosts of China that do not fit in her desire to live an American normal life. As a first generation Chinese American, the narrator states:

[t]o make my waking life American normal, I turn on the lights before anything un toward makes an appearance. I push the deformed into my dreams, which are in Chinese, the language of impossible stories. Before we can leave our parents, they stuff our heads like the suitcases which they jam-pack with homemade underwear. (Kingston, 1989:87)

The suitcase that was packed as its home-made underwear represents immigrants' beliefs; they brought their Chinese lives, beliefs, traditions to America. It seems that she is under the influence her mother and other immigrants' talk stories about Chinese traditions while leading a new life in America. This statement, from the chapter "Shaman", emphasizes that the narrator grows up by experiencing the painful clashes between her Chinese heritage and her American life and this statement also represents her fear, confusion and anger.

Chinese American alternately sought acceptance by mainstream society not through incorporation into by detachment from it when they were regarded as aliens by mainstream culture. However, the essentialization of a pure and unmediated Chinese American identity was itself problematic for cultural heritage wasn't like the umbilical cord that are could easily cut to start a new life. (Sha, 2009:65)

She cannot create an identity that denies her cultural heritage, the best way for her to combine her Chinese culture heritage with her life experiences in America.

1.3. The Life of The Chinese Women in America

In this part, I focus on the chapters "Shaman", "At the Western Palace" and "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe". Kingston's personal experiences of the racial and patriarchal discourses are reflected out by the help of biographies of Brave Orchid, Moon Orchid, Ts'ai Yen and other Chinese American women. These women embody the collective spirit of the Chinese American women. These chapters take place in America and tell about the discrimination and the problems that Chinese American ethnicity group, especially Chinese women in America meet. These chapters prove that the Chinese females' situations in America are not different from the Chinese females' situations in China, Kingston sees that both Chinese and American traditions denigrate Chinese women 'whose voicelessness is induced not only by gender but also by culture and race' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:5). Chinese females are double silenced by patriarchal and racist discourses and they do not have a place in the patriarchal narration of Chinese American history, 'minority experiences have so often been distorted or altogether undocumented in mainstream "history"' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:11). Chinese American male writers or historians ignore females existence in the experience of racism in America. Kingston writes against them, but her intention is not to create an official history that documents Chinese Americans' experience of racism, her 'revisions of the past must not be confused with definitive history' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:12).

The chapter "Shaman" explains Brave Orchid's struggle for personal freedom in China and for living in a racial society which victimizes her. 'Brave

Orchid is a bearer of the twentieth century history of Chinese colonial modernity, trans-Pacific border-crossing during World War II. And immigrant subalternity in the post war US' (Park, 2007:159). Brave Orchid tells stories that reflect the political chaos in China during the Second World War, Brave Orchid's village was in chaos; her villagers needed her skills to ease their nerves when Japanese planes flew over their heads. Her villagers killed a crazy woman, who wore her festive clothing and began to wave her arms out in the open, with stones because they believed that she was a spy for Japanese. Brave Orchid escaped the Japanese military persecution and imperialism, she crossed the ocean by herself to immigrate to America to rejoin her husband. She represents the female Chinese immigrants that are exploited as "the other" by American racists and she suffers from the American immigration policy. Her story proves that Chinese women are the parts of the Chinese American national history and mainstream history. She creates a feminist respond to the gendered construction of Chinese American history and inscribes Chinese women into the America's history.

Brave Orchid's spoken life story consists contradictions within itself. Kingston contrasts her mother's achievements in life and in profession in China with her housewifery and her working class life in America. Although she gained individuality and became a modern woman in China, Brave Orchid loses all of her opportunities and her comfortable life in America, Brave Orchid 'is an involuntary crosser of class border' (Park, 2007:159). Since she immigrated to America, her status has changed in America and she has transformed from somebody to nobody; from doctor and a shaman to a wife and a slave in America. She turns an illiterate wife of a laundryman.

Such stories are therefore frequently concerned with changes of class and status, with identities as they make transition from 'nobody' to 'somebody' (or in their d'Urbervillesque reversals from 'somebody' to 'nobody'). It may well be that the narrative structure of the spoken life-story is perfectly adapted to capturing the

inherent ambiguity of class and status. Certainly life-stories much more complex than accounts of the self made up identity labels, for example 'working class', 'lesbian'. (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:131)

Brave Orchid puts her profession aside to spend all of her time and energy for shouldering the burden of her family. Like Fa Mu Lan, she is fulfilling her traditional roles of wife and mother and becomes a self denial person that worries for her people more than herself, she sends her earnings to her Chinese relatives. Although she is a little women in China, in America, she says 'your father couldn't have supported you without me. I'm the one with the big muscles' (Kingston, 1989:104). Kingston offers her to stop working, when she is eighty years old, Brave Orchid refuses it because she says

[t]his is terrible ghost country, where a human being works her life away ... even the ghosts work, no time for acrobatics. I have not stopped working since the day the ship landed. I was on my feet the moment the babies were out. In China I never even had to hang up my own clothes. I shouldn't have left, but your father couldn't have supported you without me. I'm the one with the big muscles. (Kingston, 1989:104)

Her experiences in America 'disrupts the notion of women in the West as liberated and the U.S. as a liberating country' (Park, 2007:160).

Brave Orchid seems to leave her warrior side by taking traditional roles but her war goes on in another form, she determines to survive as a subaltern female immigrant in America. Brave Orchid says 'I work so hard... the tomato vines prickle my hands... I'll get rheumatism washing potatoes, squatting over potatoes' (Kingston, 1989:103). She has to work very hard in her husband's laundry and then picks tomatoes in a tomato field. Majority of Chinese women immigrants are working class, they are running small business. 'Some worked as prostitutes in mining areas, but many were the

wives of farmers, grocers, and restaurant owners, laundrymen, cooks and labourers (Ling, 1993:459).

Brave Orchid is both a traditional woman and a woman warrior like Ts'ai Yen and Fa Mu Lan, she puts one of these features in danger for the other. Like Ts'ai Yen, she fights to exist in a barbarian land which sees her as "the other" and her life in barbarian land is very hard for her, she states '[y]ou have no idea how much I have fallen coming to America' (Kingston, 1989:77). Like Ts'ai Yen, she intends to keep her culture and language alive in America by teaching them to her children, Kingston states 'my mother funnelled China into our ears' (Kingston, 1989:76). The narrator feels very frustrated at her mother's support of Chinese values and her demand for her children to follow them with respect. As a woman warrior, her fight with injustices against Chinese women goes on in the land of barbarians, she fights with racism and struggles for survival.

Brave Orchid is voiceless in new world as she does not speak English despite her many years in America. She uses her children to communicate with American because the immigrants assume their American born children as half ghosts. 'You cannot entrust your voice in China, either; they want to capture her voice for their own use. They want to fix up her tongue to speak for them' (Kingston, 1989:169). The narrator feels embraced to translate her mother's irrational Chinese tradition of demanding reparation candy because American think that she is a beggar. Kingston foregrounds Brave Orchid's becoming a subaltern and a marginal woman in America.

The chapter "Shaman" is full of the ghost figures, there are two kinds of ghosts; the first ones are the ghosts that Brave Orchid and other immigrants mention in their irrational talk stories and bring from China with them and the second ones are the ghosts that the immigrants meet in America. For immigrants, in America, ghosts take another form than the ones in their talk

stories. The immigrants make false statements about non-Chinese because they do not know about them and they do not have contacts with them. Brave Orchid refers to all the non-Chinese around the Chinese as ghosts, she says America is 'full of machines and ghosts' (Kingston, 1989:96). Brave Orchid teaches her to think that all the non-Chinese as ghosts but she was born and lives in America. This affects the narrator's identity. 'The self is no longer an expression from within, but is extracted, moulded, and created by outside forces' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:7). The narrator learns about the second kind of ghosts that are different from the ones in the talk stories while growing up. She writes 'the ghosts took shapes nothing like our own' (Kingston, 1989:99). She seems to live among ghosts. According to Dasenbrock who looks the semantic world of The Woman Warrior, the intention of Kingston's use of "ghost" image is to make non Chinese much more aware of the existence of Chinese and be kind to them. Dasenbrock writes:

the writer has deliberately made her text more difficult, blocking automatic intelligibility by using ghost in a less broadly availed sense in a way that makes a "ghost" reader pause and think. This again is a Shklovskian defamiliarization, not so much of the word as of our self-conception. (1987:14)

Brave Orchid mentions about the fascinating feast of hungry ghosts, great eaters of China and their disgusting foods to the narrator. The chapter "Shaman" consists so much information about exotic Chinese food. There is a connection between Chinese food and the idea of racism because Chinese food is seen as exotic and different by the westerners. Brave Orchid makes meal for her family from skunk, turtle, and other types of meals which non-Chinese cannot stand seeing them because of their being disgusting. Despite her children refuse to eat them, she insists on serving them. Kingston recalls her being horrified by her mother's talk story about Chinese people's eating brain out of the head of alive monkey, 'the eaters spoon out the brain'

(Kingston, 1989:92) and the talk story of "Big eaters" who fight to kill ghosts by cooking and eating them and they are assumed as heroes in their society. The narrator is aware of her mother's decision to make her America born children big eaters because 'big eaters win' (Kingston, 1989:90) over the ghosts, she wants her children to be powerful to win over the racists who treat them as "the other." The narrator supposes that her mother wins over the ghosts because she can eat every kinds of food, the 'ability to swallow disagreeable food could be symbolical taken as Chinese American's capacity to cope with unpleasant environment and their persistence to endure hardships they had encountered as soon as they settled in the land of America' (Sha, 2009:62). Although her Chinese cultural heritage is completely different from her American way of life, Kingston cannot deny her cultural heritage, she can tie it with her American way of life. While her parents and the other Chinese immigrants take China as their home, Kingston takes America as her real home. 'Whenever my parents said "home", they suspended America. They suspended enjoyment, but I did not want to go to China' (Kingston, 1989:99), she cannot completely assimilate into American culture due to her Chinese heritage.

Kingston's mother tells about her life in China and America and narrates Chinese traditions in Chinese language. Kingston writes them down on the papers. She translates them and the difficulties that the Chinese immigrants face in America to English language to give voices to them. Kingston empowers Chinese women by creating individualized voices for them, she writes against the racial discourse that 'third world women as pre-modern and speechless' (Park, 2007:160), she extends it to her mother who is silent in China as a woman and in America as a Chinese immigrant, but her mother struggles to have courage and voice in her life. Chinese women:

as minority women, "outsiders twice over" excluded both from the mainstream and from the ethnic centres

of power. Some of these women are, moreover, thrice muted. On account of sexism, racism, and a "tonguelessness" that results from prohibitions or language barrier. (Cheung, Don't Tell, 1988:163)

Kingston fights against patriarchal and racist discourses with her written words whose sources are her mother's oral words but her battle is an imaginary fight with her words, it is not a physical fight like her mother's fight with the sitting ghost.

Brave Orchid tries to affect her daughter to behave in the conventional ways, at the same time; she encourages her to be powerful in gender and racial terms. According to Burstain:

In stories that explore strategies of separation, mothers play an ambivalent role for both cultural and development reasons. From a developmental point of view, the mother's power as a conduit of both ethnic and gender identity appears to limit the benefit to her daughter of separating from her. But from a cultural point of view, disconnection appears to offer a certain advantages. (qtd.in Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:132)

Sue and Sara Scott make a good explanation about their mother's affect in their writing about autobiographical inheritance through stories of gender and class. Their explanation is significant and shares similarities between Kingston's relation with her mother. They explain the effect of the mothers on their daughters that

her aspirations passed on in such a way that they became a part of her daughters' subjectivity? We believe this occurred primarily through the telling of stories about her life, and that these stories conveyed not just 'aspiration', i.e. *her* desire, but class awareness, specific social skills and a narrative of upwards movement in which we were 'always already' placed as actors. Our mother's life was told as a

precursor to our own (a story of origins), our trajectory a continuation of hers. In a not always welcome sense, our achievements were built upon the pre-history of her life. (qtd.in Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:132)

Kingston starts out where her mother has left. Her mother's story is the beginning of her own story. Her mother 'is undoubtedly super-woman, in whose image Maxine is most likely to follow' (Wang, 1985:27). To state her connection with her mother, she says that both of them have dreams and nightmares about China as they get older.

In addition to Brave Orchid, her maternal aunt Moon Orchid represents the living example of the roles of both a submissive housewife and a woman warrior. She tried to exist in a foreign world but she was unable to assimilate into American culture which made her insane. Her story shows how Chinese women are rendered invisible by the assimilated immigrant men who deny women's existence in the society and history. In the chapter "At the Western Palace", Moon Orchid has an effect on Kingston's identity. Kingston narrates Brave Orchid's younger sister, Moon Orchid's story in her memoir and through her life experiences, she highlights the clash of Chinese and American cultures and its different effects on the Chinese and the Chinese American. She recreates the silent Moon Orchid by giving voice to her.

Moon Orchid's story refers to the Chinese's dream of wealth and success in America, America can be called the western palace, but it remains only dream. The title of the chapter "At the Western Palace" is significant. It refers to Moon Orchid's husband's office because he achieves success and wealth as a doctor in America. Kingston compares him with Brave Orchid, 'Brave Orchid, who had been a surgeon, too... She could not practice openly in the United States because the training here was so different and because she could never learn English. He was smart enough to learn ghost ways'

(Kingston, 1989:149). Moon Orchid's husband assimilates in American culture while Brave Orchid is bounded with Chinese traditions.

Through her aunt, Moon Orchid's and her mother's relationships, the narrator becomes aware of her own place in the world. The narrator feels in her life that there is a big cultural gap between the Chinese and the Chinese American. It is reflected by Moon Orchid's stay with Brave Orchid's family and by her giving gifts to her American born nephews and nieces. Moon Orchid and her Americanized nieces and nephews had difficulty in comprehending each other as they had different languages and cultures. They found each other's behaviour strange. Moon Orchid did not understand America and the first generation Chinese Americans. Chinese immigrants are aware that the American born children do not know about Chinese values. Brave Orchid wants her children to behave according to traditional Chinese manners. For example; her children played with Moon Orchid's gifts in front of her but this was a wrong behaviour according to Chinese tradition. Brave Orchid thinks her Chinese American children are greedy to play with presents in front of the giver. Chinese American children's behaviours are seen as abnormal to the Chinese immigrants. While American born generation dream for adaptation to American way of life, Chinese immigrants dream for China as their home.

Moon Orchid's story reveals a different version of the history of Chinese women's immigration to America. Chinese women were not allowed to enter America during the exclusion time, Moon Orchid married in China before her husband left for the Gold Mountain, her separation from her husband reflects the dramatic historical reality of exclusion act in America. Moon Orchid lived a comfortable life in China with the money her husband sent for her. As a result of change in American immigration policy, Brave Orchid brought her sister Moon Orchid to America to help her to claim her rights as her husband's first wife many years after husband's immigration. 'Through Moon

Orchid's entering the U.S. after 30 years of separation from her husband, Kingston briefly alludes to changes in the U.S. policy in the post- World War II age that allowed family reunification' (Park,2007:152). She was so passive to reclaim it. Brave Orchid told her sister, '[c]laim your rights. Those are *your* children. He's got two sons. You have two sons. You take them away from her. You become their mother" . . . "The children will go to their true mother—you"' (Kingston, 1989:125). This quotation presents the cultural gap between the Chinese people's lives in China and in America. To have son is important in the Chinese society so Moon Orchid felt excited instead of feeling angry to her husband, she said, '[d]o you really think I can be a mother of sons?' (Kingston, 1989:125)

It was believed that it was Moon Orchid's right to live with her husband in America, "you just go to your husband's house and demand your rights as first wife" (Kingston, 1989:127). To support this idea and to encourage Moon Orchid, Brave Orchid told a talk story about an emperor who has four wives; each of them lived in a palace at one of the earth's four compass points. The empress of the west imprisoned the emperor in the west palace to have strength over the other three empresses. The kind empress of the east rescued the emperor, a connection between Moon Orchid and the empress of the east was created, Moon Orchid could save her husband from his westernized second wife. Brave Orchid encouraged her sister to 'break the strong spell she has cast on him that has lost him the East' (Kingston, 1989:143). She encouraged her to be a woman warrior who 'comes out of the dawn to invade her land and free the Emperor' (Kingston, 1989:143). This talk story of the emperor is a good example to see that talk stories are crucial to empower individuals in The Woman Warrior. And it also signifies that woman warriors fight for what they believe. This mythological story reminds one the myth of Fa Mu Lan, the woman warrior who fought for what she believed, she fought to save the patriarchy. But Moon Orchid failed to be

a woman warrior who claimed her right and saved her husband. But she is recreated as a woman warrior who fought against the barbarian, alien world and cultural clashes by Kingston.

Moon Orchid is a good example to see how Chinese women accept their subservient roles. She had all the traditional Chinese values of silence, obedience and submission, these are supposed to be preserved by Chinese women. 'Feminist can argue accordingly that the dominant construct of woman in... Society was produced originally to serve the interests of a patriarchy' (Ruthven, 1984:36). As a feminist, Kingston analyses how her aunt served to the demands of patriarchy, she could not challenge to her husband's authority. Moon Orchid was passive; she depended on other people to guide her, just as the moon passively depends on the sun for light. Her name is significant, it represents her personality. In literature, moon represents female, weakness, silence, change, irrationality. Moon is inferior than the sun which represents man, strength, voice, stability. Moon needs sun to reflect light, this shows her need of her husband in financial terms. Moon Orchid thought that her husband was good to her and her daughter because he always sent them money. She got accustomed to a passive and a comfortable life in China due to that money, 'in her mind she was expected to accept that sub-woman status as part of scheme of things in the traditional Chinese society' (Wang, 1985:26). Because of her traditional upbringing, Moon Orchid was too embarrassed to confront her husband. She said, '[o]h, no, I can't do that. I can't do that at all. That's terrible' (Kingston, 1989:126). She was afraid of him. The narrator Kingston avoids to be like her aunt, through her aunt she becomes aware of the distance between herself and the Chinese tradition.

Language reflects the cultural gap between Chinese and Chinese American and it is also an important factor for the personal identity. The cultural gap between Brave Orchid and her children; and Moon Orchid and her husband

increase because of their different languages. There is no meaningful communication between them and no chance of reunion between Moon Orchid and her husband. Moon Orchid's dramatic confrontation with her husband, emphasizes the importance of language for personal identity and taking a place in American society. He adopts himself to the way of American life, he 'talked like a child born here' (Kingston, 1989:153). Moon Orchid became aware of the power of language, she was silent in front of him when she meets him. When he asks her the reason of her coming to see him, she only 'open[ed] and shut[ed] her mouth without any words coming out' (Kingston, 1989:152). Her failure to learn English language affected her husband's decision that she could not fit into his American life. She was not able to speak with him so she could not speak with the people around him. 'You can't talk to them. You can barely talk to me' (Kingston, 1989:153). Her husband told her that she could not adopt herself to his American life style. This language obstacle between them could not be overcome. In 'The Woman Warrior, Chinese immigrant women confront a strange environment, hard work, cultural difference, and even desertion by long-separated husbands (Ling, 1993:464).

Kingston reveals through Moon Orchid's Americanized husband, that, in their seeking to reconstruct Chinese America as a politically informed community or a cultural nationalists such as Chin are no different from the assimilationist husband in that they are complicit to ignore trans-Pacific women's social existence in the U.S. and in Chinese America. (Park, 2007:152)

Although Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid call non Chinese as ghosts, they became the ghosts in America because of their inability to speak English in America. Moon Orchid saw her husband as one of the ghosts who denied his Chinese heritage. He looked her directly in the same way as the American ghosts looked her but he defined her as a ghost and rejected her. She was 'stared and scared into silence by her husband' (Cheung, Don't Tell,

1988:164). Brave Orchid does not think English as a language. It symbolizes the barbarous American culture, but her children want to be American normal so they resist speaking Chinese language despite their mother.

The narrator does not witness Moon Orchid's confrontation with her husband, she hears the that story from her brother and fills the gaps with details through her imagination. Her telling this story through her imagination puts the reality of this story in danger. Kingston looks Moon Orchid from her feministic point of view, she is another victim of patriarchal Chinese tradition and American racism like Brave Orchid. Her husband left her many years ago, she lived like a widow in China and this is similar to No name woman's situation. She remained inactive and silent and never questioned the patriarchy. 'Feminists perceive women as in the position of a social class, exploited by patriarchy at all levels (economical, political, and ideological)' (Selden, 1989:35). Her silence was so irritating. Even though No name woman's silence was a revolt to oppression of the patriarchy, her silence meant that she was accepting the oppression of the patriarchy. Kingston reveals out her being exploited by the Chinese patriarchy through writing her story.

Moon Orchid is a victim of the racism in America, she felt herself being isolated, alienated and marginalized in a foreign country. She failed to adopt herself to her new life, She felt the damaging effects of American racism. She was not a strong woman to endure the hardness of life so she failed in America. As a result of her dramatic confrontation with her husband and her failure, she fell in a sense of humiliation which drove her insanity. She became paranoid about her daughter's neighbours who were the people from other nations, she called them as ghosts. Moon Orchid was afraid to go outside because she feared that imaginary ghosts were following her. At the end of "At the Western Palace", it is seen that language plays such a significant role during Moon Orchid's paranoid schizophrenia. Moon Orchid

told her sister that she heard Mexican ghosts talking in English about her but she did not understand English, '[t]his time, miraculously, I understood. I decoded their speech. I penetrated the words and understood what was happening inside' (Kingston, 1989:156). She comment the Mexicans' English according to her feelings of loneliness and alienation in the foreign country. It is similar to Kingston's interpretation of her mother's talk stories' meanings according to her feelings because Brave Orchid does not explain their meanings to her and all of these have impact on Kingston's life.

Moon Orchid represents the Chinese immigrant women who failed to adopt themselves to American way of life, as a result of this failure, they were misunderstood by the society and became mad. In feminist novels, the image of the mad women in room invent an imaginary world and stories to escape from the female oppression. The figure of mad woman that is confined in a room is used in other feminist writings such as Bertha Mason in Jane Eyre and Jane in The Yellow Wallpaper, Antoinette in Wide Sargasso Sea. When she stayed in insane asylum, Moon Orchid found relief through her insanity. Since she immigrated from China to America, for the first time, she had felt a sense of being a part of a group in asylum, she explained Brave Orchid that she and the other woman patients 'understand one another here. We speak the same language, the very same. They understand me, and I understand them' (Kingston, 1989:160). She regained a sense of identity through language. 'Cultural shock and emotional hurt together made the older sister collapse and she eventually died in an insane asylum in California' (Ling, 1993:464). Kingston shows us a possibility that if her aunt No name woman accepts the submissive position instead of expressing herself, her life might be like Moon Orchid's life, if so, she can't be a woman warrior, she can be symbol of failure like Moon Orchid who 'slipped entirely away, not waking up one morning' (Kingston, 1989:160) without proper identity and status. 'In their trans-Pacific dislocation in the post-World War II

age, crazy women in Chinatown suggest another symptomatic continuity to the no name aunt's suicide in the 1920s' (Park, 2007:154). Women

were usually send to an isolated place where their fear of the public gradually amounts to agoraphobia. . . If we go a little further along the theme of female insanity and enclosure, we could find in female writings the association of "room" and self is often reified by imaginary tension between the spatial enclosure and escape. (Sha, 2009:50)

The image of room in the chapter "Shaman" which gives females an area of freedom and intellectual creativity turns a barrier and prison for females, the patriarchal and racial societies push them in it.

Kingston fears to be like Moon Orchid who is an ideal type of female for patriarchy. Her aunt's silence has an effect on Kingston's desire to have a voice and existence as a woman against the racism and the patriarchy. If she does not gain an identity, she can be rendered as no name woman or mad woman like her aunts and other immigrant women in Chinatown. This reminds one in Jane Eyre, Bertha is Jane Eyre's double, who reflects Jane's anger to patriarchy. In the similar way the mad female figure in her book represents Kingston's fear, anger, confusion and hatred of both patriarchy and racism in Chinese and American cultures.

Moon Orchid is a negative figure and she is also an inspiring figure for Kingston. Her struggle to assimilate in America makes her a woman warrior and supplies a power to Kingston. Through her story, Kingston warns other females not to be silent like her. Kingston writes 'Brave Orchid's daughters decided fiercely that they would never let men be unfaithful to them. All her children made up their minds to major in science or mathematics' (Kingston, 1989:160). Kingston learns from Moon Orchid's life not to let a man cheat on her. Kingston and her sisters promise to be strong against patriarchy and reject the subaltern identity of woman as slave represented by their aunt.

After this decision, Kingston moves to be a speaking and existing individual female. She escapes from limitations through writing in an imaginary way. Speaking is one of the most important themes in her quest for a Chinese American female identity. Her search for her voice which can help her to achieve sexual equality dominates the final chapter.

The chapter "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" consists the most autobiographical notes of the five chapters in The Woman Warrior. The phases of her life are narrated in the first person narrator in accordance with the traditional autobiographical narratives. In some of the previous parts, we hear the third person narrators' voice that breaks the traditional rule of autobiographical writing. The first person narrator concentrates on Kingston's life as a baby, as a quiet and an alienated child and as a rebellious teenager who accuses her mother for her silence and as an adult who decides 'to leave home in order to see the world logically' (Kingston, 1989:204) and then the narrative voice moves to her present life which embraces her past and uses it to find strength as a storyteller and a writer. In this chapter, Kingston encounters with the gender issues; the oppression of Chinese women in patriarchal and racist cultures while slowly discovering her own voice. She wants to discover the lies and the truths about Chinese women told by her mother. Kingston deals with the themes of silence, speech, individuality and society. "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" is about the process of her articulating herself. Kingston comes over her confusion, frustration, anger and silence in this chapter. Kingston writes about her struggle to find an identity and she discusses the effects of the generational and cultural conflicts on her as a Chinese American girl.

Kingston's experiences in both American and Chinese school emphasize the power of the voice to create a personal identity. Language goes on playing an important role for identity and cultural gap in these schools for her. She discovers respectable females in American society to feel a part of

that society but she loses her voice. 'We American Chinese girls had to wisher to make ourselves American feminine. Apparently we whispered even more softly than the Americans' (Kingston, 1989:172). She knows the results of being voiceless as a woman. She fears to be silent like Moon Orchid.

When I went to kindergarten and had to speak English for the first time. I became silent. Dumbness-a shame-still cracks my voice in two, even when I want to say "hello" casually, or ask an easy question in front of the check-out counter, or ask directions of a bus driver. I stand frozen. (Kingston, 1989:165)

For the narrator, it is very difficult to speak in public places in English as it symbolizes the national identity. She has to overcome it to form her female self. Being a part of ethnic group makes her unable to speak.

American racism forces Chinese immigrants to be silent. The Chinese immigrants keep a code of silence, they do not mention their children about their cultural origins and their families' history so their children carry the burden of their silence. The Chinese immigrants impose silence on their America born children. The children are thought to be silent about their lives to anyone outside their community by their families who came to the America when the Chinese immigration was illegal. When the narrator's teacher tells 'look at your family's old addresses and think about how you have moved', she remains silent because '[t]here were secrets never to be said in front of the ghosts, immigration secrets whose telling could get us sent back to China' (Kingston, 1989:183). She does not certainly know about her family's Chinese history, she knows it only from her mother's talk stories.

The immigrants are also silent about the subjects such as sex, desire and birth as patriarchal society believe that they are shameful subjects. Kingston writes against this collective belief that '[i]f we had to depend on being told, we'd have no religion, no babies, no menstruation (sex, of course, unspeakable), no death' (Kingston, 1989:185). They do not explain customs

and rituals to their children. Patriarchal Chinese society demand the Chinese girls to behave in traditional ways. The Chinese girls do not go to the auditorium at American school because their parents do not sign any paper due to the fear of deportation.

I could not understand "I." The Chinese "I" has seven strokes, intricacies. How could the American "I," assuredly wearing a hat like the Chinese, have only three strokes, the side so straight? Was it out of politeness that his writer left off strokes the way a Chinese has to write her own name small and crooked? No, it was not politeness; "I" is a capital and "you" is a lower case...the other troublesome word was "here,"...the teacher, who had already told me every day how to read "I" and "here," put me in a low corner under the stairs again, where the noisy boys usually sat. (Kingston, 1989:166-7)

While attending American school, she is confused by the ideographs "I" and "here" in English language, they are different from the Chinese ideographs. "Here" represents America, "I" represents individuality and American, "you" represents Chinese. This is a good statement to see the racial discrimination that the Chinese experience in American. It is difficult for her to show her existence in America because of her gender and race. She tries to come over the problem of identity and homeland.

All the Chinese immigrants are silent in America but being voiceless is a sign of being a woman according to Kingston. Chinese girls are doubly silenced by the racism and the patriarchy in America. After American school which is a sign of assimilation into American culture, the narrator goes to Chinese school. She sees that her Chinese friends become loud because they are away from the racism. Although Chinese children find voice in Chinese school, the Chinese girls are still afraid of speaking, for example; the narrator's sister opens her mouth but a proper voice does not come out. As a child, the narrator hates this situation. As an adult female, she becomes

aware of the difference between American and Chinese children. Silence is the most dominant feature of being a Chinese girl, 'I knew the silence had to do with being a Chinese girl' (Kingston, 1989:166). In her writing, Kingston desires to break the silence of Chinese girls that cannot define themselves as a member of patriarchal Chinese American society and the racist American society.

In the chapter "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe", while describing her shyness in American school, Kingston narrates the story of another silent Chinese girl in her class. Kingston's desire to release her frustration of being a traditional housewife and having no personality as a female in the future comes out through her torturing a silent Chinese girl. She hates this silent girl because she is antisocial and she is so shy to speak up even in Chinese school. She begins to scream at her, abuses her physically by squeezing her face, pinching her cheeks, and pulling her hair. She warns her cruelly how she will be in the future but the girl only stands there and sobs in a silent way. She wants to awake the Chinese girl and all the other Chinese girls to gain voice.

Come on! Talk! Talk! Talk!...She did not say a word... why won't you talk... I'm trying to help you out, do you? Do you want to be like this, dumb, you whole life? What are you going to do for a living? Yeah, you are going to have to work because you can't be a housewife. Somebody has to marry you before you can be a housewife. And you are a plant do you know that? That's all you are if you don't talk. If you don't talk, you can't have a personality. (Kingston, 1989:180)

The silent girl's physical appearance, emotions and social activities are similar to the narrator's. She represents the narrator's Chinese feminine side. 'This numbing frustration, however, resulting from conformity to the stereotyped oriental female image, persisted until it exploded in an encounter with another voiceless Chinese girl who serves as the surrogate

self for Maxine' (Wang, 1985:29). She imagines her as a reflection of her own weakness and silence. This identification with this girl increases her hatred. And her incapability of assimilating into American society makes Kingston to fear that she cannot form an identity that consists both her Chinese heritage and her American life. And her torture of this silent Chinese girl has a symbolical meaning for Kingston, she revolts to her own silence and meekness. Kingston is

cruel and unusual, this scene is also finally more than self punishment; it's the ornament of Maxine's self-birth. Maxine survives to write it down, facing off against the racist and sexist hatred-both external and internal-of her physical existence that demands resolute silence in the face of terrible abuse. (Outka, 2007:479)

When the narrator is reborn, she tries to form a new identity that has a voice and a visibility in the patriarchal Chinese American society and in the racist American society.

Kingston falls an obsession about madness, she plays with the notion of her own madness. 'I thought talking and not talking made the difference between sanity and insanity' (Kingston, 1989:186). This sentence is important to understand the importance of the voice and speaking for female. She describes the madness of some people in her community such as Crazy Mary, Pee-A-Nah and the other mentally retarded women. Her neighbourhood is full of 'houses with crazy girls' (Kingston, 1989:187). For example, the crazy woman lost her mind after her parents left her in China, when they immigrated to America. She is a victim of political situations in her society. The narrator sees herself as a mad girl in her house. She hears and answers some imaginary people's voices in her mind. The narrator sees her imagination, her clumsiness and her mysterious illness as a sign of her insanity.

I thought every house had to have its crazy woman or crazy girl, every village its idiot. Who would be at our house? Probably me. My sister did not start talking among nonfamily until a year after I started, but she was neat while I was messy, my hair was tangled and dusty. My dirty hands broke things. Also I had had the mysterious illness. And there were adventurous people inside my head to whom I talked. (Kingston, 1989:189)

She thinks that her parents and the other Chinese immigrants may make her crazy but they are crazy for keeping the silence. Kingston blames the racist American and the secrecy of the Chinese for her silence and for creating mad women in her society. Kingston's struggle to overcome with her imposed silence represents many of Chinese American children's struggle. While Chinese immigrants distance themselves from the American culture, their America born children try to be parts of it. For instance; Chinese American girls tape their eyelids to appear less Asian.

Although her imagination, her clumsiness and her mysterious illness frighten her, they keep her away from being a slave or a wife. She believes that if she is crazy, her parents cannot find a man for her so being a crazy girl can save her from the patriarchy's control. She refuses to fit into the traditional role of the obedient girl. She breaks dishes, spills the soup, and pretends to limp when her parents try to find a suitor for her. Her parents' plan of matching her up a mentally retarded boy increases her anger. Although she is glad that her madness makes her an unsuitable girl to marry, the narrator struggles to have a normal life. She wishes to get rid of her secrets, she creates an imaginary list of over two hundred forbidden things she has in her mind to tell her mother. Her list of complaints in her mind is similar to the words of vengeance that were carved on Fa Mu Lan's back.

The narrator describes her difficulty in communicating with others. Her voice is broken and cracked with shame like many other Chinese women.

When she intends to tell her list to her mother, she whispers like her aunt Moon Orchid. At the end, she manages to let her voice free against her mother with accusations. When she tells her mother about her list in her mind, she has a verbal match with her mother who sees her America born children as corrupted. Her words that are uttered to her mother are her swords to fights for her individual desires and choices as a woman. 'Kingston wages verbal battle with the problem of being Chinese American' (Ordonez, 1982:20).

The narrator accuses her mother that she does not care for her feelings to have a new identity as a Chinese American female. She accuses her mother of lying when she talks stories and of keeping her from talking. She cries her mother that '[y]ou can't stop me from talking. You tried to cut off my tongue but it didn't work' (Kingston, 1989:202). There is no memory or physical evidence for her mother's cutting her tongue, it is a fictional activity that the narrator imagines, she supposes that her mother cut her tongue to make her silent when she was born.

To explore the figure of tongue-cutting in the text as it works a crucial intersection between the body and language is to take a step further from the debates over representation and to think about how Kingston's text interconnects social reality and material conditions of life. (Lim, 2006:50)

But it has a different meaning; Brave Orchid cut her tongue to prevent her from becoming tongue-tied so she can speak any language fluently and pronounce anything. In Lim's essay, there is a reference to a chronicle which reports about the real event of Korean parent's cutting their children's tongue to make them have a proficiency in English. In an irrational way, they create a connection between body and language. Immigrants feel a need to have a fluency in the language of dominate culture all around the world. Brave Orchid wants her daughter to speak English fluently so she can have a

voice in America. This is a paradoxical behaviour, while they try to control women's speaking, in the post colonial context, this act gains a new meaning; they revolt to their being silenced by the racism. However they speak English fluently, the Chinese people's yellow skin proves that they are "the other" in America.

The narrator believes that her tongue cutting is not so much perfect because she has a problem of overcoming her shyness and talking in English. 'This act leaves on the narrator is a heightened consciousness of the self as represented by linguistic meditation rather than actual sign of her language ability or disability' (Lim, 2006:57). Her ability to speak is not connected with her physical ability, it has connection with her race. Her voice is broken with shame when she is speaking in her second language, she believes that she feels more comfortable in Chinese school, as she does not have to speak in English, '[r]acial and cultural difference influence the assessment of language performance in The Woman Warrior illustrating the shifting ways we assess ability and disability' (Lim, 2006:51).

When she finds her voice, Kingston questions the Chinese immigrants' silence and speaking in an indirect way. The silent Chinese girl represents the Chinese immigrants' paradoxical behaviour. They are very loud and shout at home yet they are silent among Americans. And when they are outspoken in public places, they think that they cannot hear Americans because their language is softer than Chinese.

You can see the disgust on American faces looking at women. It isn't just the loudness. It is the way Chinese sounds, chingchong ugly, to American ears, not beautiful like Japanese sayonara words with the consonants and vowels as regular as Italian. We make guttural peasant noise and have Ton Duc Thang names you can't remember. And the Chinese can't hear Americans at all; the language is too soft and western

music unbearable. I've watched a Chinese audience laugh, visit, talk-story, and holler during a piano recital, as if the musician could not hear them. (Kingston, 1989:171-72)

Brave Orchid is a loud woman in public places, this makes Kingston ashamed of her; Kingston tries to be different from her mother so she talks as soft as possible to make herself seen as an American woman. She believes that her Chinese life prevents her from becoming an Americanized female. Sellers writes about Kristiva's writing 'takes the individual back to the point of separation between self and m/other - the semiotic and the symbolic – providing an opportunity to re-experience these divisions and hence our status as subjects in relation to the world' (Sellers, 1991:101). She explains that she has a different view of Chinese life from the Chinese immigrants, she creates a distance with her Chinese community. She rejects her Chinese part of her identity, she tries to fit into the American society, but it is difficult for her due to her race. She decides to leave Chinese school and run for a student office at her American school and join clubs. she sees her education in American school as a way to come over sexism in her society. She wants to discover the world out of her home and her Chinese neighbourhood so she decides to leave her home to study science like her mother. And she does not see herself as a bilingual person because she can only understand her neighbourhoods' dialect in Chinese. She writes 'I have stopped checking 'bilingual' on job applications' (Kingston, 1989:205).

After she tells her list to her mother, Kingston starts a search for her true identity. Instead of rejecting her Chinese culture completely, it will be much more suitable for her to find a balance between two different cultures. While discovering herself as an individual woman, she goes through the process of change and development, 'I continue to sort out what is just my childhood, just my imagination, just my family, just the village, just movies, just living' (Kingston,1989:205). She confused with the Chinese tradition and with her

mother's talk stories that are full of fantasies, imaginative and irrational things. She does not believe her Chinese relatives' explanations about their hard situations so she wants to travel China to search the truth about them. She knows that her relatives 'don't sell girls or kill each other for no reason' (Kingston, 1989:205), they are not barbarians.

Generic distinction such as those of Hayden White between history (discourse of real) and narrative fiction (discourse of desire) are untenable when we reflect upon woman: too often it is neither real nor desirable. A ponderous realization for a woman writer, especially an ethnic woman writer who, again too often, has been caught up in just such as generic double bind. What should she do? (Ordonez, 1982:20)

The conclusion comes by analysing memoir's last chapter's talk story and its connection to the concepts of silence, translation and speech. And it is the end of Kingston's journey of finding her voice and her female identity. Kingston's decision to create a balance between two cultures makes her introduce The Woman Warrior's final talk story about Chinese female poetess Ts'ai Yen. Kingston tells the story of Ts'ai Yen, woman warrior who represents the possibilities of two cultures' coming together. She achieves her individuality by writing through identification with the poetess Ts'ai Yen.

In her novel, Kingston is a woman warrior who fights for a sense of worth, in the last chapter, when she tells her inner feelings to her mother, she becomes aware of her own power and her value as an individual. Her power is not so much different from Fa Mu Lan and Ts'ai Yen's powers '[There is] no listener but myself' (Kingston, 1989:204). She feels a sense of validity and discovers her ability to create good stories so she does not need anyone to appreciate her.

This chapter is significant in terms of her using words and making reconciliations. At the end of the memoir, she reconciles her mother's story

with her own story. While the beginning part of the story is told by her mother, the ending belongs to Kingston. 'Here is a story my mother told me, not when I was young, but recently, when I told her I also talk story. The beginning is hers, the ending, mine' (Kingston, 1989:206). These words reveal that Kingston accepts that Brave Orchid's talk stories have significant places in her life. Kingston is proud to prove that she can create stories like her mother. She has an ability and love for creating stories. Her mother told a story about her grandmother who loved the theatre so much in China and Kingston imagines that Ts'ai Yen was the opera that she went to watch. And she creates a connection between her mother's story and her own story of Ts'ai Yen as a writer. 'Her mother's "talk-story"--that ultimately allows the narrator to create herself by telling her own story' (Walker, 1990:68).

Ts'ai Yen is a female figure in a Chinese folk story who is captured by barbarians as a young woman during a village raid in A.D. 195 and the chieftain makes her his wife, she has to fight and have two children among these barbarians in the desert for twelve years. This story represents the possibilities of two cultures coming together; '[i]t translated well' (Kingston, 1989:209). Kingston identifies herself as a writer with the poetess Ts'ai Yen, she can express herself and find her own voice and identity like her. Ts'ai Yen is the last female figure that has a positive effect on her identity. It is the retelling of Kingston's quest to find her own identity. Like her, Kingston wishes to gain voice in an unfamiliar world. Shu agrees that 'Kingston redefines cultural appropriation as a mode of articulating one's own experience through the language and thought of another culture' (2001:217). Both Ts'ai Yen and Kingston as the women warriors build a bridge between the cultural gap of the barbarian cultures and their own cultures by the power of their swords "words." Ts'ai Yen recognized the barbarian culture and reconcile it with her own culture, this offers Kingston to have a possibility of living harmoniously in both Chinese and American cultures.

Like Ts'ai Yen's living among barbarians, Kingston is among the barbarians, but barbarians in her life are not only the non-Chinese but her Chinese community are also barbarians who do not understand her. She feels a gap between her and the barbarian society. Kingston suffers from loneliness and misunderstood in her surroundings like Ts'ai Yen. The protagonist is doubly misunderstood first as a woman by her own culture, and then as a Chinese female by the racist American culture.

Both are translators, when Ts'ai Yen returns to her family and she translates her life among barbarians, barbarians' songs and her return to her own land to her native people. Her story is told in the popular Chinese hymn "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe." In the chapter "A Song for Barbarian Reed Pipe", in the same way, Kingston translates the unknown American culture to her Chinese readers and translates the unknown Chinese culture to her non-Chinese readers.

Not only there is a similarity between Ts'ai Yen and Kingston but there is also a similarity between Ts'ai Yen and other Chinese immigrants. They were forced to leave their homelands. Ts'ai Yen described her captors as barbarians, in the similar way, Brave Orchid and the other immigrants call all the non-Chinese as ghosts or barbarians. And her tent was a room of one's own, like Brave Orchid's room at the midwifery school. Ts'ai Yen's tent gave her a special area for intellectual freedom, this gives inspiration to Kingston as a feminist to create her area to produce her art. This reminds one Emily Dickinson and Virginia Woolf who focus on the importance of a room for giving freedom to females to create their arts. Whenever her husband left the tent, Ts'ai Yen song about China and her Chinese family to her children in order to remember her cultural past and teach it to her children. This is similar to Brave Orchid's telling about China and the Chinese traditions to her America born children to keep them alive. The barbarians heard a woman's singing out of her tent, her song was so

high and clear, it matched the barbarians' flutes. 'Her words seemed to be Chinese, but the barbarians understood their sadness and anger' (Kingston, 1989:209). This reminds William Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper", even though the poet persona doesn't understand what the solitary girl is singing, his heart is full of its effect. 'The music in my heart I bore, long after it was heard no more' (Wordsworth 31-32).

Kingston relates her own search for a personal voice with Ts'ai Yen's song. Ts'ai Yen's singing represents Kingston's act of writing. Like her expressing herself through song, Kingston uses writing as an important way of expression. In other words, Kingston sings her own song in written words. Like Ts'ai Yen's song, Kingston's book is her song about China and her Chinese immigrant family and the Chinese's struggle of living in an unfamiliar land. She succeeds to find her voice and her inner strength when she explodes to the quiet girl and her mother, but there remain some words in her. After using speech as a way of expression, from an adult feminist writer's point of view, she applies to writing to expose her past and her community, her culture, her family and to articulate the silent Chinese females, talk stories and beliefs of Chinese. There are woman warriors in her novel and she becomes a woman warrior who avenges the wrongs done to females within the Chinese immigrant community and within the racial American society with her sword; pen. In The Woman Warrior, Kingston documents her fight through writing her autobiography and she comes on the stage after the black curtains, this represents that in the end, she tells her own stories in written words to hold up the imposed silence.

To sum up, in The Woman Warrior a Chinese American woman searches for her ethnic and personal identity. Kingston is an American born Chinese girl who finds herself caught between two worlds, she does not completely belong to anywhere, she is in between two cultures. She tries to find her identity as a woman in racial and gender terms. She identifies herself with

some other female characters to find her real identity. She tries to make a sense of her own life through the relevance of her mother's stories to her life as a first generation of Chinese immigrants. Her mother's oral stories that are based on a Chinese context are confusing for her but she is growing up in America and she has an American normal life. Kingston asks a question directly to all of the Chinese Americans,

Chinese-Americans, when you try to understand what things in you are Chinese, how do you separate what is peculiar to childhood, to poverty, insanities, one family, your mother who marked your growing with stories, from what is Chinese? What is Chinese tradition and what are the movies? (Kingston, 1989:5-6)

This question proves her struggle to reconcile the restrictive and self denying Chinese traditions with her individualist American normal life. Kingston intends to reconcile cultural paradoxes by writing The Woman Warrior, 'the narrator ultimately fractures Chinese and white American orthodoxies to make room for renewed gender and ethnic identities and for sexual, racial and international politics grounded in reciprocity rather than in domination'(Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:78). In her novel, Kingston does not criticize the patriarchal and racial discourses in a direct way, she retells the Chinese talk stories to criticize them indirectly. She reconciles fantasy with reality to have an identity as a Chinese American in America and to give voice and existence to the Chinese women. Kingston writes against Chinese American nationalists, writers and historian who excludes women from literary, cultural and historical significance. At the end, she does not need a bird to guide her to blend her fragmented Chinese American female self. She forms a new identity which reconciles two cultures and languages. She makes good synthesis of two cultures and languages after experiencing cultural displacement. She recreates herself and the other Chinese and Chinese American women.

CHAPTER 2

FANTASIA, AN ALGERIAN CAVALCADE

2.1. Introduction of the Themes in Fantasia

Assia Djébar is a francophone writer, as a post colonial figure, French colonization has effect on her identity. She has a fragmented self which is in between Algerian and French languages and cultures. To form her Algerian female self, she writes against the patriarchal discourse that enforces females' subjugation and ignores females' agency of nationalism. Taking an active role in every part of social, political and intellectual lives belongs to males and females are the veiled subjects to suppress their voices and existence in this patriarchal society. Her autobiographical novel, Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade is a personal quest, a movement from Algerian female's victimization to heroism, from their silence to voice. In Fantasia, a little Arab girl's journey is the starting point of her revolt to Muslim patriarchy and history which make women subversive and refuse their existence in the social life and national history. Djébar is different from her Algerian sisters because she has knowledge to speak and write. Al-Nowaihi in his essay states that Djébar

sees writing, and writing specifically and unabashedly about the self, as a source of power, an extremely significant processes that allows them to examine, interrogate and attempt to bring out change. It is both a private activity crucial for analyzing, understanding and maybe even reinventing the self, and a public activity that enables them to interact with and re-create the world around them. (2001:478)

In Fantasia, her speaking and writing in French has two functions, firstly, it gives Djébar a personal movement and secondly, it helps her to juxtapose the written accounts and eye witnesses of French colonizers with the voices of Algerian females to bring out females' contributions to their nations and to recreate Algerian female's self. Djébar uses history, culture and language to respond to the representation of Algerian female in the dominant discourses.

Djébar studies the erasure of French sexual and physical violence from historiography. In Fantasia, history is presented in a fractured structure, it is not a linear narrative. She tries to rewrite the history that was partly erased by the colonizers' historiography by using the fictional mode. The history is formed through the written and oral historical or fictional sources. Although history means about the real events in the past, it tells about fictional events in Fantasia. She gives place to fiction in the history that she recreates. She blurs the line between the fact and fiction. She challenges the traditional rules of autobiographical genre by blending her autobiography with fictional history. Fantasia is not only about Djébar's life but also a collective autobiography of the Algerian especially Algerian females.

Djébar is aware of the importance of the language to recreate Algerian female's self. As described by Helen Cixous, *écriture féminine*; female writing and writing in French help Djébar to hear the cries of women who rebel silently to patriarchy and colonialism and they also connect her to her Algerian heritage. She believes that writing brings out the positive representation of the Algerian females' voice and existence from the oral words of Algerian females and from the gaps that the colonial French written documents and the national history left blank, 'an 'other' (woman's) meaning can only exist in the gaps and blanks of our present language system' (Sellers, 1991:xv). Historical and cultural genealogy are created by the help of intertextuality in her book. Djébar succeeds to reverse the Algerian patriarchy and colonialism's enforcing discourses into the ways of

reformulating female's voice, existence and positive sexuality. She deals with the traditional lives of the veiled females in the harem from her feminist point of view. Djébar lets the veiled women to breathe and expose to the world out of their houses by her writing about them in French. She tries to explain that Algerian females' movements for the national liberation is not extended to their liberation in the social life.

the most frequently cited example of the disparity between the goals of national liberation and the outcome for women is the Algerian war of independence against the French... the fact that women played a crucial role in the revolt did not prevent them from being discouraged, if not barred, from assuming prominence in the public sphere following victory. (Moghadam, 1994:2)

2.2. Palimpsest Relation between the French Colonial Archives and Djébar's Writing

This part of my thesis is circumscribed by the post colonial framework. The written accounts of the French colonialism, the influence of French colonization on the Algerian females and the importance of the revision of the colonial history in recreation of the Algerian female's identity through her gendered perspective are at the centre of this part.

As a post colonial female writer, Assia Djébar places her work within the context of Algerian history and writes about French colonialism. Djébar deals with the physical and sexual violence of the colonialism and the erasure of that violence from the historiography and the erasure of Algerian women from the Algerian national history. As a modern day educated Algerian woman, she travels back to her nation's colonial past. She uses French language and French historical accounts to bring out the history of her own people, especially the women whose agency of Algerian national history is ignored. She foregrounds a traumatic national history and the treatment of Algerian

women's agency and their desires under the violent controls of both Algerian patriarchy and French colonization. When Algeria was declared a French territory in 1848, French colonizers erased territorial boundaries and divided Algeria in three French parts. Like Algeria, Djébar's female self is divided in two parts by her French education and her heritage. To form her fragmented identity, she places her autobiographical notes in her nation's colonial history by breaking the traditional rules of autobiography.

Before discussing the Algerian's experience of the French colonization, it is useful to give a short definition of the term colonialism. It means more powerful and dominant countries control the weak countries and exploit their resources. Generally, it functions through westerners' use of brutal force to abuse the native people in the orient. It seems that the colonization of Algeria by French meets this definition. French colonized Algeria in order to make a profit and to be known as a superior nation. French colonization of Algeria began in 1830, it created some economical, political and cultural problems in Algeria that has even affected the present day Algeria. The French modernized Algeria's agricultural and commercial economy and enjoyed some privileges but native Algerians have had great sufferings from these colonization since the French landed on Algeria.

For this conquest is no longer seen as the discovery of a strange new world, not even as a new crusade by a west aspiring to relieve its pasts as if it were an opera. The invasion has become an enterprise of rapine: after the army come the merchants and soon their employees are hard at work; their machinery for liquidation and execution is already in place. (Djébar, 1993:45)

In Fantasia, Djébar's writing reflects a long history of the Algerian's resistance to the French occupation which began in 1830 and have lasted 132 years, the Algerian's struggled for the national independence between 1954-62. Algerian history is seen as a continuous resistance to colonization

and Algerian females are the parts of this resistance. But their agency to national history is ignored by the patriarchal nationalists. The tragedies of Algerian females in the national history are Djébar's subjects.

Fantasia is a historical revision in which females are recreated as the active parts of Algerian national history. As a post colonial feminist writer, Djébar sets up dichotomies in Fantasia to criticize them. Both feminist and post colonial theories subvert the images of the existing hierarchies. She studies binary opposition between the colonizer and the colonized; and male and female. Algerian females are doubly colonized by French colonial power and Muslim patriarchal tradition. Colonial power and patriarchal tradition function through creating a distance from *the other* in racial and gender terms. Language has become the dominant tool of the colonial and patriarchal system to control the *other*. Both of these dominant powers produce *the other* through their languages which define *the other* as emotional, decadent, passive beings, while they assume themselves as progressive, rational and active beings. They attribute all the negative adjectives to the Orientals in the colonial term and to females in the gender term in order to place them above *the other* and to justify their colonization of *the other*. They feel it is their duty to rule *the other* to make them more civilized because they think Islam is controlling all the aspects of people's lives and ignores the development. In Fantasia, this type of language is used in the colonial written accounts to construct the Algerian as barbarous beings and to degrade the Algerian women as irrational and passive sexual objects. The Algerian patriarchal tradition treats Algerian women in the same way and disregards them as politically significant subjects in the struggles over the national identity.

In the historical parts, Djébar gives colonial history in the forms of letters, diaries, published accounts of French soldiers, officials and journals and little known eye-witness accounts written by officers, publicists and camp-

followers. She reconstitutes the colonial past by exposing them and its reason can be explained that Algerian history was erased under French colonization. Djébar is an historian by education, she works with the remaining documents and she uses the aspects of rewriting history to recreate the colonial history and to resurrect the vanished Algerian females in the colonial history. Djébar's rewriting these written documents gains a particular meaning as the Algerians' history has been erased under the French colonization. These written documents form historical bases for her to reconstruct the past upon them and to give place to Algerian females in the Algerian national history. In *Fantasia*, Djébar recreates a history, 'Djébar, like Franz Fanon refuses to be a prisoner of history - history is hers for the making - She does look into the past, her own past and Algeria's past to seek the meaning of her destiny' (Ringrose, 2006: 42).

She starts writing each historical part with a precise date to create a historical document. Historical narrative contains the brutal examples of French colonial domination that began with the French's attack on Algeria in 1830. The date '[t]he twelfth day of June 1830' (Djébar, 1993:6) and the first written documents of the French's conquest of Algiers are the subjects of the first historical chapter of her novel. The loss of Algerians against the colonizers is dramatically displayed in this chapter. The history have started since 1830 for the Algerians because their histography before 1830 was destroyed under the French colonialism. The French colonization that started with the first attack in 1830 has deep effects on Algerians' history. 'In Algeria, it is impossible to start with a clean slate because of the history of colonization. Before one can look to the present and the future, one must come to terms with the scars of the colonial past on the palimpsest of historical discourse' (Donadey, 2001:47). The French's eagerness to colonize and the natives' shock and fear during the siege of city were written in the archives by colonizers but their writings were subjective documents which did not reflect the historical realities about their colonization of Algeria, they

were the examples of discourse that was used by the military colonizers. In Fantasia, their writings displayed the brutality of the French conquest of Algeria instead of showing Algerian as barbarian.

Algerians were erased from the history that was written from the enemy's perspective. In the French archives and on the battle field, Algerians were invisible, their guerrilla war strategies seemed to render them invisible to French army. On 13 June, the French fleet reached Algiers. Before landing in June, 1830, there was a horrible war. Many French soldiers died by the shrapnel on their vessels. There was no equal power between the colonizers and the Algerian due to the French's superior artillery and better organization, The French army easily gained over the forces of the Dey that sent janissaries and troops from the Beys of Constantine and Oran, and Kabyles to face the French. Against the modern and advanced artillery of the French, Algerians fought in simple ways like reptiles or insects, '[t]actics that are derived from the mocking flight of an insect' (Djebar, 1993:15). Djebar describes the war before landing in June, 1830 from the point of French. Not only does Djebar give the historical facts, she also adds the poetic descriptions, she writes the description of the navy's approach in a poetic way in the novel. 'The majestic fleet rends the horizon' (Djebar, 1993:6). She gives us the description of the city in the colonial terms.

French were full of fantasy and joy to gain victory before the war, for them war was a festivity, it was not a chaotic event. The western artists or writers saw Algeria as a mysterious place and they saw the colonization and the war as the sources of their arts. They created art objects from the destruction of *the other*. Djebar rereads Montagnac's account which described the battle as a charming spectacle, a delightful panorama and an exhilarating scene. This proves clearly that French colonizers were the real barbarian who did not hesitate to create chaos. They were fascinated by the war which meant joy for them. And while the Forth's explosion filled the

Algerian with terror, panic and confusion, the French were full of rejoice. She unveils the French accounts to bring out French violence. Bosquet wrote that

[o]ur little army is celebrating with feast. . . There is a bit of everything in this *razzia*: a route march, wise planning, admirable energy on the part of the infantrymen who marched non-stop in spite of their fatigue, perfect co-ordination on the part of our magnificent cavalry, and then every possible touch of poetry in the setting which formed the backcloth to the foray. (Djebar, 1993:54)

Although the French chroniclers tried to describe their battle as manly sport but there was no manly sport as described in their words, they only met with women, from these chronicles, Djebar is able to bring out Algerian women's existence in the colonial history, their manly sportive actions were raping Algerian women, murdering the Algerian and looting their goods. According to Djebar, Algeria was seen as a "prey" by western military forces and art discourses. 'The battle is not yet joined, they are not even in sight of their prey, but they are already anxious to ensure a pictorial record of the campaign. As if the imminent war were to be considered as some sort of festivity' (Djebar, 1993:8)

From the points of marginalized groups; Algerian and Algerian women, Djebar puts the issues of representations and truth in danger. The French used their science to destroy the Algerian; they used Congreve rockets against the Algerians' nomadic struggle. Merle described the excitement and pity he felt. From his detailed description, Djebar brings out the superiority of Algerian who carried their friends' corpses not to be mutilated by the enemy. He wrote that an Arab father refused his son's amputation which French doctors advised. In this writing, he wanted to prove that French tried to help Arabs with their science but Arabs refused French's medical help because they were primitive, irrational beings and Muslim fanaticism forbade them to approach the Christian French. Their religion was the reason of the boy's

death. The Arab boy's father was disturbed by the French's humanity. After reading his writing, French believed that it was crucial to import European civilization, moral and social values among the Algerian Muslims in order to enlighten them and to come over their fanaticism. According to traditional French colonial doctrine, French had to change the ways of natives' lives. Djebbar reverses the author's intention and reveals out the French's treatment of the Arabs in the pitiless ways. Djebbar writes in an ironical way to respond the French colonial writings, '[m]ight it not be that the barbarity of the natural scene contaminates these noble attackers?'(Djebbar, 1993:55) She mocks French's assuming themselves as noble people, the barbarity of the Algerian is to blame for the colonizers' behaviour.

French colonization must be written from another point of view than the French. Djebbar does it by applying the previous written documents. Djebbar fights against French colonial discourse which insults the Algerian, especially, Algerian females by using the same language which is described as enemy's language by Djebbar. From her post colonial feminist point of view, she describes the French colonization and responds to the French accounts of the colonization of Algeria. Djebbar rewrites the documents in the name of Algerian and Algerian females by filling the gaps that were left by chroniclers, she recreates some details in the written French accounts by adding fiction and imagination to them. She intends to reclaim a history by rewriting the fractured colonial histories that were written by the chroniclers,

the dominant narratives of the past inevitably display blanks and occlusions, writers seize fiction as a privileged medium with which to content with the hegemonic historiography. Postcolonial fiction exposes dominant history's ideological cover-ups and silences, while attempting to imaginatively flesh out its gaps. (Donadey, 2001:143)

Like the other post colonial writers, she is aware of the necessity of returning historiography because the dominant version of history left blanks and has

misrepresentations. Djébar blurs the line between fiction and history. She is mixing the historical accuracy in the written documents with her imagination. She represents the unrepresented Algerian women through fiction, her fictional writing helps her to place her feminist views into the construction of her nation. She creates a feminist language that reflects Algerian females' sufferings, cries and brings out their buried voices.

Djébar explores the theme that the Algerian female has lived under the French occupation. There is no place for women in traditional history as participants or writers. Algerian women are not viewed as active parts of the nationalism; Algerian national history becomes the symbol of denial of the Algerian females' agencies. Chroniclers published their memoirs about French occupation; they revealed the hidden truths that did not exist in official documents. There are thirty seven chronicles about French occupation of Algeria in July 1830, they were written by French, British, German and Algerian males' perspectives, but there was not a woman writer among these chroniclers, this proves that history is written by male writers. This suggests the limitations of traditional history for females. All these male writers are the sources of her historical parts in her autobiographical writing, *Fantasia*. Some of these texts were sent to Paris but 'their words thrown up by such a cataclysm are for me like a comet's tail, flashing across the sky and leaving it forever riven' (Djébar, 1993:45). They are very important for Djébar, from males' discourse; she brings out females' existence in the Algerian colonial history. Djébar uses these male writers' sources as archaeological sites for unearthing the buried Algerian women. And she hears the cries of Algerian women who were mutilated, raped and burned in the caves, 'women's voices penetrate and disrupt the orientalisising unity of the French text' (Green, 1993:963).

French officers' reports brought out the experiences of Algerian women during the invasion and they proved their existence in the struggle against

the colonization. The French colonial writings about Algeria proved that Algerian women were not passive figures in the colonial history, their written accounts are "écrivain texts."

He [Barthes] described the text of the *écrivain* as lisible - or readable - since the role of the reader is reduced to passively following the words on the page. An *écrivain's* text, by contrast, he referred to as scriptable - or writable - since the participation of its reader is actively thought to co-produce meanings. (Sellers: 1991:7)

Djebar, as the reader, attributes new meanings to them to recreate a history in which women are the parts of the national history. She rewrites the French's writings of colonization from her post colonial feminist perspective to respond their barbarism. Djebar creates a textual violence that is similar to the violent history of French colonization so she avenges from the French for the wrongs that are done to her nation.

Writing about women during the French colonization connects her to her Algerian heritage. She engages with the colonial writings to reveal the existence and struggle of her female ancestors. She recreates her mutilated foremothers through the written words. "As Susan Griffin succinctly put it, "what is buried in the past of one generation falls to the next to claim"" (qtd.in Donadey, 2001:xiii). She claims that the previous female generation deserve their right places in the pages of history. Written documents are useful for her because they have already placed the Algerian women in the pages of history.

She attacks the colonial history and the colonial discourse with the same weapons; history and language, her language is a *feminist language* and her history is *herstory*. Algerian women's sufferings from the French sexual and physical violence and their courage against the colonialist are at the centre of Assia Djebar's feminist rewriting of the written documents of the French colonization. As stated by Blair, in the introduction part,

Algerian woman in all her complexity and historical reality is the protagonist of Assia Djébar's most ambitious and original work of fiction, this is also an attempt to wrest her own identity as an Algerian woman from the warring strands of her Arabo-Berber origins and her Franco-European education. (Djébar, 1993:iii)

Through these written accounts, Djébar highlights Algerian females' victimization; they were burned with their rebelling tribes in the Dacra caves, they were caught up in the fighting like the dancing girls, and the rural women's hands and feet were cut off for the sake of their jewellery and she reflects their power, pride, courage and resistance to the colonizers, females' bravery was illustrated in the stories of young bride of Mazuna, pregnant hostage of Saint Arnaud and Haoua whose story became a central framing that '[t]he "insignificant detail of" an Algerian woman's life and death becomes an emblematic story framing Algerian history in Djébar's rewriting' (Donadey, 2001:91). And Djébar creates identification with these suffering and proud Algerian women to form her Algerian female self.

In Djébar's historical parts, the historical events begin with the siege of Algeria by the French in 1830. France arranged its navy and sailed to the Northern coast of Algeria in June 1830. She does not know about this siege's effect on the Algerians because there is no document written by the Algerians' point of view. Djébar learns about this historical reality from the colonizers' point of view, she rereads the officers Amable Matterer and Baron Barchou de Penhoen's subjective writings about this first encounter. The first day of the French siege of Algeria as a historical event is ready to be written, it needs writing from the Algerian's point of view, Djébar asks questions, '[w]ho will write of it? Which of all these silent spectators will live to tell the tale when the encounter is over?' (Djébar, 1993:7). After one hundred and fifty years later, she reconstructs their writings by filling their gaps with questions, fictions, imaginations and details, she sees and hears the events

as if she was a participant in the siege of the city, as if she was one of those invisible eyes that were watching the colonizers. She hears the speech of the women of the town. She succeeds to write this event from the Algerian's point of view by the help of fiction, imagination 'the texts of colonizers themselves appear only in fragmented citations, interwoven with her own word; the text itself thus creates the possibility of dialogue absent from the historical record' (Green, 1993:962). She creates a dialogical process between these written texts by filling their gaps with fiction. She writes as if she was talking with the writers, she asks questions to these writers and responds their writings.

Djebar creates a parallel between the siege of her nation and her autobiographical note, '[t]hroughout my childhood, just before the war which was to bring us independence, I never crossed a single French threshold, I never entered the home of a single French schoolfellow' (Djebar, 1993:23). Like the French colonial powers' accessing into Djebar's country, French policeman's household easily visit Algerian's homes and orchards and enter in Algerian female gatherings. But entering in French's house is not easy for Djebar and the other Algerians, French's houses are inaccessible. The siege of Algeria by the French colonizers is parallel to the Djebar's feeling herself under the siege of the French language, Djebar describes herself as cut off from her mother language by her French education and "a mutilation of memory that connects her to the women mutilated by the French conquest" (Green, 1993:963).

Djebar gives us the French colonizer's eagerness to colonize the Algeria and the Algerians' listening to their approach in silence, they gain their voices by her rewriting them. The city is personified in literarily terms, '[t]he scene is suddenly blanketed silence' (Djebar, 2993:7), it represents the Algerians' silence and their depressing and dangerous situations. Both Algerian and French were silent. Algerians were dazzled by the sight of the majestic fleet,

French were enthusiastic by the sight of the city that they were ready to colonize, 'the dazzling white panorama freezes before them in its disturbing proximity' (Djebar, 1993:7), while the French's eyes were looking with the desire of colonial gaze to destroy their prey, the Algerians' invisible eyes were watching them silently, city's silence would be disappeared by the cavalcade of screams.

The French's eagerness to colonize Algeria and the Algerian's watching their approach in silence is similar to the love between a man and a woman. She succeeds in connecting two opposite themes; war and love. This is highlighted by the title *Love and War*, the original title of the novel in French is *L'amour, la Fantasia*. Love is between male and female, war is between westerner and Algerian. Love starts through eyes, through seeing the other and it goes to heart and creates an excitement, silence and a desire in the watcher to approach the other, she creates a parallel between the colonizers and the lovers. 'As if the invaders were coming as lovers' (Djebar, 1993:8). Like lovers who fall in love with women at first sight, the colonizers fell in love with the city while approaching it, they were full of eagerness to get it. The chroniclers Amable Matterer and Baron Barchou de Penhoen fell in love with the city and felt fascinated by it. Djebar's description that Amable Matterer was at his post in the first squadron and his gliding slowly westward is similar to a lover's approach to his darling.

Bosquet and Montagnac were the other male colonizers who were fascinated by the city like lovers. They wrote about their expedition to Razzia in 1840 to their family, and their writing gives Djebar a chance to look this event as a participant of it. They attacked Razzia with bandits and the war spelled a charm on them. They described the war area as a 'delightful panorama and an exhilarating scene' (Djebar, 1993:54) and they found only women in Razzia, they raped both the Algeria's land by looting the Algerians' goods and Algerian females who insulted them bravely. As described by

Djebar, their fascination by Algeria like lovers is a problematic behaviour. 'Bosquet like Montagnac, will never marry; no need of a spouse, no dreams of settling down as long as the joy of the battle remains alive, galvanized by words' (Djebar, 1993:55). Algeria took the role of a woman in their lives and the excitement of the war scene gave the joy of love to them so they did not need a woman in their lives to enjoy love, war satisfied their desire of love to a woman.

Djebar uses their writings as a proof to French cruelty and uses their gaze as symbol of colonial gaze, French creates a parallel between the Algeria's land and the Algerian woman. There is a metaphorical relationship between them, Algeria is personified as a veiled Algerian woman, who is the object of French gaze, 'between the lines these letters speak of Algeria is a woman whom it is impossible to tame. A tamed Algeria is a pipe-dream' (Djebar, 1993:57). And the conquest of the Algeria's land was expressed in sexual terms. Through gazing, they felt that Algeria belonged to them. In colonial fantasy. When they raped an Algerian woman this meant that they raped the Algeria. Algeria was imagined as a woman to be possessed, in the same way, to posse's Algerian woman meant to possess Algeria.

In much masculinist discourse, colonialist and anti-colonialist, the subjectivity and suffering of women raped are erased by the allegory of Woman as the plundered land. Djebar takes up this discourse in order to force it to acknowledge both its erasure of women to reaffirm their presence. (Donadey, 2001:105)

Algerian females' bodies gained a political meaning during the French colonization. French planned to defeat Algerian nation by unveiling Algerian women. This made the male feel the dishonour of the colonial domination of Algeria and Algerian women. Djebar writes about Algerian women's resisting look against the colonizers' objectification of them in their look. Matterer 'gazes at the city which returns his gaze' (Djebar, 1993:7), when French

soldiers approached a group of captured Algerian women with the objectification of them in their look, women reversed their colonial look and showed their bravery as woman warriors against the colonizers.

Djebar creates a parallel between this French's colonial gaze and the Algerian social gaze in her autobiographical notes. Algerian female's resisting look appear in her autobiographical episode that voyeurs during the female gatherings gaze her unveiled body, she does not sit on the floor like them because she feels her femininity and she sits cross legged like a western woman as a result of her western education.

I had passed the age of puberty without being buried in harem like my girl cousins; I had spent my dreaming adolescent on its fringes, neither totally outside, nor in its heart; so I spoke and studied French, and my body, during this formative period, became westernized in its way. (Djebar, 1993:127)

She is in between the exposure and exclusion of Algerian female community, she is both a part of the harem and she also moves from it as a result of her western education, 'while the French language enables Djebar to expose her fellow Algerian women, it is, paradoxically, the very same language as an instrument of vision—"the eyes of French language"—that separates her from them' (Huughe, 1996:868). Like her female ancestors who reversed colonizers' gaze beneath their veils, Djebar reverses both the voyeurs' disapproving eyes and male's sexual gaze which defines her unveiled body as a sexual object. Djebar is a marginal woman when she is compared to the other Algerian females. She escapes from cloistering due to her education in French through her father, an Arab teacher of French. And her education in French makes her a prey of masculine gaze with her unveiled body and it also gives her a chance to have a pen that places her in the in the world of words which belongs to men. Huughe notes that Djebar's

focus on the colonial gaze and women's resisting gaze are significant for one to understand Djébar's writing, Huughe refers

panoptical system described by Michel Foucault. If the Algerian woman's presence is undesirable in "the center," which is reserved exclusively for men, it is because the latter occupy a place of choice the better to exercise their surveillance over the feminine subject, who is marginalized, within reach of the gaze. Thus, by dint of writing and of its social impact when published, the woman penetrates not only the public space, the outdoors--masculine space--but also and especially the heart of the panoptical centre, where she becomes the object of all gazes and transgresses the prohibition on visibility. In other words, she agrees to become the target of voyeurs. (1996:867)

Algerian females' identities in terms of race and gender are defined through the colonial and traditional binary distinctions. Algerian females' identities do not belong to them because their identities are subject to the judgement of the others. Algerian culture allows the social gaze to place the Algerian females under the control of the patriarchy and this social gaze defines females' roles and identities.

Djébar distances herself from these binary codes. Djébar resists and revisits the colonial and patriarchal portrayals of the Algerian women and she recreates Algerian women with visibility and audibility. She offers the people to dismantle their colonial gaze when they are looking at the Algerian women. She connects the theme of visibility in terms of race and gender with bodily representations in Fantasia. Her knowledge of French language allows her to write the colonizers' violence to the Algerian women. Writing means freedom and survival for female's body.

Writing enemy's language is more than just a matter of scribbling down a muttered monologue under your very nose; to use this alphabet involves placing your elbow some distance in front of you to form a bulwark-

however in this twisted position, the writing is washed back to you. (Djebar, 1993:215)

Through writing, Djebar discovers the cries and existence of Algerian females in the battlefields. And she succeeds in reflecting her post colonial text as a shield to resist to the discursive colonization. By the help of French language, she explores French colonial archives to rewrite the history of French colonization of Algeria and to inscribe women in the pages of national history. With the enemy's language, she gives a respond to French colonization of Algeria , in a way, she colonizes the language of the French. 'Can the "language" of Other, verbal as well as pictorial, intercede for a Self hitherto silenced and cloistered? I wish now to consider how this resisting scriptive strategy grounded in a historical fact' (Zimra, 1995:152). Djebar responds to the colonial legacy by placing the Algerian at the centre of the history through writing Algeria's history in the colonizer's language. She is able to see the hidden truths within the colonial chronicles, their writers expressed these truths for colonial needs without knowing that they revealed truths for *the other*. 'Djebar 'overreads' the colonial archives, reading Algerian women and men back in history; and then 'overwrites' their presence by writing over colonial documents, making her fictional text into a palimpsest' (Donadey, 2001:46). She gives place to her silent community who cannot speak in the enemy's language to express their sufferings. Her second language creates a distance between her and her native speakers but it also enables her to write about the injustices of the Algerians. She writes in the name of Algerian women who do not have existence in the colonial history.

As in the myth of Prometheus, to write, for the woman, is to steal words, to tear them from social rule, from the masculine grasp. It is therefore through writing that Assia Djebar asserts her freedom. And it is on the basis of writing, conceived as a junction between the individual and the community, that she feels committed as an Algerian to revisit the history of her country and

as a woman to rewrite it from a feminine point of view,
with, and for all other women. (Gafaiti,1996:813)

Djebar wants the other Algerian females to have education and freedom because only her writing does not liberate all the Algerian girls from veiling and cloistering and it does not respond to the silence of all the Algerian women. Djebar states the connection between the veiling and literacy. 'So wrap the nubile girl in veils. Make her invisible. Make her more unseeing than the sightless; destroy in her every memory of the world without. And what if she has learned to write?' (Djebar: 1993:3) Woman's writing and expressing herself must be regulated by the patriarchal Algerian society because her expression of her personal feelings is seen as an indecent rebellion that disrupts the roundness and the order in the society. Female's voice and writing are dangerous in the society which puts the communal interest above the personal interest. When an Algerian female learns to write her desires and moves out of the harem, this can mean that the male's authority and names are dishonoured, an Algerian female's freedom is associated with a loss of honour in Muslim patriarchal Algerian society, they may have a connection with another man before marriage so they are kept under the control of patriarchy. Although her father presents her an education in French and a freedom of movement out of the harem, he fears that her writing letter will put his patriarchal honour in danger, he tries to keep her writing under surveillance but this encourages her to write letters to men in French. Her access to French writing puts her in a rebelling position to the patriarchal tradition and signifies a subjectivity that is inscribed on love letters.

Although French is a language that gives her richness and opportunities, it can be dangerous and it can push her to the depth of silence like Algeria's silence while watching the French fleets' approach. 'I cohabit with the French language: I may quarrel with it, I may have burst of affection, and I may subside into sudden or angry silences' (Djebar, 1993:213). Although the

need to resist historical amnesia and to articulate the unspeakable are at the centre of her writing, words lose their expressions when she becomes the object of a male's gaze, and she subsides into a sudden or angry silence because she feels herself uneasy about a man's sexual abuse. French allows men to come close to her but when a man speaks to her in a flattering way, it turns a danger. She puts a symbolic veil to protect her from the patriarchy's gaze and flattery, her aphasia acts as her shield against the sexual abuse 'the only possible eloquence, the only weapon that could reach me was silence' (Djebar, 1993:127), she ends her relationship with men by falling in aphasia in the matters of love. She reverts to her mother language to avoid the sexual abuse of men. She is oscillating between two the languages in her life.

Language is an identity quest for her as an Algerian woman between her Arabo-Berber heritage and her Franco-European education. 'Paradoxes of divided identity –both French and Algerian – as one who uses the language of the conqueror to explore the complexities of belonging and not belonging' (Stephens, 2000:199). Like the hostages from Beni Manacer tribe that were forced to cross from one country to another one, she is also a hostage who moves from one culture and language to the other ones under the colonial forces. She feels herself colonized by the Arabic and French languages because she is cut off from her mother tongue under their affects. French is the language of love,

I write and speak French outside: the words I use convey no flesh and body reality. I learn the names of birds I've never seen, trees I shall take ten years or more to identify, list of flowers and plants that I shall never smell until I travel north of the Mediterranean. In this respect, all vocabulary expresses what is missing in my life. (Djebar, 1993:185)

The Arabic is the language of taboos and full of Arabic heritage and Islamic doctrines, Djebar writes 'Arabic for our stifled aspirations towards God-the-

Father, the God of the religions of the Book'(Djebar, 1993:180), it can be said that it is the language of Arab patriarchy, it is not suitable for females, 'matters of course are not as simple as French equals liberation and Arabic equals repression. French may have been, since childhood "a casement opening on the spectacle of the world and its richness' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:489). Both languages invade her body.

After more than a century of French occupation-which ended not long ago in such butchery- a similar no-man's-land still exists between the French and the indigenous languages, between two national memories: the French tongue, with its body and voice, has established a proud presidio within me, while the mother tongue, all oral tradition, all rags and tatters, resists and attacks between two breathing spaces. In time to the rhythm of the rebato, I am alternatively the besieged foreigner and the native swaggering off to die, so there is seemingly endless strife between the spoken and written word. (Djebar, 1993:215)

She compares a man's having the right to four legitimate wives to the four languages that surrounds her, although she has four languages to express desire, as a girl she can only sigh and moan. French ,Arabic, Lybico- Berber and female's body are the languages that she has. French, Arabic and Berber languages are all connected to female's body's language. Body language is very important for the half-emancipated girls whose bodies are kept under the control of the patriarchy.

There is an ambivalence towards French language in Djebar, it means both the expression of the individual freedom and the reflection of the cultural colonization. As stated by Djebar her second language is a tunic of Nessus, a poisonous gift. While it opens her a new world, presents freedom and new opportunities to her to have voice which remain as dreams for her Algerian sisters, she says 'French is my 'stepmother "tongue"' (Djebar, 1993:214), there is a love and hate in Djebar towards French language, it is

a language imposed by rape as much as love. 'The journey towards finding her own voice is further complicated by the ambivalent relationship she has with the French language, on one hand; French is the language of the occupier, the oppressor and enemy' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:487). French is her father's gift to her, her father who took her by the hand to accompany her to school introduced her to the colonizer's French so she calls French as her father tongue. She has been enclosed by French language since her childhood in the same way Algeria has been enclosed by the French since 1830. She creates a parallel with her learning French and French's siege of Algeria.

After dealing with the chronicles about the French navy's siege of the city, Djebbar deals with the chronicles which recounted the fall of the city and the explosion of Fort Emperor on 4 July 1830, they were written by Baron Barcheu de Penhoen and J.M. Merle. she creates a parallel between the explosion of Fort Emperor and her autobiographical notes about the explosion of personal desires. The intimate relationship between her father and her mother is an explosion in their patriarchal society, her father wrote a letter to his wife and her mother called her husband with his name in a radical way.

One of these chroniclers is a man of letters, J.M. Merle assumed war as a theatrical performance, he made notes of everything that he witnessed from the back of the action, he did not see any real events but he was called as if he was a front-line reporter. He was not writing for military needs like some other chroniclers, his aim was 'to compose, published; distribute the first French newspaper on Algerian soil' (Djebbar, 1993:28). He described his own ridiculous role and the explosion in the following words:

we heard a mighty explosion, following upon ceaseless shelling since day break...At the same instant, the horizon was covered in dense black smoke, which rose

to a prodigious height; the wind blowing from east carried the smell of gunpowder, dust and scorched wool, which left us in dust that fort emperor had been blown up, either by a mine or from its powder magazines catching fire. (Djebar, 1993:29)

Baron Barchou watched the battle from the slopes of Bouzerah as if he was watching a film, according to him, battle area was an amphitheatre filled with many spectators. After the fall of the city, they dominated their colonization on this land which longed 132 years. Baron Barcheu de Penhoen, wrote what he recalled,

Arab tribes are always accompanied by great numbers of women, who had shown the greatest zeal in mutilating their victims. One of these women lay beside the corpse of a French soldier whose heart she torn out! Another had been fleeing with a child in her arms when a shot wounded her; she sized a stone and crushed the infant's head, to prevent it falling in to our hands; the soldiers finished her off with their bayonets. (Djebar, 1993:18)

Djebar rereads Baron Barcheu de Penhoen's account in the name of Algerian females from her feminist point of view and reverses his intention. In his colonial discourse, Penhoen attributed the negative adjectives to two Algerian women and described them as barbarian, violent, animal like creatures. These two Algerian women had no individuality. They represented the other Algerian females and the land of Algeria. Apart from reflecting the discourse of the colonizers in his writing, he placed the vanished Algerian women in the pages of history without being aware of it. Djebar creates a mythical birth for modern Algerian nation. She uses his writing to give a place to the rural Algerian women in the colonial history 'two women enter into recent history' (Djebar, 1993:18) as women warriors.

Djebar brings out how French colonizers were cruel and greedy against the natives by rereading the written documents from the other perspectives than the French's perspective. Djebar mentions the accounts of Bey Ahmet of

Constantine, a German prisoner and Mufti Hajj. Hajj Ahmed Effendi wrote after twenty years of siege of city, he 'chronicles the defeat, adding his spadeful of words to help fill the paupers' grave of oblivion' (Djebar, 1993:39). His accounts prove that the French lied about their declaration of Algiers as an open city. The capital was sold was one of their lies. The Algerian struggled against the French, they did not give their land as an open city to their enemies.

The city, not so much 'captured' as declared an Open City. The capital is sold: the prize- its legendary treasure. The gold of Algiers shipped by the crateful to France, where a new king inaugurates his reign by accepting the republican flag and acquiring the Barbary ingots. (Djebar, 1993:39)

He wrote Algerian's reaction to the siege, 'the explosion shook the city and filled all inhabitants with terror. Then Hussein pasha summoned a council of the city elders. There was an outcry from the entire population' (Djebar, 1993:39), in a poetic way, he described the inhabitants' revolt against the infidels that brought dishonour on them, they raised their voices by chanting Tekbir. He revealed the truth that the city lost two thirds of its population in one night. The citizens and the soldiers rejected the abdication so they left the city. You cannot get this information from the French's archives. Hajj calmed down the citizens' agitation when he got an assurance from the Dey that French would not give harm to mosques and civilians but French troops destroyed the city and raped the Algerian females, mutilated females' bodies for their jewellery, took money from the treasury in the Kasbah, and destroyed the mosques and cemeteries. 'An open city, its ramparts destroyed, its battlements and earthworks demolished; its ignominy cast a shadow over the immediate future' (Djebar, 1993:39), in other words; France's self-described civilizing mission which began in 1830 with the fall of city has had a devastating effect on this land and its people that longs many years.

All the writings revealed out a monstrous reality that Algeria was conquered although it sent up suffering cry and they repeated the dramatic existence of the Algerian women throughout of history in a literary way. Djébar searches for the written texts which prove the barbarous act of colonizers who set off the expedition to Oran In 1840. Djébar reflects the brutality of French army which brought death to everywhere they stepped and their temptation with booty and looting. 'There were jeers and bloodthirsty yells, promising death to the victims they were about to despoil' Bosquet relates, with admiration for the momentum with which this fantasia is launched' (Djébar, 1993:52). She does not challenge Bosquet's letters that were addressed to his family, she reinterprets them because the written words in his letters protected the reality about the French colonization of Algeria. Bosquet was not able to control his writing, and he mentioned about one detail of a foot of a woman and about the description of the corpses of the seven women in a poetic way. Djébar rereads his account to show women were killed by the French colonizers. She brings out females' cries and voices and Algerians' fantasia by filling the gaps through imagination that Bosquet left, she sees the dead bodies which 'are piled up in extricable heaps' and hears the voices, 'the echo of muffled groans, more-poignant than lamentations, yells of triumph or shrieks of terror' (Djébar, 1993:53). She brings out the Algeria women's bravery; these seven executed women in his writing insult French, 'dogs, sons of dogs!(Djébar, 1993:54). In the accounts of French observers, Algerian women were both objectified and also as mutilated and fragmented by colonists. They were chopped to pieces, stabbed and stripped of their jewellery by the French.

1845 was most important date for the Algerian's national history. It was the year that many Algerians were burned alive in the caves. Berber tribes tried insurrection and the colonizers responded it with burning the natives' cattle and properties. They took tribesmen's swords and put them in jail known as "the storks' tower" which remained from the ancient times. As a

post colonial writer, like the other post colonial writers, Djébar returns to the traumatic national history of her country. And she brings out the buried cries of her female ancestors during the cave burnings, she responds to the French's violent colonization and she tries to give existence to the Algerian females in the national history. She does not create a new history; she creates a traumatic history through filling the gaps that were left by P. Christian, Spanish officer and Saint-Arnaud's written accounts about the cave burning. She creates a parallel between the cave burn and her life to form an Algerian female self.

Djébar uses Colonel Pélissier's report for Paris to reveal out the hidden truths of cave burning and to form her own writing; she focuses on certain elements of the conquest in which majority of Ouled Riah tribe were asphyxiated in a cave. Bugeaud sent a written order to Pélissier which told "if the scoundrels retreat in their caves," . . . "do what Cavaignac did to the Sbeah, smoke them out mercilessly, like foxes" (Djébar, 1993:65). French officer, Pelissier in a typical colonial way in Ouled el-Amria destroyed orchards, houses and raided animals. He followed the natives with a humour as if he was playing in a drama. Djébar writes

for colonel Pélissier the approaching dawn makes a solemn backdrop, befitting the overture to a drama. The curtain is about to go upon a tragic action; fate has decreed that he, as the leader, must make the first entrance on the stage set out before them in this austere chalk landscape. (Djébar, 1993:67)

He set fire in front of the entrance of the cave in which native people were hidden, flames rose for eighteen hours without stopping. A French witness wrote '[w]ords cannot describe the violence of blaze' (Djébar, 1993:69). He caused many Berber people not to breath as a result he destroyed a whole tribe, he concerned about his prestige so he did not care about Berber's begging for forgiveness. She imagines the details in this historical event and

hears her foremothers' cries in the cave to bring out their lost voice in the past to the surface and place them in the Algerian national history. 'Djebar describes the incident with subjectivity and emotion, affirming her ties to the victims. Their agony is hers' (Mortimer, 1997:104).

P. Christian published the letters of anonymous writers; one of them was Spaniard who described cave burn as a cannibalistic scene and as a tragedy in these words:

the flames- two hundred feet high- enveloping El-Kantara promontory. The soldiers...shove wood into the cave- 'like into an oven'...what pen could do justice to this scene? To see in the middle of the night, by moonlight, a body of French soldiers, busy keeping that hellfire alight! To hear the muffled groans of men, women, children, beasts and the cracking of burnt rocks as they crumbled, and the continual fire! (Djebar, 1993:71)

Spanish officer wrote about the cave fire for Spanish newspaper the *Heraldo*, ironically, he added that the problem was solved. 'I am telling the story in my own way and is it so purposeless to imagine what motives these butchers had?(Djebar, 1993:73) The motives of the colonial soldiers were taking the jewels of the corpses. Pélissier ordered his soldiers to bring the corpses out of the cave to display while many of them were not in the situation of the bringing out to be seen. Djebar imagines Pélissier might say that 'bring out rooting corpses out! Let's see them all stark and stiff! Bring out their rooting corpses! then we shall have won, we shall have made an end to it'...I cannot say for sure what the military policy was; this is just a surmise' (Djebar, 1993:73). Although Pélissier was the responsible one for this terrible vision, he called it as a horrible burn. The French suppressed their feeling of guilt for this vision with their pride, they boasted about their success in capturing these caves which had been under the Turkish domination for three hundred years.

Colonel Pélissier is both a butcher and a recorder according to Djébar. 'She finds herself in the paradoxical position of having to be grateful toward the officers, such as Pélissier, who dared write about violence inflicted on the Algerian people' (Donadey, 2001:49). She is thankful to Colonel Pélissier for his facing the dead Algerians and his desire to immortalize them in his letters. He wrote about the cave burn to inform Paris and his writing is the most reliable chronicle for Djébar because the images of the corpses were described in a realistic way. He is a good writer so he makes an affective contribution to Djébar's gendered post colonial writing. 'Pélissier, speaking on behalf of this long drawn-out agony. . . hands me his report and I receive this palimpsest on which I now inscribe the charred passion of my ancestors' (Djébar, 1993:79). If he did not write these words in his letters, the reality of cave burn could be vanished from the history. Through palimpsest of intertextuality, the violence in the past and Algerian women's suffering from this violence is provided. Her novel functions as a 'historical palimpsest in which [she] reconstruct[s] [her] history through the blanks of the Other's discourse (be it the colonizer's or that of the patriarchal tradition)' (Donadey, 2001:xx). She puts together a picture of cave burns through the pieces of the French chronicles. The erasure of Algerian history makes her use the palimpsest of intertextuality, she creates a surviving history through palimpsest project. Pélissier's writing goes beyond his intention. Authors cannot control their texts, the readers can attribute different meanings to them. His writing lost its originality, he made his report which he intended to compose in official terms but he wrote on the behalf of one thousand and five hundred corpses buried beneath el-Kantara. According to Djébar, he had a literary talent to express the violence.

After exposing to Pélissier and Spanish officer's accounts, she rereads Saint Arnaud's account. He asphyxiated nearly eight hundred tribesmen of Shebah. He remained silent about this violence but, like Pélissier, he could

not help breaking his silence by expressing his thoughts in a letter to his brother,

I have all the exits hermetically sealed and create a vast cemetery. The bodies of these fanatics will be buried in the earth forever!.. no-one has been down into the cave!...I sent a confidential report to the field-marshal, stating everything simply, without any terrible poetry, nor any imagery...I have done my duty as a leader and tomorrow I shall do the same again, but I have developed a distaste for Africa! (Djebar, 1993:76)

He revealed his feelings of hate against the Algerian. All the chronicles about the cave burning reveal that not only the Algerian males suffered from the fire but also Algerian females became the part of this catastrophe. And Djebar makes a connection between her autobiography and these cave burning. She feels as if she was not breathing like her foremothers in the caves as because of the patriarchy's role before marriage and the sexual violence of the patriarchy at her wedding night.

The written words in the French chronicles bring back the terrible events and save the realities. Chroniclers could not resist writing about the siege and the capture of the Algeria, the forth explosion, cave burning and their impressions on them. Their function of writing chronicles resembles the act of writing love letters. 'The same day he writes of the confrontation dispassionately, objectively' (Djebar, 1993:7). Djebar creates a parallel between the love letters and the accounts written by the French colonizers.

Djebar mixes her autobiography with the historical facts by creating a parallel between the French chronicles and love letters. Djebar creates a connection between the temporary Algeria and the colonized Algeria, between the war and the love; and between history and autobiography by the help of the theme of love letters. Both war and love create similar effects on people, there is a distance between Algerian and the colonizers, this is parallel to the distance between women and their lovers, this distance

creates a problem of ambiguity in their feelings and they feel both excitement and fear, this idea is supported by Blair's statement in introduction part of the Fantasia. 'There is an analogy between the love-letters and the correspondence dispatched from encampments by forgotten captains participating in the conquest of Algeria; both are the occasion for self-analysis and result in insight into the ambiguity of emotions' (Djebar, 1993:vi) Djebar's love affair makes her feel her inner world and gives her pain that is similar to the Algerians' suffering from the French colonization. To overcome their ambiguous feelings, the lovers and the colonizers write like maniac. They do not control their desires of writing about their feelings to *the other*. The colonial writers find a relief in writing about their memoirs to escape from their ambiguous feelings of excitement and fear in a quick way. They write quickly and carelessly what they have witnessed, they have fear of scribblomania.

The colonizers' desire to use pen in order to put down their memoirs is similar to Djebar and three cloistered Algerian girls' writing letters. Djebar takes a love letter at the age of seventeen that has two meanings for her, firstly; it is a way of revolting to the patriarchy's control of female's senses, feelings and writing; 'I become absorbed by this business of love, or rather by the prohibition laid on love; my father's condemnation only served to encourage the intrigue' (Djebar, 1993:4), it is similar to the three cloistered girls' desire for writing love letters to the boys all around the world. Djebar's three cloistered sisters live their hidden lives behind their veils, unlike their illiterate Algerian sisters, they write letters in French secretly to escape from the submission and their closed area temporarily to refresh them. Their finding freedom resembles to the colonizers' finding relief in writing, and both love letter writers and colonizers escape their ambiguous feelings through writing their inner feelings. Both girls and chroniclers write because of escaping their burdens according to Djebar, colonizers write, 'did their writing allow them to savour the seducer's triumph, the rapist intoxication?'

(Djebar, 1993:45) Writing presents Djebar and there cloistered Algerian girls a different world from the other enclosed girls who are under the shadow of males, they experience something different, they break the circle in the society and they are heroines who fight for freedom against patriarchal tradition's confining their expression of their feelings, desires by writing love letters secretly. Although they are closed in their rooms, their voices travel out of their rooms. 'Djebar writes woman as object of desire into woman as desiring subject, drawing on the alienation and desire for recognition which are the legacies a of colonialist discourse'(Murdoch ,1993:75).

Secondly; there is an 'ambiguity of emotions' (Djebar, 1993:v) in her towards love as stated by Blair, 'writing love letters helps Djebar to find out her senses but later on, they turn to a key for pleasure and discovering her sensuality, Djebar explains that '[o]nce I discovered the meaning of the words - those same words that are revealed to the unveiled body' (Djebar, 1993:5). She fears that the words that are full of love refer to her body. She thinks love letters as an attack to her body when she is a younger girl. Her lover is full of desire for her body, like the colonizers' desire for Algeria. But the desire expressed in love letters loses its effect when she gets it, she denies her body which is described by men. She is not aware of her body and sexuality in her teens because females in her patriarchal society are expected to suppress their desires, 'I can scarcely persuade myself that this document concerns me' (Djebar, 1993: 59). She does not believe that these letters that make her an object of patriarchy's desire are addressed to her so she finishes writing letters. She fights with patriarchy's sexual desire with her silence so women's silence gains another meaning; it becomes another kind of language. But these letter about the intensified love of a man to her has another important function for Djebar, they become mediators between her and the other illiterate submissive Algerian females who never get love letters from men.

Suddenly these pages begin to emit a strange power. They start to act like a mediator: I tell myself that this cluster of strangled cries is addressed-why not? - To all the other women whom no word has ever reached. Those of past generations who bequeathed me the places of their confinement, those women who never received a letter: no word taut with desire, stretched like a bow, no message run through with supplication. Their only path to freedom was by intoning their obsessional chants. (Djebar, 1993:59-60)

Djebar guesses whether the colonizers' dangerous love to Algeria brings them a sense of guilt like her feeling of guilt or ambiguity in her love affair. She states '[a]fter this first encounter between the two nations, both sides watch and wait, in doubt as to their next step. Throughout this summer of 1830, both camps are haunted: are these the ghosts of the raped, flitting over the piled-up corpses? Is it the spirit of an acknowledged love felt only in an intuitive sense of guilt?' (Djebar, 1993:16)

Djebar and three cloistered girls are descended from the heroines during the French colonization of Algeria. In the colonial historical parts of *Fantasia*, Djebar's *écriture féminine* is to give existence and voices to the women who were the victims of colonialism, she creates them as woman warriors. The female figures of the past inspire the moujhaïdates and contemporary Algerian females in the harem and Djebar to fight with the patriarchal and colonial discourses. She recreates young naked bride of Mazuna as a woman warrior who made a stand against the patriarchy's objectification of her body, she broke the circle of the society with her expression of her individuality. 'The testimony to women's existence [in the colonial violence] is provided by a severed foot or the hand that is found along a road way by the artist Eugène Fromentin. . . At the end of the novel, she is able, symbolically to seize the severed women's hand discovered by Fromentin, which now regains its life and creative power through her touch' (Green, 1993:962-63). This hand belonged to Haoua with whom Djebar identifies herself. These

central female figures of the colonial resistance and the patriarchal resistance take the shapes of moujhaïdates in the second section of my thesis. She rewrites the real lives of moujhaïdates who were the central figures of anti-colonial resistance in the mid 1950s. Djébar's writing her autobiography allows her to enter the world of her past and the Algerian's past. She mixes the historical accounts of the French conquest of Algeria that are taken from the French archives and the chronicles with the Algerian women's oral history of Algerian independence war. Through her post colonial feminist techniques, she recreates Algerian female self and proves that Algerian females deserve a good place in the national history and social life.

2.3. Recollections of the Algerian Women's Words

Assia Djébar addresses the role of Algerian women in Algerian nationalist project and the privileging of the men in the patriarchal nationalism. In *Fantasia*, Algerian national history is reconstituted by contrasting the literary evocation of the French conquest with the oral stories of moujhaïdates in the 1954-62 war and Djébar juxtaposes the episodes of her life in post war Algeria with the Algerian national history. Telling the narrator's and Algerian's history prove that all the spaces of agency, political authority and social emancipation are controlled by the French colonial discourse and by the Algerian patriarchy's silencing of women's voices and veiling of women's experiences. The oral historical sources function as a respond to the French's lies in their written accounts' and patriarchal national history's ignorance of Algerian females' agency. She tries to contribute freedom, visibility and audibility to the Algerian women and she explores an Algeria that women will deserve a good life in the Algerian society.

I try to reflect the palimpsest feature of Djébar's writing in this part of my thesis. Some parts of her work deal with the Algerians who participated in the war of national independence in between 1954-62 and she uses Algerian

war of liberation as a bridge between the French colonization started in 1830 and the contemporary Algerian women's struggle against the colonial and patriarchal powers. She creates a relation between the French's written colonial archives and the Algerian women's testimonies and oral stories, this relation is a palimpsest relation, palimpsest writing is one of her feminist writing strategy and her aim in using this strategy is to reveal out Algerian females' existence in the history and social area. This idea is supported by Patricia Geesey's statement that 'by juxtaposing the two historical discourses [French archives and women's testimonies] She recognizes that the common thread between the two is Algerian woman herself' (qtd.in Donadey, 2001:45). There is a palimpsest relation between colonizer's writing and the history that is passed down by female storytellers in other words; *oral herstory*. Contradiction can be easily seen between the French's written documents and the knowledge that is gained from the oral tradition. She functions a bridge between two contradictory worlds. 'The narrator therefore views her role as that of an intermediary, not only between her people and the French archives, but also between a male-centred history and one that focuses on the role of Algerian women in the struggle for independence' (Fayad, 1995:154).

Djebar discusses the gendered aspects of the Algerian war of national independence and females' central role for rebellion and fight for their country. She succeeds in making her gender issues and feminist theorizing parts of her post colonial discourse. Djebar uses post colonial feminist strategies; through fiction, she follows a process of rewriting *history* which is constituted by colonizers' lies and patriarchy. 'It weaves itself through the blanks and gaps of memory, participates in palimpsest nature of Djebar's project. it proves to be utmost importance for the recovery of one's own past, especially the written record had been shown to lie' (Donadey, 2001:50). She creates a documentary history and also a fictional history by filling the gaps or imagining the details.

As a feminist writer, one of Djébar's reasons of writing *Fantasia* is to focus on these females whose contributions to the independence are overlooked and forgotten. Women are not treated as citizens in the contemporary patriarchal Algerian society, Patriarchal *history* is not aware of the active participation of rural women in the struggle for independence or it does not accept their contributions to the independence struggle, so she uses Algerian women's oral history as a proof for women's deserving places in the social and political areas. 'Djébar's purpose is to bring out the presence, gaze and the voice of Algerian women throughout history, the sources she uses Arab and French texts dealing with women' (Donadey, 2001:124). For Djébar, independence war is not only a war for liberation, it is the beginning of Algerian women's emerging on the public scene, it takes women out of their private spaces, their harems and places them in the public space. After reading French officer Barchou's record of two Algerian women; one torn out a dead French soldier's heart, the other crushed his son's head to prevent it from falling alive in the French's hands, she creates a mythical birth for the new Algerian females who take their roots from the colonial past, she creates a matrilineal history in which the daughters are the victims of the colonial and patriarchal violence like their mothers,

I scrupulously record the image of two warrior women glimpsed from the back or from the side, in the midst of the tumult, by the keen eye of the ADC... an image that prefigures many a future Muslim 'mater dolorosa' who, carrion beetles of the harem, will give birth to generations of faceless orphans during Algeria's thralldom a century later. (Djébar, 1993:19)

Djébar links the cloistered and illiterate Algerian women in the contemporary Algeria to the victims of cave burn, to the women who were raped and whose bodies were severed during the French colonization of Algeria. The women in the colonial period give inspiration to temporary women who are kept at home passively and they contribute to the

construction of the new Algerian women. Moudjahidates prove that Algerian women can achieve success on the public area. 'It is the expectations, the aspirations and the ties established with the recent past through the women's participation in the war that makes the moudjahidates the mothers of the contemporary women's struggle' (Moghadam, 1994:36). But Algerian patriarchal nationalists assume Algerian women's mobilization, support and struggle for the national revolution as a necessity so they do not emancipate Algerian women.

One of the reasons of Djébar's writing Algerian females' oral history is that she feels a need to find her past, she wants to follow her lineage that will give her power and strength to live in the contemporary Algeria as an emancipated woman. As stated by Coates 'the essential beauty of the novel is the inscription of the female narrator's complex awareness of the violent history of her Algerian forebears interwoven with her reaction to multiple problems of existence in contemporary' (1993:1). She mixes her autobiography with the stories of other Algerian females, so she creates a collective autobiography. Fantasia is not about only Djébar's story, it is the story of all Algerian, especially Algerian women. 'The result is not a happy pluralism of voices , but an encounter that foregrounds violence as conflicting voices use for control of the fragmented narratives' (Donadey, 2001:xx). As a feminist writer, she applies to collective autobiography to find her own identity by the help of the other Algerian females. 'The most pervasive feature of female autobiography is the tendency to define the self in relation to significant others rather than in terms of self-creation' (Stephens, 2000:188). She widens her autobiography to embrace the Algerians' collective voice. The first person narrator of the autobiography joins her voice with the voices of other Algerian women; she finds their stories to be her own story so she breaks the rules of the traditional autobiography. And she finds her matrilineal bonds that she is cut off from by her French education. Djébar interviews with Lila Zohra, who is Djébar's

relative, she tells 'it's true I'm closer to you through your mother's father; we belong to the same tribe. She was related to me through another marriage. Through the female line' (Djebar, 1993:164). She creates *herstory* by establishing a contact with her foremothers who do not remain passive in the harem during the liberation struggle. She gains inspiration from these women to emerge on the public scene and to write.

In Muslim societies, gender relations are strictly organized by Islamic religious law that is treated as eternal. Authority belongs to God, male is the representative of God on earth, he demands female to obey him. There is no place for female to have any authority. Female, who is subject to male, is not allowed to speak, to express her needs, feelings, experiences, sufferings and desires. Female is the unequal being under this law and endures subjugation. And female's upbringing teaches her never to use "I" to talk about herself, because the use of "I" refers to individuality and this individuality cannot be accepted in a society which locates the communal interest over the personal interests.

Whenever my mother spoke of my father, she, in common with all the women in her town, simply used the personal pronoun in Arabic corresponding to "him". Thus, every time she used a verb in the third person singular which didn't have a noun subject, she was naturally referring to her husband. (Djebar, 1993:35)

Females call their husbands as him or hajj if he has gone to pilgrimage to Mecca. They cannot call them as "my husband" because they are females so they cannot have or possess anything; patriarchal discourse creates a distance between themselves and females.

In Arabic language, a certain silence reigns a woman's conversation is laden with the omnipresent "he", the "I" of the first person is never used, and women primarily tell their stories "by means of understatement, proverbs, even riddles or traditional fables, handed down from generation to generation, the women

dramatize their fate, or exorcise it, but never expose it directly. (Al-Nowaihi, 2001: 489)

But her mother directly calls her husband 'my husband' as a result of her learning a little French and her connection with her French women neighbours. French language allows female to express their intimate feelings. Algerian women are not allowed to have a chance to use pen to write or speak in the patriarchal social life, their hands and their bodies are under the control of the dominant powers so they use oral tradition instead of the written tradition, their mouths function like their hands which use pens to create their discourse and *herstory* within their confined walls. They use their mouths to convey their experiences to the next generations. 'Alas, we can't read or write. We don't leave any accounts of what we lived through and all we suffered!...you'll see other people who spent their time crouching in holes and who, afterwards, told what they've told!' (Djebar, 1993:148)

For a woman to have a subjectivity in life and a place in literature is very problematic in Algerian culture. There is a problem of the silence of moudjahidates in Algeria, Algerian women cannot undertake their war experiences because of their illiteracy. In this patriarchal society, masculine voice speaks and writes in the name of female participants of the freedom fight. There is no woman writer in the written Algerian national history. Another writer deals with written documents about Algeria war of independence is Bouatta. She explains why there is not any written account of the war of independence by females and what is the reason of female's using oral tradition, she states

[t]wo observations can be formulated about these writings :(1) in general, they are not many; and (2) they are the discourses of men, about the adventures of men. The female moudjahidates have produced no discourses and no formalization about their experiences of war. If it is true that the task of writing and the task of theorization require some distancing, some standing

back, they also require an education and training that participants in the war do not always possess. It remains that it is the men who have given evidence; the women have not. (Moghadam, 1994:18)

Despite the limitations of the traditional history which overlooks the existence of the Algerian women in the struggle, the richness of her native culture's oral tradition reflects the Algerian women's existence in the public sphere and in the struggle for national freedom. Djébar is 'reconstructing the history of Algerian war from oral sources' (Green, 1993:963). She blends her rich French writing with the simple oral Berber words. 'The old lady talks today and I am preparing to transcribe her tale' (Djébar, 1993:177). The oral tradition, especially, the influence of the foremothers in passing down culture and history are effective in her writing. By the help of her French education, she translates the female fighters' oral Berber stories to the written French stories. She listens, translates and writes down female participants' experiences for them in French, 'her use of French is her making out of it a medium of expression for the victims of French's brutality to the Algerians' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:491). She learns from her foremothers how to tell stories. We see her being a story teller who translates the French story of a severed hand found by Eugene Fromentin to her native language.

The chapters "Voice" and "Embraces" in Fantasia are important in terms of discovering the histories that remain hidden by the Algerian national history, and finding voices and existence of the silent and invisible Algerian females. She records their stories in French. The violence of the Algerian revolution between 1954-62 is reflected by recording Algerian women's voices in the parts entitled as "Voice," Algerian females lost their male relatives; all the men, they used to depend on had gone. When men run away from enemy's accusations, women were alone to face with French, their houses and farms were burned down, they were tortured by French soldiers. Women had participated in this historical project but their tasks were not easy. They have

experienced the French authorities' humiliation. In the mid-70s, Djebbar interviewed with the war widows and her female relatives, who fought for the independence struggle and won through their participation in it. She tells the story of rural women about their wartime experiences in her native region of Cherchell. She mixes her story with the other women's stories, in many stories, women's testimonies are rendered in the first person, and then she uses "I"; the first person, as if "I" belongs to the narrator so she places herself in a subjective position. Djebbar presents the words of women freedom fighters, like many other post colonial writers, she writes the other women's stories as her own story; she takes the roles of the rural Algerian women, "use of women as a category in history, whose experiences could be recovered, depends on relationship between speaker and the audience" (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:16). Narrative voice is problematic in parts called "Voice," it is affected from her meditation and translation from Berber to French and writing from oral to the written words. Who is behind "I"? For example: Djebbar writes 'no! I replied, "I stayed with them' (Djebbar, 1993:130). This "I" refers to Cherifa or Djebbar. Djebbar talks Cherifa's story as her own story.

Djebbar's polyphonic texts containing autobiographical fragments mark a new approach to autobiography as they blur the boundaries between fact and fiction, and ignore the autobiographical pact, the promise to the reader that the textual and referential "I" are one and the same. (Mortimer, 1997:115)

Djebbar's approach to woman warriors' experiences consists some qualities; first of all, she is listening to Algerian woman participants' accounts of their entrance into the war, she focuses on their interpretation of the important situations that they lived through. They reveal some crucial information about the variety of the roles women filled during the struggle. She talks with them by mixing her voice with their voices and she also speaks to them. She speaks for them because she intends to perform for her illiterate Algerian

sisters and Djebar presents the words of the women freedom fighters for them by recording the stories of female fighters such as Lla Zohra and Cherifa. From 1830 to the end of the war of liberation, Algerian females have suffered from the violence of the French colonization of Algeria, It can be said that history of Algeria is full of female victims and their resistance to the colonization. French colonization has effects on females' bodies and memories. Cherifa and Lla Zohra's stories' recalls the stories of the Algerian females who suffered from the French colonization in the previous century; the women in the caves, the young naked bride of Mazuna, the prostitutes; Fatima and Merriam. French took the rural women's clothes and left them naked without any clothes on them like the naked bride of Mazuna and Fatima and Meriem and like many of others,

women involved in the war in variety of ways. They went into the maquis as nurses or fighters: they were *moudjahidates*. The *fidaiyates*, those who planted bombs stayed in the city; others, and sometimes the same ones, carried the messages, the money, and the weapons. The 'Battle of Algiers' could not have taken place without these women. . . It was these women who were harassed by French soldiers because their sons or husbands had gone to the war. (Moghadam, 1994:19)

Algerian females' bodies are humiliated by unveiling them. Lla Zohra's sister never recovered from the shock of her nakedness and she died of shame.

Cherifa is one of the participant women in the independence war. When she was 13 years old, Cherifa took part in struggle despite war is assumed as men's deed. She functioned for the benefits of the Algerian nation like a man, instead of remaining with other females at home passively in need of men's protection. French soldiers forced the whole population of Douar to move another place and they took women away because men had gone to join to the fighters. She experienced the colonizers' tortures. She run from French soldiers with her partisan brother, Ahmed. Her brother was killed by

colonizers when they were running away from them. When she saw him fall down, she lost her voice like Djébar's falling in aphasia. She spent two nights hiding from the French soldiers in a tree. She climbed down to retrieve the body to perform the purification rituals. Although Cherifa suffered from cold and hunger, she gained power during the ritual, it is a response to the discourses that describe female's body as weak and fragile. 'Her name is Cherifa, when she tells her story, twenty years later, she mentions no interment nor any other forms of burial for the brother lying in the river bed' (Djébar, 1993:124). A palimpsest of lost memories is addressed by *moujhaïdates* and reinvented by Djébar. Djébar imagines and writes down their memories and the details of the ritual for Cherifa, she hears their cries with grief and sees their movements to bring out their lost voice into voice. In the part "Clamour" in *Fantasia*, a shepherd-girl's silence turns to cry.

Then the voice cautiously takes wing, the voice soars, gaining in strength, what voice? That of the mother who bore the soldiers' torture with never a whimper? The voice of the old women of Douar who face the approaching death-kneel, open-mouthed, with palms of fleshless hands turned upwards? What irrepressible keening, what full-throated clamour strident tremolo? . . . is it the voice of child whose hands are red with henna and a brother's blood? (Djébar, 1993:123)

These women's cry which sounds like a clamour represents the cry in Cherifa, their cry is a revolt to the French colonization of them and this clamour is the top point of their suffering cries against the colonizers, it consists of the whole Algerians' cry which first came out in 1830. Djébar joins her voice to a chorus of Algerian women's voices at the end of *Fantasia*. She hears the death cry in the *Fantasia*.

Another female fighter that Djébar listens and records her story is Lla Zohra who is more than eighty; her story focuses on her sons' and her own resistance to the French soldiers during the war of independence. 'When she

translates women's words in the written text, Djébar is effectively breathing new life into their speech by giving it the power of circulation from which she has benefited since her youth' (Rice, 2004:80). She is not able to use pen or speak like Djébar, in her feminist discourse, Djébar lets us hear her voice of telling her sufferings, '[e]verything has happened to me!' (Djébar, 1993:150) and she gives her a place in the Algerian national history. During the struggle for revolution, she made bread for partisans, they used her farm for five years to hide in. French violence affected her through physical torture, humiliation and the repeated house and farm burning. When Zohra passed information to fighters that French was going to make a raid into the mountains, French police came to tie her up for betraying France. In another part, her sons joined the maquis so the French burned her house down. She hid in her niece's, a war widow Jennet's house like a snake under a mat, she was trembling with fear and Jennet guarded her until she gained her strength and leave with a veil that would hide her real identity.

Algerian women's losses were not only material, their bodies suffered from the French colonization. They put their lives in danger for their nation. Lla Zohra's lose was inscribed on her body because her hair caught fire, she had scars on her forehead and neck that are the reminder of this fire. Donadey states 'the violent colonial encounter between Algeria and French inscribes itself as a wound whose traces remains on the body and memory of Algerian women, from the beginning of French colonization to final war of liberation' (2001:59). All these misfortunes, tortures caused the brain damage and people treated her as if she was the mad-woman. The marginalized people in the societies are usually females. Cherifa says, '[t]hey brought a whip. They beat me' (Djébar, 1993:135). French took her to cell, sent her exile and tortured her with electricity.

Algerian females demonstrated their courage against the colonizers in a revolting tone, their fearless voices are heard, they represent the courage

and power of all the brave Algerian women; Lila Zohra's said 'I am involved until I die' (Djebar, 1993:147). In the same way, Cherifa challenged the French 'come closer, if you dare! You call us rats, so let's see if we're rats or lions!' (Djebar, 1993:138) When a French officer asked Cherifa why she was fighting, her response was significant, 'for what I believe in, for my ideas!' (Djebar, 1993:140), war gave Algerian females a chance to express themselves, they felt themselves as individuals and useful parts of and heroines of their society.

The Algerian war was a decisive turning point in the struggle of colonized countries. It was a demonstration of the power of the people, in the sense that it gave the colonized the status of heroes in history. For the duration of the war, the women had become heroes. (Moghadam, 1994:20)

Djebar writes a history by the help of the trauma of the war existing in women's memory. Remembering and retelling of Algerian women's experiences of war and the collective narrative are the central features of her writing project. Djebar focuses on the importance of women's memory to rewrite history,

women's testimonies about their experiences of history can only be transmitted to the reader through a series of external meditations that foreground the aspects of *reconstitution* of such history and the *workings* of memory in the rewriting of a history erased by official versions. (Donadey, 2001:51)

She writes a history from her feminist perspective and this leads her to move into Algerian collective memory. The chapters about the oral history involve Algerian women's collective memories. Djebar relies on the suppressed memories of Algerian woman warriors' to bring out the reality of the war of independence and to recreate *herstory*. 'This colonized woman as Memmi suggests condemned to oppressive loss of memory' (Green, 1993:959). When Cherifa recalls the past, '[s]he speaks slowly. Her voice lifts the burden

of memory; it now wings its way towards that summer of 1956, when she was just a girl, the summer of devastation' (Djebar, 1993:141), for Djebar, the woman warrior sets her voice and herself free again as if she was free during the war.

In Fantasia, Cherifa, Lla Zohra and the other war widows seem to structure their personal stories; indeed, their stories are the representative of many other female war participants' stories during the liberation struggle in Algeria. In Gender and National Identity, Cherifa Boutta creates a study like the parts that consists of interviews with female war participants in Djebar's Fantasia. Boutto's study of 'feminine militancy' during and after the Algerian war of national liberation is significant to understand the aim of Djebar's interview with the female war participants, and the stories of spokeswomen in both works carry similarities.

Boutta seeks to uncover the 'subjective' side of participation in war and revolution and brings her skills a social psychologist to bear in her interviews with two mujhaidates- Algerian women fighters-regarding their role in the national movement, their views of their role, and their perspectives on the situation of Algerian women today. Both of her subjects are extremely critical of the post-independence status of Algerian women. (Moghadam, 1994:12)

Boutto seems to study subjective side of participation in the war, but this subjectivities and the experiences of two or more Algerian women fighters refer to the experiences of many others. Camila and Houria's experiences in Boutto's study are similar to Cherifa, Lla Zohra and other war widows' experiences.

Whatever they do, Algerian women are under the power of patriarchy before, during and after the war. They were not equal with men during the war, they could not command to men or control them, men were the leaders, commanders but women were able to use their traditional duties for male

fighters and their nation. For example, Cherifa made herself useful for rebellious partisans. She used a woman's traditional roles for Algerian nation. She learnt to give first aid to the wounded Algerian in the camps of partisans. 'It may my job to wash the patients and their clothes and bed linen; I began to give injection' (Djebar, 1993:130). During the war, there was pressure on women participants to get married to avoid indecent talk of their behaviours.

Djebar brings out the realities about war heroines after the war. Djebar writes down the experiences of a widow, she gives voice to her, this widow lost four of her men whom she used to depend on, during the independence war, she buried her brothers and nephews in order not to leave them to be eaten by jackals, she sent food, soap, clothes money to moujhaيدات, but after the war, she lives in bad conditions in a hut lonely, she declares that the people in the city don't give her anything, she wants her rights, '[g]ive me my rights'(Djebar, 1993:200). Djebar searches for her rights after the independence. Djebar's approach is crucial to end the silence of moudjahيدات and to restore a feminine voice on the war by recording their words.

Certain women such as Cherifa and Lla Zohra crossed the line that creates a division between women and men and the harem and the public; and they had a chance of moving out of their houses during the war and they entered the war. The war gives women a chance to appear on the public space to become heroines. During the war, a paradise occurred for Algerian females in the society but after the war, this paradise remains as a dream and imagination for them, 'during the war is established as a mythical period of harmony and fraternity between human beings' (Moghadam, 1994:33). Algerian females are confined within their houses and their traditional roles after the war because their main intention is to be free of French control. Algerian females do not have an intention for emancipation or making

females' condition better, they do not aware of their being heroines. The war for revolution does not signify the end of the oppression of Algerian females by patriarchal system or the arrival of new social order that supplies freedom to Algerian females. 'According to Fanon, the war was to shake the patriarchal familial edifice' (Moghadam, 1994:23), Fanon is optimistic about the situation of female after the war because he did not live to witness the condition of Algerian women in the contemporary Algeria but Djebbar experiences the condition of Algerian women in the contemporary Algeria.

Women can be liberated it is necessary to dismantle those parts of the androcentric culture which keep them in subjection and seeing that language and literature are part of that culture, a feminist critic can contribute towards the de-centring of androcentirism by designating gender the principal criterion for assessing those dominant but usually unacknowledged conventions which determine how women speak and write. (Ruthven, 1984:64)

Algerian males go on limiting the lives and opportunities open to the Algerian women. The nationalist structures in Algeria in the service of perpetuating the special advantages and opportunities of the patriarchy. 'Were not nationalist leaders anxious to make it known that all were equal in the struggle?' (Djebbar, 1993:103). Algerian male revolutionaries use the nationalism to silence and govern the women and use Islam and Arabic to intensify Algerian females' oppression. They influence women's lives and choices and shape them as they wish. If females achieve some rights, patriarchal authority, which commands female are life, will be shaken.

There are not so much things that have changed in the name of Algerian females. For example; after the war, Cherifa becomes a subservient woman; when she was a young prisoner, Cherifa outburst against the French soldiers bravely, but many years after the war, Cherifa's voice turns weak, she speaks slowly. 'Lords of the yesterday war, or to the young girls who lay in

hiding and who now inhabit the silence that succeeds the battle' (Djebar, 1993:142). And she goes under the control of a widower and brings up his five children. She is enclosed within the walls of her patio. Like Djebar, Cherifati-Marabtime interviews with moudjahidates about their experience of the war to bring out their silent contributions and existence in history. Both Djebar and Cherifati-Marabtime deal with some particular Algerian women's explanation of their involvement and their motivations in the war. Cherifati - Marabtime, summarizes what is meant to be said about the situation of Algerian women participants during and after the war. 'Cherifati-Merabtime then goes to emphasize the disparity between the female militants who had 'acceded to the ranks of subjects of history' and their place in the post-independence leadership is 'null'" (Moghadam, 1994:13).

I want to make a comparison between Turkish and Algerian wars of independence in terms of females situation during and after the wars, Turkish history is full of females such as Nene Hatun, Halide Edip Adivar, Şerife Bacı, Fatma Bacı, Gülsüm Bacı and many other females during the war who fought and functioned for the benefits of their nation like Cherifa and Lla Zohra and other Algerian females in the Algerian history. Apart from this similarity, there is a great difference between the situations of the Algerian and Turkish females after the war of independence, In Turkey, equality between the genders is permitted. Turkish women gain emancipation and autonomy and they have right to vote and to be chosen as leaders. They remain as dreams for the Algerian women.

Djebar writes down Algerian women's courage against the colonial powers. Djebar wants the patriarchy's to look the colonial and anti-colonial periods in which females took parts like males, so they deserve a place in the contemporary society, Djebar intends to prove that the other Algerian females can be free like her, as a result of her French education, her body gains mobility, 'I spoke and studies French, and my body,during this

formative period, became westernized in its way'(Djebar, 1993:127). She is preserved from cloistering and marrying with an unknown man against her will and she asks an important question to herself 'why me? Why do I alone, of all my tribe, have this opportunity' (Djebar, 1993: 213) and this is the starting point of her writing this novel with the aim of justifying females' declaring their rights in the contemporary patriarchal society.

Algerian females try to survive in a world that is hostile to them. As an Algerian chronicler, Djebar creates a fictional history, 'I should first and foremost be moved by the rape or sufferings of the anonymous victims, which their writings resurrect; but I am strangely haunted by the agitation of the killers, by their obsessional unease' (Djebar, 1993:57). Apart from depicting the forgotten Algerian women in the history, Djebar attempts to recreate her foremothers and her relatives; her mother, grandmothers, aunts, sisters living inside the harem so she breaks the silence that surrounds all of the Algerian women. Djebar feels herself haunted by the vanished Algerian females during the colonial and anti-colonial times or by the Algerian women in their harem in the post colonial time. She is haunted by her paternal grandmother's ringing voice, she tries to find her voice, she is used to call her 'silent mother' (Djebar, 1993:194), she compares her with her maternal grandmother and aunts who are proud aristocrats live in a world of music, incense and noise. Djebar widens her autobiography to insert her post colonial feminist discourse within the community of Algerian females. As a feminist autobiographer, the relationship between females in the harem and Algerian females' conversation are influential for her.

Djebar deconstructs the traditional symbols, harem and veil in Fantasia to empower and to recreate women as if woman warriors those fight against the colonial and patriarchal discourses. Djebar challenges Algerian females' movements and bodies being controlled by Muslim Algerian patriarchy and she challenges the western tales about the traditional symbols; veil and

harem, these symbols come first to one's mind when someone mentions about Muslim Algerian women. In the western mind, all of the Muslim women are portrayed as heavily veiled subjects and live with one man in their secluded areas and their lives consist of their homes, their families and other females in the harem. And they were sexual and exotic beings in the earlier western travellers' text and these inspire the contemporary western discourse of Muslim women. Like Leila Ahmed, Djébar rejects their fantastical image of the harem which is the place for sexual abuse and oppression against females.

Harem is no longer a place for controlling females' movement. Harem is constructed to control women by Muslim patriarchy but it becomes a place for the veiled Algerian women to break the imposed silence that surrounds their experiences by talking to one another, it supplies them freedom to speak without the patriarchy's control. Djébar portrays the moments of Algerian women's resistance that consists their coalition and expression of their "merriment or happiness" (Djébar, 1993:155) in their traditional limited areas. They confess and reveal the intimate details about themselves. Harem becomes a place for women to fight against their silence, invisibility and inactivity in their cultures in *Fantasia*. She let us hear her sisters' voices of radical ideas at home under the lock, 'we can say "bonjour" like them, and sit on a chair like them, why not? God created us too, didn't he?' (Djébar, 1993:21). And they transgress the traditional anonymity with the use of "I", they break a taboo without being a part of an anonymity. This emphasizes the collective nature of females' expression. They express themselves as unified subjects; women tell the stories of their lives and experiences so they claim their individuality within the confines of the harem. The cloistered and illiterate Algerian women in the harem retain their role of story teller by whispering to the next generation their stories. 'She transmits her whispered story in her turn to a new circle of bright-eyed children' (Djébar, 1993:178). Algerian women have significant roles in the passing down Algerian's national

and cultural history and genealogy through their mouths. Story telling belongs to women in this patriarchal society.

For Djébar, the female gatherings in the harem can be treated to have a potential to unite women and make social and political change. The female gatherings are necessary to inspire Algerian women. Djébar and other Algerian women have already practised the possibilities of resistance to patriarchal oppression in the harem.

Algerian women's bodies are laden with traditional meanings. The social and cultural norms wish to keep Algerian women under constraint, Algerian patriarchy confines women's bodies through wrapping them in veils to control their movements and their sexual desires. In *Fantasia*, Djébar seeks to portray Algerian female's body and articulate the importance of the body for female without making absolute statements. French colonization intensifies Algerian women's wearing veil. French sought to unveil Algerian women because they thought that the veil of Muslim women was a proof of their being oppressed under Islamic religious authority, and they believed that all the Muslims need their enlightenment, this made the French to see their colonization justified. Muslim women's wearing veil gains a political meaning to respond westerners' desire to unveil Algerian females' bodies.

Algerian females' participation in the struggle against colonialism complicates the theme of veil and overloads new meanings to it.

There are two issues at stake concerning the Arab women's veil and its relationship to power and resistance; phallogentrism (patriarchy) and colonialism. By traditional Muslim standards, women inhabiting public space are bound by specific rules and rituals, most recognizable among them being wearing of the veil. As Fatima Mernissi states, 'the veil means that the woman is present in men's world, but invisible; she has no right to be in the street'. (Decker, 1990:182)

Veiling is treated in Algerian history and in Fantasia as a palimpsest, a rich and a complex text on which multiple messages are overlaid. Although the veil confines Algerian women's movements, it also gives freedom to them to move because they are made invisible to the colonial and patriarchal eyes. All of them look identical to these eyes. Algerian females think that they are invisible to Frenchmen so they can protect their image that is the most sacred inheritance of them.

[T]here is a difference between the veiled women, a difference that the eye of the foreigner can't discern; he thinks them all identical--phantoms roaming the streets, staring, examining, surveying all about them, but they possess an inherent streak of inequality: between the one who shouts, sending her voice soaring over the confined area of the patio, and the one on the other hand who never speaks, who contents herself with sighing or lets herself be interrupted until her voice is permanently stifled. (Djebar, 1993:203)

Through her conversation with the veiled Algerian women, some of whom are members of her own family, Djebar participates in a tradition of Algerian women's storytelling to come over her cut off from her origin and her native language and this creates a contact with her mother tongue, Berber language which 'implies in terms of intimacy, security, and trust' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:489). She has no memory of songs, poems in her native language, she is cut off from this language. 'I too seek out the rich vocabulary of love of my mother tongue-milk of which I had been previously deprived' (Djebar, 1993:62). It is lost for her because she is culturally colonized by French and Arabic languages. Algerian government's policy of Arabization in Algeria ignores Berber specificity and Berber language. Djebar begins with the discussions of language and then she bases those discussions on creating her identity. As a woman writer, she finds herself being colonized once by the colonizers and then by the nationalist power, in addition to this problem,

she faces the problem of ambivalence about the language in which she writes.

Speaking French language has two functions in Djébar's life, it is the language of the colonizers and it is also used as a vehicle to perpetuate binary discrimination. Her French education makes her a cultural and linguistic exile from her origins, 'severing the bonds of childhood' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:491), it also excludes her from the other females' company. She feels a distance to female gatherings, Djébar 'explore[s] the paradoxes of a divided identity –both French and Algerian-as one who uses the language of conqueror and to explore the complexities of belonging and not belonging' (Stephens, 2000:199). It also means a chance and freedom for Djébar. She recognizes that her French education spares her from a life of seclusion. it is 'the one in which she was educated and one that she associates with liberation' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:488). It allows her to move out of the harem and escape from the cloistering,

when I sit curled up like this to study my native language it is as though my body reproduces the architecture of my native city: the medina with their tortuous alleyways closed off to the outside world, living their secret life. When I write and read the foreign language, my body travels far in subversive space, in spite of the neighbours and suspicious matrons; it would not need much for it to take wing and fly away! (Djébar, 1993:184)

Djébar discovers that writing is a physical activity that connects her to deep thoughts, feelings or emotions and it connects her body to freedom. She is a francophone feminist, she uses French as an Algerian and as an Algerian female writer. She speaks and writes for herself and her Algerian sisters who cannot write. It is dangerous for a woman to learn to write in this patriarchal society. Dominant male society controls woman's writing which is connected to women's freedom,

it is the pen that enables the subject to transcend the feminine condition because writing is perceived as a masculine preserve, the role of writer is not represented as the gift of genes or genius, but as a status won through a gradual and dramatic process of experiment and authorization. (Stephens, 2000:189)

Writing in French allows Djebbar to write Algerian women's stories and to find the voice of the Algerian women who speak in their native language. 'The old lady talk today and I am preparing to transcribe her tale' (Djebbar, 1993:177). She considers herself as a hand more than an author. Djebbar's writing about them in French resurrects her vanished sisters who protest against the patriarchal and colonial powers silently. Djebbar translates female narrators' oral stories to the enemy's language. She also translates Algerian woman warriors' experiences in the past to the present day.

Djebbar is equally committed to bring the qalam to this mujahidat, and are resistance fighters. She uses her role as a scribe, attempting to transcribe their words into French that maintains the tempo, texture, and expression of their spoken Arabic and Berber with minimal interference on her past. (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:492)

Djebbar strives to prove the importance of writing for females and Algerian history. Djebbar writes

but the enemy, slips back in the rear. His war is mute, undocumented, leaving no leisure for writing. the women's shrill ululation improvises for the fighting men a threnody of war in some alien idiom: our chroniclers are haunted by the distant sound of half-human cries, cacophony of keening, ear – splitting hieroglyphs of a wild, collective voice. (Djebbar, 1993:56)

Through writing, Djebbar creates her feminist language as a respond to the colonial and patriarchal discourses which define women's roles. Her writing an autobiography gives a change for individual and collective expression and unveils their bodies and their voices. The unspeakable themes in her society

are written in her novel. She hears the sufferings of women in one of French legionnaire, Bernard's chronicle, he told his friend his experience with a small Algerian girl. He described this small girl like a voluptuous adult woman. She writes about this event after twenty years. Djebbar speaks for Algerian women who remained silently while the girl giving herself. 'Twenty years later I report the scene to you' (Djebbar, 1993:211). She feels her ancestor women's sufferings and writes more than the eye-witnesses see and she hears more than they heard.

When Djebbar foregrounds women's visibility in the war, it means that she claims an acceptable space for all Algerian women in the social and political areas. She tries to emphasize that Algerian women deserve a place in the society because they helped to build it. She restores them to their right places. Her pen allows Algerian women's existence and courage to emerge into public space. 'For the majority of female French autobiographers who are writers, a central feature of the traditional pattern is the achievement of freedom through writing itself' (Stephens, 2000:189). She tries to open spaces for Algerian women with her qalam. 'Can I, twenty years later, claim to revive these stifled voices? And speak for them? Shall I not at best find dried-up streams? What ghosts will be conjured up when in this absence of expression of love (love received, love imposed), I see the reflection of my own barrenness, my own aphasia' (Djebbar, 1993:202). She helps women to physically encounter the world out of the harem from which they are excluded by the traditional patriarchy, Algerian women are subversive they do not have right to speak and write which belong to the patriarchy.

To sum up, *Fantasia* contains historical, autobiographical and collective autobiographical fragments. 'The different parts of the text are in a self-corrective dialogue with one another' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:488). She interweaves her autobiographical fragments with colonial history and *herstory* so she succeeds in placing her own story within her nation's story.

Autobiographical writing involves negotiating with public and private archives. The theme of archive and concern with the status of document and the trace, is an important thread in contemporary French thought and it is not surprising that this finds clear echoes in the rise of autobiography, given a common concern for the borders of individual and collective experience, self and history. (Stephens, 2000:200)

Djebar combines her own voice and life story with the voices and lives of Algerian women. She is able to change the silent Algerian woman and the colonizer's version of history into a celebration female existence and expression. Her fragmented self affects her autobiography's fragmented structure. To form a united identity and to give voices and identities to all of the Algerian females through *word*, historical context cannot be dismissed, she looks back to her foremothers' histories to form new Algerian female self who has voice and existence. Djebar succeeds in recreating Algerian female self and Algerian national history; she breaks a silence that has lasted for 132 years. She writes in a challenging way to the patriarchal language that controls her. Like Scheherazade, she takes the role of storyteller, and she describes the women's wounded bodies in details which are bleeding and suffering and she restores wholeness to mutilated corpses by storytelling in written words. Djebar inherits power from the women; who were burned in caves, whose hands and feet were cut, who killed her son with a stone not to give him to enemy, who are in harem, who wear veil, who fight. She creates a parallel between the women's wounded bodies and her wounded memories to create an autobiography.

CHAPTER 3

THE COMPARISON PART OF THE WOMAN WARRIOR AND FANTASIA

3.1. Imposed Silence in The Woman Warrior and Fantasia

The contexts of Kingston and Djébar are completely different from each other. Kingston lives in America as a daughter of Chinese immigrants to America, she experiences the racism in America and tries to find her Chinese American identity, but Djébar lives in Algeria which had been under French colonization since 1830 and gained its independence in 1962. She experiences post colonization and tries to find her female self that is under the effects of French and Arab cultures. Despite this difference, they share similar themes, the imposed silence on female is one of the main similar themes in their writings.

Both of these feminist writers succeed in entering the world of *word* by creating different strategies. Both recreate the ignored and silenced women by giving a deserving status to the written word and the oral word which are the parts of the language. Language is constructed by the racial, colonial and patriarchal systems that have power over *the other*. And it becomes their dominant tool to control *the other*. These systems try to reign *the other* under their control and they try to impose restrictions and the feeling of inferiority on them with their languages. The aim of the racial and colonial powers' control of the individual's thoughts reminds one George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, 'war is peace, freedom is slavery, and ignorance is strength' (1973:7). They adopt the language to their ideologies, they shape

peoples' identities as they wish. It is through the language that we become aware of our own identities but in their works, females' identities and choices are influenced as much by racial, colonial discourses as by patriarchal social arrangements. These discourses use the language to inscribe dichotomies on people's mind to create racial, colonial and gender conscious societies and to create certain roles for women. Both of the writers respond to the repressive effects of the dominant languages. '[L]anguage has played a crucial role in the creation of patriarchal order' (Sellers, 1991:16) in their works, it prevents the women in their societies from the possibility of speaking as individuals.

Both write against the women's behaviours' being shaped by the society's expectations and both protest against the political and social injustices that women have to endure 'our history, our philosophy, our system of government, our laws, even our religions, are products of a specific – masculine - mode of perceiving and organizing the world' (Sellers, 1991:xiv). Both deal with the subordination of women to the masculine language. I want to make a reference to Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion in which the florist girl is reshaped by the patriarchy according to his desires, Higgins words highlight the idea that women are seen as objects to be shaped by the patriarchy, he says 'woman: do you not understand that I have made you a consort for a king?' (1993:137)

This part is an explanation of their use of silence in their works with its similar and different aspects. Both apply to silence as a way of control of women by the dominant discourses and both use its potential to respond to them. It is seen that both writers cross the lines and use language to communicate and understand the other women in their societies. Both writers speak for those who are afraid to speak, for those who cannot speak because of the lack of the second languages, for those whose stories are intentionally erased by the official histories as well as by their patriarchal

societies. They resist the historical amnesia and write about socially unspeakable themes.

To explore the issue of language in Kingston and Djébar's works is not an easy deal. Language and gender are two inseparable themes and 'speaking a language is inherently political' (Chen, 1995:1) in Kingston's work like in Djébar's work. 'Female writing is bound up in female biology, she maintains, because women have been taught to feel guilty about both, and the courage to claim and proclaim both language and biology is the first step toward "transformation"' (Walker, 1990:42). Their dealing with the issue of gender brings the themes silence and voice together. The language and voice are the main effective themes in Kingston and Djébar's works. Their search for *female self* for their fragmented identities and for the other invisible or silent women base on these themes and they start writing their autobiographical works with these themes. The Woman Warrior and Fantasia are the works of search for feminine discourse to criticize the rules of the discourses that imprison women sexually, racially and colonize them.

Kingston and Djébar write as post structural feminists whose enemies are patriarchal, racial and colonial discourses and their representations. Sellers writes about women's silence by referring Irigaray's statement:

'women can only come into being as the inverted other of the masculine subject.' She explores the premises that underlie the theories of the 'great' philosophers from Plato on, revealing both their masculine bias, and how this bias has become encoded in our language and culture to reduce women to silence. (1991:8)

Both feel the pain and fear of being silent and useless and these are the backgrounds of their lives' successes. Kingston and Djébar suffer from the prejudices to the females in their cultures and histories. Their cultures are the anti- female cultures. 'For my part, I lived at a time when, for more than a century, the vilest of men from the dominant society had imagined himself

a master over us' (Djebar, 1993:128). They experience the same discrimination by the dominant powers against them. 'Despite being a reticent autobiographer, Djebar leaves enough traces of her own experiences in her texts to allow for an Anglo-American style examination of the author as product of a "particular cultural milieu"' (Ringrose, 2006: 15). In the same way, Kingston's experiences of racial and gender discrimination in her society prove her being a part of a "particular cultural milieu." Like many other Chinese girls, her getting straight A is ignored and she is humiliated by her family and her community with the discriminating words such as "maggot, useless, shameful."

While their societies expect them to behave in traditional ways, Kingston and Djebar break the circle of the patriarchal society to taste their individualities. Due to her education in French, Djebar escapes wearing the veil and turns a westernized Algerian woman, she has to deal with being an unveiled sexual object in her society. 'Such women are expected to think in terms of imported ideas, desiring to "transgress what is sacred and based in nature and culture"' (Moghadam, 1994:19). She also raises her female community's veil with her words about them. Kingston does not try to behave like a girl as she does want to fit in the imposed traditional roles of Chinese females by the patriarchy.

They are not sure about their societies' behaviours against their woman members. The changeable behaviour of their societies against females trouble Kingston and Djebar and affect their constructing their female selves. The protagonists, No name woman, three cloistered girls and Fa Mu lan, moujahidates interact differently with their societies. These two works are set in the domestic and restricted settings of females. Kingston and Djebar suggest that the first thing a woman learns is to stay in her place silently. The chapter "White Tigers" begins with the statement that 'when we Chinese girls, listened to adults' talk story; we learnt we failed if we grew up to be

but wives and slaves' (Kingston, 1989:19). They are between these slave and warrior types of women to form their female identities. There are two choices for women: to be appreciated or to be disgraced by their societies. They focus on the importance of silence and obedience for females to be accepted as good women in their traditional Chinese and Algerian cultures. In Fantasia, the place of women in Algerian society is to be invisible, silent and stay in their limited area in order to be away from the punishment of the controlling society. Djebbar states that 'so wrapped the nubile girl in veils. Make her invisible, make her unseeing than the sightless, destroy in her every memory of the world without' (Djebbar, 1993:3).

Women in their societies are in between their individualities and their communities. Both writers experience that their native societies condemn the individuality and appreciate the woman who cares for her society more than herself yet the protagonists' western educations expect them to be individuals. Their societies' paradoxical behaviours to their female subjects are reflected in the traditional stories about women. The main duties of the women in their societies are to care the goodness of their communities. Fa Mu Lan was appreciated and moujhaيدات gained movement due to their attitude of self-denial and self-abnegation. When Fa Mu Lan returned to her home after training for fifteen years with the old couple, her community greeted her in a happy way, and when she set out to fight against her community's enemies, her community gave her their sons and they made her immortal by telling her story in the Ballad of Mu Lan. Algerian females moved out of their houses to fight but they were not appreciated like Fa Mu Lan. In Algeria, women are only disgraced, their contributions during the war of liberation are not appreciated. Whether they appreciate or not, men push women back in their restricted areas.

Females' success and contributions do not bring freedom to the next generation of females that include the protagonists. The young girl Djebbar

attended a female gathering in her town, she wore veil, and one of the city lady moved around her to choose her as bride for her son and when she was in a wedding ceremony, the household of women became another prison apart from the veil. This reminds one that the narrator Kingston's foremothers gained success in social area; Fa Mu Lan saved her society and her mother became a respected doctor who saved her society from the illness and ghosts. Although female can be successful in Chinese society, Kingston experiences the prejudice that her nameless aunt experienced in her family, she is debased in her family. She tries to endure the pain of females' discriminated social conditions. Both try to justify that Chinese and Algerian women deserve good places in their social lives by rewriting their silent stories. They fear to be victims of their patriarchal societies' violence against the females. As described by Ringrose, to change female's status 'language is the favoured medium to achieve this change' (2006:18). Djébar sees language like the other French feminists as described; 'only dismantling the very bases of patriarchy, beginning with its language and working from language to its culture and institutions, can we hope to initiate social and political change' (Sellers, 1991:15). And in the same way, for Kingston language is used to create a change for females.

In both Chinese and Algerian societies, free speech, expression of desire is forbidden for females. In The Woman Warrior, for keeping girls in silence, society utter a common phrase; a ready tongue is evil. The protagonists, No name woman and three Algerian girls' are lack of self-denial qualities, the individuality does not exist for the women in their societies, women are under the control of jailers who keep them watching. While her society expected her nameless aunt to behave in traditional ways, she broke the circle in her society to taste her individuality. She fought against the society with her untraditional experiences and her fight goes on even after her death. Kingston desires to cross the line that enclosed her like No name

woman. In the same way, three cloistered girl and Djébar aim to break the social circle and create freedom within the confines of their rooms. No name woman's expression of her love and her feelings brought her freedom, in the same way, love letter is a key to the outside world for the cloistered Arab girls and Djébar. 'These girls though confined to their house, were writing; were writing letters; letters to men; to men in the four corners of the world; of the Arab world, naturally' (Djébar,1993:11) Djébar's tempo in her writing reflects her amazement with the girls' breaking the social circle. They find freedom in their rooms and write, 'the French language enables them to escape the physical walls surrounding them and partake of experiences they wouldn't otherwise be able to have' (Al-Nowaihi,2001:489). Their secret correspondence with the boys from the other countries is a dangerous sin, Algerian patriarchy has right to kill female who writes love letters or whispers words of love. In Fantasia, writing is connected with female's freedom, society condemns girls who learn how to write; "I have told you so' while commiserating with the foolhardy father, the irresponsible brother." (Djébar 3). The correspondents' individualities are much more important than the social structure. No name woman must be punished for tasting her desires, 'the villagers punished her for acting as if she could have a private life, secret and apart from them' (Kingston, 1989:13).

Chinese and Algerian females are confined within their rooms, their voice and movement are controlled by their patriarchal societies. The villagers who are watchful in Kingston's memoir are the same with the neighbours in Djébar's statement,

from the very first day that a little girl leaves her home to learn the ABC, the neighbours adopt that knowing look of those who in ten or fifteen years' time will be able to say 'I told you so!' while commiserating with the foolhardy father, the irresponsible brother. For misfortune will inevitably befall them. (Djébar, 1993:3)

The neighbours are watchful to control girls' behaviours as we see in the wedding ceremony in Fantasia.

The silencing of women and social taboos are transmitted from one generation to the other. They pass down obedience and silence as ways for their existence in the oppressive cultures that devalue them and their contributions. Patriarchal societies do not talk about love, desire, sex and birth. Brave Orchid and the other immigrants do not explain some customs to their America born children, Kingston states her amazement with her society's silence about these subjects that 'I don't see how they kept a continuous culture for five thousand years. Maybe they didn't; maybe on being told, we'd have no religion, no babies, no menstruation (sex, of course, unspeakable), and no death' (Kingston, 1989:185). This statement also refers to their silence about her aunt's pregnancy. Brave Orchid became aware that No name woman's stomach got broader but Brave Orchid and the other member of her family did not mention about her pregnancy. And Djébar gets love letters about a man's passion to a woman's body for the 'women who never received a letter: no word taut with desire' (Djébar, 1993:60).

The issues of women's silence and social taboos are the most dominant themes in their writings and they can be assumed as the reasons of their writing feminist autobiographies and they have direct effects on Kingston and Djébar's struggle for formulating their own identities. Both reveal the taboos of their societies and the secrets of the females in their communities and they deal with the wrongs that are done to their societies and females. Both of these autobiographical writings start with the theme of imposed silence on their protagonists and the other female characters and with the theme of secrets in their lives. When we start to read The Woman Warrior, we hear Kingston's mother's voice who starts out No name woman's story with the theme of silence. Brave Orchid's voice functions as the voice of Chinese

patriarchy that warns her to be silent about her immoral aunt; she says '[y]ou mustn't tell anyone' (Kingston,1989:3). Kingston tries to break the silence that patriarchy imposed upon her. She tries to find her voice as a Chinese American female. It is an ironic statement because she is not keeping silent. By rewriting her aunt's story, Kingston reveals out her family's secret to her readers. The first sentence of The Woman Warrior recalls the first sentences of the autobiographical part of Fantasia, with the theme of writing, Djebbar brings out the females' silence. And she reveals the cloistered girls' secret correspondence with the boys from all around the world in her writing.

In The Woman Warrior, Brave Orchid's aim in telling this story is to control Kingston's body not to have premarital sex and bring shame on her family. In Fantasia, the Algerian women's movements are confined in the same way, in Algerian society, there is no permission for them to express their feelings. Djebbar asks 'what if she has learnt to write' (Djebbar, 1993:3). Writing is a bodily act and it gives freedom to women to move out of their houses and to express themselves but women are only allowed to sigh in the Algerian society.

I recall one familiar expression used to condemn a woman irrevocably: worse than the poor (wealth and luxury were relative in this restricted society), worse than the widow or the repudiated wife (a fate that depends on God alone) the only really guilty woman, the only one you could despise with impunity, the one you treated with manifest contempt, was 'the woman who raises her voice. (Djebbar, 1993:203)

It is indecent for a women in patriarchal Arab society to speak, let her voice come out of their patio, 'to speak-or try to speak- is to experience difficulties in finding an appropriate speaking-position in an andocentric mode of discourse which designates men as the enunciators and relegates women to the position of the enounced' (Ruthven, 1984:60).

In Kingston and Djébar's traditional patriarchal societies, women operate under the limitations and this makes them desire to do forbidden things. Their societies do not let women reflect their feelings and females must not learn how to write, women expression of their feelings are restricted but the absolute controls over women's voices are not possible in both of their works, women can express and write their feelings secretly 'the jailer must keep watch day and night. The written words will take flight from the patio; will be tossed from a terrace. The blue of heaven is suddenly limitless. The precautions have all been in vain' (Djébar, 1993:3).

Chinese and Algerian societies' traditional roles and concepts of femininity and their control of female's voice and body is supplied by the discursive languages. Female's oppression through language becomes the part of the masculine languages in their societies. After her burst of her desires to her mother, her mother shouts her as "Ho Chi Kuei." Kingston does not know its meaning, she cannot ask anyone because 'I don't know any Chinese I can ask without getting myself scolded or teased, so I've been looking in books' (Kingston, 1989:204). Chinese is the language that is used to insult Chinese females. Djébar affirms that the official Arabic is an authoritarian language that is simultaneously the language of men, and this language, like the Chinese language reign all the Algerian women and Djébar. Kingston shows her readers that all of the concepts in Chinese old sayings in her mother's stories reign her girlhood in the chapter "White Tigers." Chinese women in America have already been oppressed by the patriarchal system's common phrases such as "'Girls are maggots in the rice,' 'it is more profitable to raise geese than daughters'" (Kingston, 1993:43), "'when fishing for treasures in the flood, be careful not to pull in girls'" (Kingston, 1993:52).

In the same way, Algerian patriarchy impose on the people's mind the ideology that girls are useless, while girls are humiliated by the degrading words of the patriarchy, words of love are uttered to boys. 'The old granny

who only says "hannouni!" to little boys because she does not care for girls (they cause too many worries)' (Djebar, 1993:80).

Both of these feminist writers create a connection with the female's body and the language, this connection is shaped according to their postcolonial contexts. Female's body is invisible to conventional traditions in their works. When Fa Mu Lan disguised herself as a man, her body gained visibility. Kingston hates the silent Chinese girl's silence and her physical appearance which is fragile, weak 'her footsteps were soft' (Kingston, 1989:175). And she is invisible to both Chinese patriarchy and American racists. These features make her appear as a non-existent figure in this world. This is similar to Djebar's statement 'so wrapped the nubile girl in veils. Make her invisible. Make her more unseeing than the sightless; destroy in every memory of world without' (Djebar, 1993:3). And female's body is abused by the racial, colonial and patriarchal powers to perform their barbarism. The Algerian women who wear veils are invisible figures in their patriarchal societies. During the French colonization and the struggle for independence, they were raped and their bodies were severed by cutting their hands and feet for their jewellery, they were questioned with electricity and they were left without their clothes, 'they took our clothes, and left us like that, naked as the day we were born!' (Djebar, 1993:159) They are silent about the discourses' misuse of their bodies, it is revealed out by Djebar.

Apart from confining women through their words, the patriarchy confines them physically by keeping their bodies under their control. Chinese and Algerian societies produce their traditional roles and concepts of femininity which are enforced through the social symbols; feet-bound, cutting tongue in China in The Woman Warrior and veil in public and the harem in Algeria in Fantasia. These symbols confine women physically in the same ways. Feet bound and the tongue cutting traditions are thought as violent physical torture that Chinese men perform upon the women to make them silent and

inactive. Feet bound was a common tradition in old China, Kingston writes about her aunt and grandmother whose feet were bound and she refers to her and her sisters being lucky unlike the traditional Chinese women, 'we didn't have to have our feet bound when we were seven' (Kingston, 1989:9). Chinese girls are brought up to adopt their bodies to the traditional Chinese feminine bodies by 'walking erect (knees straight, toes pointed forward, not pigeon-toed, which is Chinese feminine)' (Kingston, 1989:11), feet bounding gave a terrible pain to Chinese females, they could not move and they cried on their beds. In The Woman Warrior, the Chinese men sees women's bodies as objects. The sitting ghost rolled over Brave Orchid. She was under the physical oppression of the ghost. Its attack to her reminds a scene of a man's raping a woman. 'It rolled over her and landed bodily on her chest. There it sat. It breathed air-lessly, pressing her sapping her' (Kingston, 1989:69). Kingston depicts the patriarchal discourse as raping women's lives. The words of the patriarchal discourse took the shape of a ghost in "Shaman". Fa Mu Lan's body was tortured as it was used as a text that consisted of the patriarchy's written words. Kingston's aunt No name woman saw her husband on the night of their wedding and he had sex with her, her lover or the rapist had sex with her, too. When Fa Mu Lan looked into the water gourd, she saw the men who sit on the naked little girls.

Fa Mu Lan represents Maxine's dream of externalizing that violence, redirecting it from the (female) self to the patriarchy. In this section, it is male fatness that signifies criminality, replacing the aunt's swelling pregnant belly, the unhidable "evidence" of her "sin" in making female desire manifest. All the bad guys are overfed and rich. (Outka, 1997:455)

Djebar writes about the veiled Algerian women that are confined in the harem. Like the memory of No name woman, the memory of her maternal grandmother, blind women, musicians who played the drums and repeated ceremonial chants appear to Djebar. Djebar remembers her being a

spectator in one of the ceremonies, in this ceremony, women swayed their body from side to side in trance, sang their hypnotic songs, and whispered the scraps of Quran. Like No name woman's using her silence as a weapon and as a language to respond to Chinese patriarchy, her maternal grandmother used her body as a weapon and a language to respond to Algerian patriarchy. She danced for hours until she fell into the waiting hands of her daughters and daughter in laws. 'Against whom? Against the others or against fate? I wondered. But when she danced, she became indubitably queen of the city. Cocooned in that primitive music, she drew her daily strength before our very eyes' (Djebar, 1993:145). Djebar emphasizes and reconstructs Algerian women's revolutionary existence. Although Djebar does not able to decipher her grandmother's dance and voice completely, her dance represents Algerian women's expression of themselves, within a closed area Algerian women find ways to express themselves. When she danced, 'the voices of the past, imprisoned in her existence now set free and leapt far away from her' (Djebar, 1993:145). And this echoes Cherifa's setting her voice free for Djebar and Brave Orchid's setting her voice free for Kingston. Her maternal grandmother's dance for expression proves that the women in the harem and the rural women are descendants of the Algerian women who suffered from the colonization and fought against it. 'An image that prefigures many a future Muslim 'Mater dolorosa' who, carrion beetles of harem, will give births to generations of faceless orphans during Algeria's thralldom a century later' (Djebar, 1993:19).

Both are bilinguals and bicultural females who are straddling between two worlds; Djebar is a francophone writer who is between the worlds of the colonizer and Algerian while Kingston is an Asian American writer who is between the old world, China and the new world, America. Both examine how their native languages and their second languages lend themselves to the act of oppression and put the Chinese and Algerian women in an awful plight in the same ways. In addition to their patriarchal societies' use of their

native languages to create their discourses to control females, both racial and colonial powers use their second languages to insult them and abuse their bodies in order to guarantee their positions as masters. Their linguistic struggles are in between different cultures. Both writers realize that language means strength and their preoccupation with speech is closely related to their social invisibility. If females talk, their speech can be a powerful means of their social presence as individuals. The most overwhelming challenge for them is to make them heard and have communicative speech. Both try to establish their personalities through the communicative speech. They desire to have speaking personalities and struggle to have a recognizable voice in their societies as females. They go to two different kinds of schools; the first ones give education in Chinese and Arabic languages, the others give education in their second languages. These schools contrast two different worlds in their dual identities.

Both of their experiences in both schools emphasize the power of the voice to create a personal identity. In their autobiographical parts, the authors have education in these two kinds of schools that become the most suitable places for assuming the connection with female's body and the language. Their being in between two languages and cultures has effects on their speaking. They are oscillating between two education systems. They make comparisons between the education systems of their societies and the western education systems. Their bodies become the constant battlegrounds of their individualities between two education systems. Their educations in their second languages make them approach their people and their traditions in critical ways. Djébar does not go on attending the Quranic School, in the same way, Kingston wants to quit attending her Chinese school, these schools give education in accordance with their societies' patriarchal ideologies and they become the most suitable places for their oppressive patriarchal societies to confine girls' movement and to teach them their traditional female roles. In The Woman Warrior, girls and boys have

separated areas, boys' playroom is a forbidden area for girls in Chinese school. In Fantasia, due to fear of being inactive and silent girl, Djébar quits going to Quranic school, she feels her bodily act is controlled in Quranic school,

when I sit curled up like this to study my native language it is as though my body reproduces the architecture of my native city: the medina with their tortuous alleyways closed off to the outside world, living their secret life. When I write and read the foreign language, my body travels far in subversive space, in spite of the neighbours and suspicious matrons; it would not need much for it to take wing and fly away! (Djébar, 1993:184)

If she goes on attending Quranic School, she has to be wrapped in veil and she has to remain as a prisoner at home among the Algerian female community. Djébar's education in the French school helps her to gain visibility, movement and freedom.

Like Djébar's quitting Quranic school, Kingston does not want to go Chinese school anymore because Chinese people and Chinese tradition in her mother's stories seem as lies and irrational things to Kingston. Kingston bursts her mother 'I'm not going to Chinese school anymore. I'm going to run for office at American school, and I'm going to join clubs . . . and I can't stand Chinese school anyway' (Kingston, 1989:202). Kingston 'sees an "American" education precisely as her ticket out of the Chinese community' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:91).

Apart from escaping from the patriarchal oppression of these schools, they quit attending them for different reasons that are shaped by their post colonial contexts. Both want to adopt themselves to the western way of life and to have the rights and freedoms of the individuals. Both enter a new world through speaking in their second languages. They describe the American school and the French school as sites of formulating their

individualities. Their western schools become places that they experience their difference from the majority groups according to their post colonial contexts. While immigration and ethnicity dominate Kingston's female identity, French colonization affects Djébar's Algerian female identity. Kingston is not an American, she is the first generation of Chinese immigrants so she experiences her being *the other*, different from the majority group in American school. 'When my second grade class did a play, the whole class went to auditorium except the Chinese girls' (Kingston, 1989:67) but her experiences in American school are different from Djébar's experiences in French school, Djébar is a member of majority, she experiences her being different from the majority group, from the other Algerian girls due to her education in French school.

Language thus becomes the place of inscription of paradoxical colonial subjectivity: while marking the divided desire of the colonized subject, at the same time writing may be read as signifying a subjection to cultural alienation as well as its eventual subversion and transcendence. Exile and nomadism become figures for the inscription of an identity which ultimately derives its validity from the experience of alienation. (Murdoch, 1993:92)

Djébar's going to French school alienates her from her fellows. She is liberated from female enclosure of her Algerian sisters. She is against the French colonization yet she breaks the circle in the society by learning to write in enemy's language, 'a little girl going to school for the first time, one autumn morning, walking hand in hand with father' (Djébar, 1993:3).

American school is the significant cultural zone in which Kingston encounters American public culture on a more encompassing scale. Her learning the national language is complicated by her racial identity. Kingston has freedom of speaking in Chinese school but she becomes incommunicative in American school, she is not an active speaker of her

second language. 'In the public, "American" world of school, her ethnic identity, not her gender, silences her' (Walker, 1990:67). She feels an anger towards non-Chinese who do not let her speak and 'Asian American psychological trauma of trying to live up to a dominant norm and points to the danger of excessive emphasis on vocalization' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:6). English is the language she is educated in but when she has to speak in English, she becomes silent. 'Dumbness-a shame- still cracks my voice in two, even when I want to say "hello" casually, or ask an easy question in front of the check-out counter, or ask directions of a bus driver. I stand frozen' (Kingston, 1989:165), for her, it is very difficult to speak in her second language in public places but to exist as a person in America, she must have a voice. The American school

is the site where she first learns about norms. While public speaking schooling is a well-known means of socialization, the cultural differences between home and school complicate the experience of socialization for the narrator. The first coping strategy she adopts when she's thrust into an alien world of public institution is to resort to silence. (Lim, 2006:52)

But Djebbar is silent at Quranic school and she gains voice in French school. Speaking French language which she learns from French school is a chance for Djebbar, it allows her to move from the harem and to escape from the cloistering, to have action and communication. To call French as the enemy's language seems paradoxical for Djebbar, in the same way, for Kingston, English is no longer the ghosts' language as her mother describes it in opposition to Chinese, the only human language.

Whatever their postcolonial contexts, both of these writers want to express themselves, they fear to be silent like the females in their communities. 'My father's preference will decide for me. . . I do not realize that an irrevocable choice is being made; the outdoors and the risk, instead of the prison of my peers. This stroke of luck brings me to the verge of breakdown' (Djebbar,

1993:184), due to fear of being wrapped in veil and confined in the harem, she makes a choice between her two education and quits Quranic school because Quranic learning has a connection with confining female's body so she decides to go on French education which presents her freedom. Kingston fears to be silent like her aunts as she witnesses the consequences of being voiceless and she wants to express herself in her Chinese community and in her American community, she desires to be a speaking female figure like 'the Mexican and Filipino girls at school who went to "confession" and how I envied them their white dresses and their chance each Saturday to tell even thoughts that were sinful' (Kingston, 1989:198).

Apart from females' colonization by patriarchal power, they deal with females' colonization by the western powers. The females in their works are doubly colonized, they are under the *gaze* of both racism, colonialism and patriarchy and these affect their identities. Both Kingston and Djébar are experiencing the double oppression in their lives. Cheung describes Kingston's being under the gaze of dominant powers,

[a]s minority [woman this writer is] subject not only to the white gaze of the larger society but also to communal gaze. Mediating between a dominant culture that advertises "free" speech (but maintains minority silence) and an ethnic one that insist on the propriety of reticence. (Articulate Silences, 1993:16)

In the same way, Algerian females and Djébar are under the gaze of patriarchy and colonialists that control and confine their movements.

In The Woman Warrior and Fantasia, the political violence in their histories victimize the female characters and their patriarchal narrated national histories ignore their sufferings and their existence. They do not respect to their desire to exist against the racists in The Woman Warrior and the French colonialists in Fantasia. Chinese women's husbands left for America as a result of economic chaos in China, they were left alone in China to struggle

with the hard life conditions and face the humiliation of society. Like the Chinese women, the Algerian women were left at home to maintain the household in male's absence and they faced the humiliation of French colonizers. Algerian females experienced the war and demonstrated their bravery and sense of responsibilities but the power of patriarchy goes on reigning females and 'govern[ing] their futures' (Moghadam, 1994:13). Women are sent back to their private spaces of the houses like Fa Mu Lan's returning her traditional roles after saving her society from the tyrannical baron. Female's appearance on the scene of the war is assumed as a normal behaviour of a person who sees her country in danger by their patriarchal nationalists. They are not presented as if they did extraordinary things. While, in Algeria, post independence patriarchal governments deepen Algerian women's relegation to their domestic roles. Chinese tradition appreciates Fa Mu Lan 's contributions by creating a mythology of her, but this does not mean to give freedom to Chinese females. They give a message that Chinese female must devote her life and her feelings for her society. It is similar to Algeria's national identity as a Muslim nation that affirms Algerian culture in which women traditionally play a subservient role. Algerian women who fought in the battle for independence such as Lla-Zohra and Cherifa are portrayed as role models of Algerian heroism, but the Algerian women who actually follow in their steps today find themselves confused. As opposed to the situation of Algerian female freedom fighters' ignorance by their patriarchal society, revolution brings some equality between the genders on the surface in China. Djébar rewrites the written documents about Algerian colonization that 'will form a pyramid to hide the initial violence from the view' (Djébar, 1993:45). She twists them into feminist writings. Djébar's dealing with official documents creates a difference between Kingston who applies to mythical oral sources.

The Woman Warrior and Fantasia are good examples to see how racism, colonialism and language come together; both narrators experience it.

Kingston cannot make herself heard to the racist bosses who insult her for racial reasons, she can only squeak for her rights because as a Chinese female, she is humiliated in her own culture by being called as useless, at the same time, she cannot escape from the racial discrimination in America. Kingston refers to this by comparing herself with the female avenger. 'The swordswoman and I are not so dissimilar' (Kingston, 1989:53). She has to fight against the injustices in her American life. For Kingston's finding her identity, Wang states 'she must reject all external imposed authorities in order to allow her own voice or a chance for expression. It is this instinctive voice from within than can free her from stereotypes and taboos and open the way towards growth and selfhood' (1985:24). To gain their female identities, both must fight against these discourses. Female's imposed silence by the patriarchal society and by their post colonial contexts are deepened by each other. Kingston creates an intersection of gender and ethnicity. The oppressed position of being a female in their patriarchal societies is compounded with the low status of immigrants in The Woman Warrior and with the French colonial discourse in Fantasia. Like Kingston's racist bosses' insulting her, the French addressed Algerian females with colonial discourses, 'you fellaheen, you live in forest like wild beasts and you want to behave like savages here!' (Djebar, 1993:138).

Their post colonial contexts intensify the silence of women who have already been silenced by patriarchy and attribute new meanings to the female's body. Female body and national identity and language are related to each others in their works. While the Chinese immigration to America deepens women's silence in The Woman Warrior, French colonization of Algeria deepens women's silence in Fantasia. Chinese women's silence is deepened by the fear of deportation because of immigration laws in America. Kingston is thought to be silent. Her family came to America when Chinese immigration was illegal, Chinese immigrants in America keep a code of silence, they never tell their children anything regarding their cultural

heritages and histories. They impose silence upon their children, 'there were secrets never to be said in front of the ghosts, immigration secrets whose telling could get us sent back to China' (Kingston, 1989:183). Immigrants keep immigration secrets, when they tell about their heritages and histories, the racists in America can send them back to China. Kingston becomes frustrated with the ways the Chinese immigrants silence themselves. 'Sometimes I hated the ghosts for not letting us talk; sometimes I hated the secrecy of the Chinese. "Don't tell," said my parents, tough we couldn't tell if we wanted to because we didn't know' (Kingston, 1989:183) and through the racial language, American insult them to keep them silent. Chinese immigrants such as Moon Orchid's failure to learn English deepen their silence, 'the women who, like Kingston's narrator, are not part of mainstream culture by virtue of their racial and ethnic backgrounds are more easily and effectively silenced' (Walker, 1990:58).

There is a difference between Kingston and Djébar in terms of their dealing with female body in their post colonial contexts. In The Woman Warrior, the racial identity of the Chinese is revealed out by their skins' colour and by their accented speaking of the English language, immigrant parents, like Brave Orchid, want their children to have fluency in standard English. Their accented speaking reveals out their ethnic identity, but 'for the narrator the tongue is that cut loose becomes a bodily sign that is not visible to others. The visible sign of her difference, rather, is her race, the first marker by which she is classified and understood in the social' (Lim, 2006:59).

In Fantasia, the French's raping an Algerian female's body is equal to their conquering the land of Algeria. The French colonial discourse has sexual dimension which sees the land of Algeria as a woman 'this alien world, which they penetrated as they would a woman' (Djébar, 1993:57) and they perform their barbarity on the Algerian females' bodies. 'The link between

war, death, sexuality, and the female body resides in the unequal struggle for power between "man" and "woman" "the west" and "the orient" (Donadey, 2001:105) so Algerian females' bodies gain a political meaning. And the French colonizers create their fantasies about the cloistered Algerian female community in the harem, 'it was the harem on which they focused with fascination and loathing, the harem can be defined as a system that permits males sexual access to more than one female' (Ahmed, 1982:524). They have an interest to look inside the harem which is a forbidden world to them. Their writings and paintings have discursive representations of the veiled Muslim women in the harem. They assume them as the symbols of gender inequality. These symbols create the possibility of the idealization of the Algerian women by the French and Algerian patriarchy alike, they create the process of silencing Algerian women through these symbols. The lives of Algerian women after 1830 have become much more controlled by the Algerian patriarchy. The French colonizers view the veil as a symbol of Algerian's nationalism and their religious beliefs. They believe that if they undermine it, they can come over the Algerians' patriotism and their religion. 'For Fanon, wearing veil becomes a sign of Algerian women's patriotism' (Morgan, 2002: 603). As a reaction to the French's pressure to remove Algerian women's veils, Algerian and Algerian women cling to wear the veil. the Algerian men want to make Algerian women invisible to the French so they can save their values and honour. Algerian women wear their veils to be identical and invisible to the French. After Algerians gain their national independence, Algerian women cling to wear the veil. Wearing the veil that becomes a symbol of Algerian patriotism is actually increased. 'The return to veil as a patriotic "necessity" both during and after the war is a prison for women, women have nearly exchanged one autism for another' (Morgan, 2002:603). Algerian patriarchy's control of the Algerian female's body is reinforced by the history of French colonization of Algeria.

Both resist the historical amnesia, they criticize the dominant discourses that render Chinese American in American history and Algerian in the Algerian colonial history invisible and silent. There is no recorded Chinese American history from the Chinese Americans' perspectives and Algerian history from Algerians' points of views. Their silence becomes a part of their survival. Their existence in the national histories are problematic because they have unequal status as national figures. And females' being central figures in the national projects are ignored doubly by the dominant histories and by the patriarchy's narration of the national histories. Both texts are not only cultural narrations of their nations but also critical engagements between the feminism and the nationalism. These women writers narrate their nations in various contexts while re-inscribing women as the subjects of the national agency. Their texts are feminist corrective texts to the patriarchal nationalists. They seek for utterances for Kingston's Chinese inheritance and American upbringing and Djebbar's Algerian inheritance and French education. They try to manifest themselves within their cultures and the mainstream cultures.

Both explore the concept of silence in relation to female identity and look silence from their feminist perspectives; the silence in their works is a strategy of resistance and it is re-inscribed as a discourse of females; Duncan's statement support this statement.

Silence is not simply the absence of speech. In his influential *The History of Sexuality* Michel Foucault questions the western myth of sexual repression. He interprets the act of confession as part of a will-to-knowledge, a form of seeking "truth", whereby speaking is both demanded by a demand for power. Power is both productive and prohibitive, in fact, prohibition, or not-speaking, too, is productive, and is not to be understood in opposition to speech, but as a part of discourse; silence in such a model may operate as a different way of saying. (Boles and Hoeveler, 2001:29)

For example; No name woman's silence tells many things about her relationship and inscribes her in her family's history like Kingston's telling many things with the black spots in her pictures. Kingston keeps silent in front of her teacher when he asks about their immigration, her silence keeps her family from deportation. Djebbar falls in aphasia to say that I won't be an object of a man's desire. They use silence as a shield.

Kingston and Djebbar start a journey from silence to voice. They begin their works with describing imposed silence upon themselves and the other females in their cultures. To overcome the non-existence of women in their histories and cultures, they translate the females' silence into voices, for both of them translation 'is not one of sounds and signs, but of world views' (Cutter, 1997:581). To find all of the Chinese American and Algerian females' identities, they portray their struggle to find *female self* in their autobiographies with the motif of translation in combination with the theme of silence. 'Women characters most often bear the heaviest burdens as translators, as the links between divergent world views' (Cutter, 1997:581). They are in between two cultures and equally displaced in both cultures. While Kingston finds her Chinese American identity through the translation of traditional Chinese stories, myths, legends, songs and poems into her American normal life in the ghost's language, Djebbar finds her Algerian female self through the translation of written documents and Algerian females' talk stories into enemy's language. Djebbar blends her voice and life story with the written document of French colonization of Algeria and the stories and voices of freedom fighters during the war of independence,

the parallel between the narrator's struggle for personal independence and the nation's struggle for political independence are too inextricably linked. The unnamed narrator finds herself caught up in what she terms the "chains of memory," struggling to define herself but unable to do so without defining the history of her people. (Fayad, 1995:154)

In the same way, Kingston blends her story with the story of her people. Kingston 'finds a bicultural voice to articulate her experience of moving between cultures resisting and embracing both alternately' (Direnç, 1) and brings out the silence and existence of the Chinese women.

The writing belongs to dominant powers so females apply oral words to express themselves. In both cultures, telling stories and making next generation to learn about their traditions and histories are females' duties. Females tell their stories in oral words for the next generations in the female communities so their cultural traditions are conveyed to next generations. Djébar's words; 'matriarch whisper to children in the dark, to children's children crouching on the straw mat, to the girls who will become matriarch in turn...of their bodies, they retain only the ears and eyes of childhood which hang on the lips of the wrinkled story teller' (Djébar, 1993:176). Through females, both learn about their traditions and the expected roles for them. In the same way, Kingston hang on her mother's stories about China because she lives away from her native land, China. Brave Orchid tells her the stories to teach her Chinese culture and family history and she has to learn about China and Chinese femininity. For Kingston, The translation underlines the ethnic and cultural conflict, for her, her Chinese culture and language are untranslatable. Djébar's childhood and adolescence is among the females in the harem, she learns from them the expected roles of Algerian girl.

Words of Chinese talk stories creates a bond between mother and daughter in The Woman Warrior and in the same way, Algerian females' words and moudjahidates' words serve as bonds between Djébar and them. Moudjahidates; Cherifa and Lla Zohra set their voices free for Djébar. The Chinese and Algerian females' words in their native languages supply inspiration for Kingston and Djébar to write in their second languages. They catch some words from them, for example, the words of her female

community are described as torch words by Djébar that enlightens her way to write stories. 'Torch-words which light up my women-companions, my accomplices; these words divides me from the once and for all. And weigh me down as I leave my native land' (Djébar, 1993:142). Djébar is under the burden of female fighters' words which reflect the collective experience of female fighters and their words supply her a source for her to write on. Kingston is under the burden of her mother's talk stories to translate and write down in her book like Djébar. 'And I have words- "chink" words and "gook" words too- that they do not fit on my skin' (Kingston, 1993:53). And, finally, words become the means of Kingston's being an adult.

Both adopt oral words to their needs by using fiction. In other words, 'they must learn to recreate 'target text''(Cutter, 1997:581). Kingston is a reteller of her mother's stories about Chinese females in her family and in the mythical and historical Chinese tradition. She rewrites their stories. Djébar is a reteller of stories of Algerian women who have suffered from the French colonization and lived through and after the Algerian war of national liberation. Dominant discourses have the control over the writings about the independence war, moudjahidates who involved in the war have the problem of silence. Djébar writes that 'I have captured your voice; disguised it with my French without clothing it. I barely brush the shadow of your footprints' (1993:142).

In their writings, both allow the Chinese and Algerian women's words in their native languages to be heard in their second languages.

Writing gives voice and form to the silences/signs of the temporal and spatial infinity which gives meaning to life. Making the invisible visible, making silence speak on all planes from the simplest to the most philosophical is the implicit project of the docufiction of the works of Assia Djébar. (Budig-Markin, 1996:893)

They struggle to learn to translate females' narratives to come over the dichotomies of the cultures that they are in between and to reconcile them, they use the language as a tool to constitute their own identities.

At the same time, both of them translate their cultures to the dominant cultures so they make them enter the words of the dominant powers. 'The writer affirms her project by insisting that her transcription in French don't stifle these voices, but given them room to breathe and space to live (on)' (Rice, 2004:80) like Djebbar, Kingston breathes new life into her mother's stories, she translates her mother's stories told in Chinese to English and she translates her Chinese culture to American culture. The Chinese immigrants, who are the oral narrators, are not able to speak the language of racists in The Woman Warrior.

Kingston's storytelling, speaking Chinese also becomes simply functional for the older immigrants who do not want to participate or/and are not perceived as full participants in the public language. As a result, they remain outsiders within the system; their use of private language marks the central feature of their identity. (Chen, 1995:1)

In Fantasia, Algerians are not able to speak the language of colonizers that is imposed with force. Djebbar presents Algerian women's words for them and translates their stories in their native languages to French, and she translates her Algerian culture to French culture in the parts "Voices." 'Djebbar links kalaam, "word" in Arabic, to écriture, "writing" in French, expressing the relationship between colonized and colonizer in terms of language and gender. The oral narrative is female and Arabic (or Berber); the written narrative is male and French' (Mortimer, 1997:104). They are writers of "the other" so in their works, they translate the others' problems to the languages of dominant powers.

Djebar's love letter is a mediator between the words of love and the other Algerian females. Brave Orchid is a mediator between China and America and between the ghosts and the people. Like these mediators, Through translation, Kingston and Djebar become mediators between the oral words and written words, between their native cultures and western cultures and between the past and the present. Breaking silence is their first attempt to redefine women's roles in their traditional communities. They believe that women must talk without caring in which languages to express themselves. Both of them speak for their female ancestors, relatives and the other females who cannot speak for themselves. Djebar is a 'trusted mediator who speak for somebody; or, perhaps one, who secretly and speciously, presumes to speak, "instead of" those who can't, or may not, speak for themselves' (Zimra, 1995:151). Djebar uses first person while telling the Algerian females' stories, she speaks as if she were them. She speaks for Algerian women and for the young Algerian girls in their rooms. 'I would cast off my childhood memories and advance naked, bearing offerings, hands outstretched to whom?- to the lords of yesterday's war, or to the young girls who lay hiding and who now inhabit the silence that succeeds the battles' (Djebar, 1993:142) her learning French is her gift for her sisters.

Like Djebar's bringing out females' hidden words to the sunlight. Kingston speaks for the silent Chinese and Chinese American females, 'Kingston became a storyteller, committed to giving expression to the muted females of her culture' (Walker, 1990:68). Apart from speaking for and to their silent relatives, they speak with them which prove the collective nature of *the females' identities*. Their narratives emerge in a dialogic process and mix autobiographical genre with me and mum genre. Females tell their stories and narrators respond to them by revising and rewriting in their processes of shaping identities for Chinese girls in America and for Algerian females.

Kingston and Djebbar's identities are invented and their lives are shaped in the process of translation and negotiation between cultures and generations. They produce new stories out of the existing ones. In the end, Kingston's writing Ts'ai Yen's story becomes her way of finding a voice for herself and the other silent women. 'It translated well' (Kingston, 1989:243) recalls 'it is now my turn to tell a tale. To hand on words that were spoken, then written down. Words from more than a century ago, like those that we, two women from the same tribe, exchange today' (Djebbar, 1993:165). Both of them translate their own experiences into meanings and become story tellers, They take their part in the circle of listener and teller; half of Ts'ai Yen's story belongs to Kingston, this is similar to Djebbar's telling Fromentin's story of nayletts to Lla Zohra, she makes a translation from the written French to the language of Lla Zohra. 'I, your cousin, translate this story into our mother tongue, and tell it now to you...so I try my hand as temporary story-teller'(Djebbar, 1993:167). After listening to women's stories, they write down them but their stories are told in written words in their circle of listening to and telling stories. They inherit oral traditions that they carry on as written traditions. Their reaction to the gendered, racial and colonial speechlessness is channelled into writing.

3.2. Writing

Silence is female's first language that is used as a shield, writing is their second language that presents them a chance of expression. In their texts, Kingston and Djebbar are writing females' oral words on the pages, their acts of writing females' stories are connected to their recreation of the females' silence. Throughout their autobiographical writings, they fight against the powers that hold females back. They start a quest from silence to voice, they make the invisible visible, their feminist strategies of double telling disrupt the racial, colonial and the patriarchal discourses although language and history enforce the master discourses. In order to interrupt these discourses,

they bring out females' oral tradition and oral history through writing down the females' words. They give freedom, existence and voices to the Chinese and Algerian females who are once voiceless and non-existent by applying to fiction. They reinscribe them as disruptive figures to the masculinist understanding of cultures and histories.

For Djebbar, silence is a synthesis of a number of polar opposites: on the one hand, historical asphyxiation (absence of sound), on the other hand the oral tradition of tribal legend close to extinction (lost presence); or, at one extreme, collective solidarity, and at the other, solitude. In the works of Djebbar, women's silence can express submission to masculine norms or defiant refusal of these norms or other oppressions. (Budig-Markin, 1996:893)

To respond female's oppression and to give voice and existence to them, Kingston and Djebbar choose autobiography as genre to verbalize their experiences and the other females' experiences of the patriarchal, racial and colonial oppression. Both write in unconventional autobiographical mode which presents women a chance to find expression. They create transgressive works which blur the distinction between fiction and history or fact, self and community; autobiography and collective autobiography.

The linear development in a traditional autobiography is disturbed by both of them; they move between past, present and future lives of the protagonists', Chinese and Algerian females and their nations' pasts.

In their form, women's lives tend to be like the stories they tell: they show less a pattern of linear development toward some clear goal than one of repetitious, cumulative, cyclical structure," which is similar to Hélène Cixous's description of a "feminine text" as one that "is always endless, without ending: there's no closure, it doesn't stop. . . [A] Feminine text goes on and on and, at a certain moment the volume

comes to an end but the writing continues. (qtd.in Walker, 1990:66)

Djebar moves back to the Algerian and Algerian females' experience of French colonization of Algeria in 1830, the war of Algerian independence and returns to the experiences of the contemporary Algerian females in Fantasia. Kingston moves back to her family history, the history of communism in China, the history of Chinese immigration to America through her childhood recollections of Chinese stories and then returns to the experiences of the Chinese in America. They encourage themselves to struggle with the competing claims of two cultures upon themselves. This proves that they base their life stories on their cultural, national and family histories, we do not read only their life stories. Blair's statement in Fantasia's introduction part 'a preparation for autobiography' (Djebar, 1993:v) can be used for their autobiographical notes.

The basic facts of Kingston and Djebar's lives are known but they favour a "fragmented autobiography," as Mildred Mortimer refers to it, available through fiction' (Morgan, 2002:603), Djebar admits that her autobiography is a fragmented autobiography. 'My fiction is this attempt at autobiography, weighed down under the oppressive burden of my heritage' (Djebar, 1993:218). Like Djebar, Kingston's identity and autobiography is in fragmented structure.

For Djebar to tell her story in fragmented fictional form is to admit how fragmented her life has been. To read it is to admit how fragmented our own lives are and to agree for a few brief moments to raise the veil of self-enclosure for the sake of looking out and letting the light of her words in. (Morgan, 2002:603)

Writing in autobiographical mode heals their fragmented self to challenge the racial, colonial and patriarchal structures.

Kingston and Djébar change the form of their narratives so we cannot easily classify their writing as fiction or autobiography. An important dichotomy; fiction is opposite to the fact is reflected in their autobiographical writings. They break the traditional definition of the autobiographical genre, by blending fact and fiction, myth and reality, memory and history. 'Fantasia's ambitious project borrows strategies from a variety of genres to create a multifaceted, multilayered, multivocal text' (Steadman, 2003:173). Their application to mixture of genres help them to recreate the absent and silent females in their traditional confines and to fight against the racial, colonial and patriarchal languages and histories, it also helps them to come over the protagonists' divided identities; Djébar's Arabo-Berber origin and Franco European education and Kingston's Chinese origin and American environment.

Both of them twist the traditional stories into their feminist writings, they do not mimicry the stories, both repeatedly build up their stories by using fiction so they apply to writing in intertextual ways. Djébar rewrites French colonial written accounts, oral words of female fighters and storytellers and texts of, Eugene Fromentin, Ibn khaldun, Saint Augustine and the works of colonial artists, but Kingston's material for intertextuality is not as much as Djébar, she writes only oral words of storytellers and uses her parents' pictures. While Kingston does not deal with the written texts, Djébar manipulates the historical written texts, she uses fiction in the written documents of French colonization of Algeria to give voice and existence to Algerian women and bring out them as heroes and to justify their deserving emancipation in the Algerian social life.

They write about factual events in their books and they recreate them through imagination. Their application to memory implies that their autobiographies are not completely or perfectly tells about truth and fact. For creating a relationship between the sense of individual identity and collective

identity, they deal with the important role of memory in it. They bring out personal and collective memories to the surface in their autobiographical writings. But the memories in their writings belong to the suppressed females, not the privileged, powerful westerners or the patriarchy who are entitled to speak. Their books are not written as its events and stories as they actually occurred or they are remembered. They create different versions of the stories told them by the other females. They add their feelings, ideas, and views to the events and imagine the details in a fictional way instead of writing what has happened in its bareness. If they do not give place to memory which is connected with fiction, their works can be assumed as essays.

The honest truth, insofar as this suggests absolute fidelity to historical fact, is inaccessible; the minute you begin to write it you may try to write it well, and writing well is an activity which has no simple relation to truth. For memory cannot do the necessary work independent of fantasy; and if it tries, the result will be a dull report. (qtd.in Elnagger, 2002: 172)

Djebar tries to imagine what cloistered Arab girl writes about to her correspondents, she says 'did she write of her uneventful everyday life, or of her dreams, or of the books she read? Perhaps she invented adventures for herself' (Djebar, 1993:12). In The Woman Warrior, Kingston recreates her mother's memories. The subtitle of The Woman Warrior is Memoirs of Girlhood Among Ghosts proves that it is a book about memory rather than a writing of a life. Kingston identifies herself with knot-makers because of her not writing the events in its bareness. No name woman's story seems as a fictional story because she is simply making up stories to satisfy herself and she is doing justice to her aunt's memory. Her brother tells about Moon Orchid's meeting with her westernized husband in its bareness but Kingston twists this story into designs and recreates it as a complicated story.

Long ago in China, knot-makers tied string into buttons and frogs, and rope into bell pulls. There was one knot so complicated that it blinded the knot-maker. Finally an emperor outlawed this cruel knot, and the nobles could not order it anymore. If I had lived in China, I would have been an outlaw knot-maker. (Kingston, 1989: 163)

Women's speech and writing are outlawed by their patriarchal cultures. Both are outlawed because they are females and they are telling stories in written words by using the pen that belongs to the patriarchy, their rewriting the stories are rebellious actions and they also gain awards so they reverse the hundred years of the discourses about women. Both are aware of the importance of language for self-realization and freedom. Writing allows them to have freedom in use of language.

For some critics, such as Hélène Cixous, *the langage des femmes* not only exists, it is necessary for women's emancipation. Cixous maintains that women have been driven away from language just as they have been forced to deny their bodies, and she encourages full expression of the female experience as a powerful subversive force. Masculine language, Cixous believes, has been used for the oppression of women. (Walker, 1990:41)

Assia Djebar is the pen name of Fatima -Zohra Malayen, she published her book under this pen name because she feared her father's reaction.

Djebar is concerned with bringing out the lost memories from written documents and the chronicles of the official colonial history. This is her difference from Kingston. With the help of fiction, she fills the gaps of written documents and gives a respond to the colonial discourse. Barchou described two women among the great numbers of women; one of these women crushed her child's head not to let him fall in enemy's hand and the other tore out a French soldier's heart, he described these females as savage creatures but like Kingston's reversing her mother's stories to feministic

stories, Djébar reverses his writings to a feministic issue which proves Algerian women's courage against the colonists. By rewriting the written documents with fiction, she brings out the Algerians' frozen voices and fantasia and females' ululation and cries of their sufferings to the present day.

The personal memory and collective memory are equalized by these feminist writers. Kingston and Djébar write their autobiographies in relation to both remembering and retelling of certain important parts of their lives and to the collective nature of Chinese and Algerian women. When they apply to their own memories or memories of other females, they give place to imaginative recreations in their writings. It can be said that memory has a subjective feature so their autobiographies reflect the subjective mood of the female who remembers a memory. Their writing autobiography contributes to the production of the memory. Memory connects an individual's experience to its social context. Rather than females' being mere victims of patriarchy and western racism and colonization, they redefine females as alternate recorders, Chinese and Algerian females witness to women's historical presence in the racial and colonial processes. Their experiences lead to feminism. 'This colonized women, as Memni suggests, condemned to a progressive loss of memory' (Green, 1993:959). The parts titled as "Voice" and "Embrace" in *Fantasia* show not only who is speaking, but also how the women speak and what about they speak. These parts address the women's forbidden, repressed and secret experiences and the memories of the women are important to understand women's subjective oral narratives. There is a debate over the place of women in the independence war and Djébar's work deals with it. Djébar fights with patriarchal and colonial discourse by placing Algerian women's memories in the foreground of her feminist project of rewriting Algerian national history. 'Postcolonial feminist literature foregrounds the presence and voices of silenced women by a

history that discounts them and fails to consider their agency' (Donadey, 2001:143).

They blend their autobiographies with the biographies of other females. 'Mixing autobiography with the biography of the others is typical for postcolonial autobiographies. The autobiography then becomes what Djebbar calls "an autobiography in plural"' (Huughe, 1996:874). Kingston is in search of possible identification for herself. She combines her own autobiography with the biographies of her aunts No-Name Woman and Moon Orchid, mythical characters such as Fa Mu Lan, her mother, Ts'ai Yen, and the silent Chinese girl. Djebbar's autobiography covers the biographies of all Algerian women; females who suffered from French colonization, female fighters who struggled for the national freedom and the contemporary Algerian females in the harem. Green states that 'the first person narrator of the autobiography joins her voice with that of other Algerian women, and the novel becomes collective autobiography as she finds their story to be her own' (1993:963).

They narrate parallel stories of different women from different times. Their identities develop in relation to both remembering and retelling of these particular females' lives and collective narrative of Algerian and Chinese women. It is difficult to understand Kingston and Djebbar's lives apart from these women's lives. These women help the narrators to find a matrilineal way of life in a male powered world. Kingston and Djebbar try to come over the paradoxical female figures in their societies. Kingston's mother, Fa Mu Lan, Ts'ai Yen and her aunts in The Woman Warrior and Algerian women that are locked at home and the Algerian female fighters in Fantasia represent contrasting female behaviours. They are the unification of these behaviours. Female characters in their writings are the integral parts of the protagonists.

By the help of communicating with other females and listening to their stories, they gain chance of accessing the women's untraditional experiences that break the circle in the society. Oral tradition supplies inspiration to them in terms of gender roles. Kingston's mother narrates female swordswomen and herself as an intelligent, successful doctor and shaman in her talk stories to encourage her. 'You will bring science to the villages' (Kingston, 1989: 63) was said to Brave Orchid and other female students at the collage. Like her mother, Kingston wants to learn science and have a normal life and she wants to enjoy her individuality and intelligence without servitude to elders, she can have 'a job and a room of their own' (Kingston, 1989:62). Kingston retells and recreates the fantastical story of Fa Mu Lan, the woman warrior who teaches her to be successful. Like her aunt No name woman, Kingston wishes to break the circle of patriarchal social order. In the same way, In Fantasia, young bride of Mazuna, Hauoa, nayletts, war widows and other anonymous females are prefigures for the present day Algerian women and Djebbar. Algerian female fighters' stories inspire them that Algerian women can come out of their harems to take place in the public areas to accomplish something good. They inspire the protagonists and the contemporary women to declare their voice and their existence against the oppressive powers. They identify themselves with the woman warriors through fictional situations. They establish a connection between the colonial figures, they 'enter a stage of wish-mirror' (Elnagger, 2002: 181) to develop a sense of self.

Despite this inspiration, their oral traditions give conflicting messages about gender roles. Kingston fears to be a traditional woman; Fa Mu Lan at the end of the story became a traditional woman who promised to service her husband and his family and her mother turned her traditional roles in America. And after the war, Algerian female fighters returned their traditional roles and their confined areas, harems. 'the process of placing an individual autobiographical project within a collective experience has resulted in the

maturation of the individual and the artist' (Mortimer, 1997:115). And through identification, both writers experience their sufferings and silence and write them on the pages.

Their autobiographies are collective autobiographies, through these women's individual stories, the mechanism of racism, colonization and patriarchal oppression are reflected out. Their experiences are reflections of the experiences of the Chinese and Chinese American women and all the Algerian women. While Djébar's autobiography is a representative of francophone Algerian females, Kingston's autobiography represents the life of Chinese American females. For example; in the chapter "Shaman", Brave Orchid moved to America for a better life from China but she works in a laundry and picks tomatoes in America. Brave Orchid and Moon Orchid represent the problem of Chinese women's adopting themselves to a strange country. Ling's statement about Sewing Woman 'It displays a sensitive treatment of the confusion and fear which is very much a part of the immigrant experience. It provides first hand materials for a discussion of issues involving the family, cultural differences and the role of women' (1993:468), can be used for Chinese women in The Woman Warrior.

Many females' voices are heard in their autobiographies. They succeed to record the silent and invisible women's stories and recreate them in their own voices. When they give voices and freedom to them, they succeed to give voices and freedom to all of the women in their societies, 'revision of historical focus to include those previously left out of the history books' this aim has own similarities with the feminist project and feminist oral historians have seen themselves as recovering women's lost voices and hidden history' (Cosslett, Lury & Summerfield, 2000:5) There is an important development between autobiographies and oral history.

In their autobiographies, Kingston and Djébar explore both their own pasts and their nation's pasts, and they mix them together. That brings one's mind Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children in which Salem's autobiography is linked to his nation and 1,000 other 'midnight's children'. Rushdie states that 'I even made the boy and the country identical twins'(Rushdie, 2006:x). In Fantasia, Djébar joins her destiny to Algeria's. 'She has wedded her destiny to Algeria's' (Gracki, 1996:837). 'I am forced to acknowledge a curious fact: the date of my birth is eighteen hundred and forty-two, the year that General Saint Arnaud arrives to burn down the zaouia of the Beni Menacer, the tribe from which I am descended' (Djébar, 1993:217), it is similar to Kingston's calling her aunt as "my forerunner." They create a collective identity of the people in their societies.

Kingston and Djébar widen their autobiographies to insert their writings within the community of Chinese and Algerian women. Their lives depend on collective sense of self. 'The most pervasive feature of female autobiography is the tendency to define the self in relation to significant others rather than in terms of self-creation' (Stephens, 2000:188). The marginal of the patriarchal society take the central role in a room of one's own and in the harem. For example, Ts'ai Yen's found time and space to create her art and experience her individuality in her tent among the barbarians. The room and the tent in The Woman Warrior take the shape of the harem in Fantasia. They are spaces for women to create their communities. Women in their communities play important roles of storytelling and both take part in women's this tradition. Green's statement about Djébar 'to enter the circle of women's storytelling is for the narrator a way of overcoming her own cultural dismemberment and at the same time of bringing these mutilated women back to life' (1993:963) is similar to Kingston's dealing with her mother's tales.

They blend female's individuality with the idea of collectivism, they believe that woman must have her individuality and her individuality must not be against the other women. Female's individuality can develop when she is with the other females. Brave Orchid is experiencing individuality among the other female students in midwifery school, In Fantasia, within the female community, Djaber places her independency.

They emphasize on the women's affecting each others, sisterhood of women and their relational connection are reflected out in their autobiographical writings. In terms of subordination women are similar to each others; this is easily seen in their writings, they use *we* of women. 'The "I" of the first person is never used: the time honoured phraseology discharges the burden of rancour and rales that rasp the throat. In speaking to the listening group every woman finds relief from her deep inner hurt' (Djebar, 1993:154). Algerian females share their stories of their experiences and their feelings with the others. This reminds one that with her female classmates Brave Orchid told ghost stories. When women speak to the listening females in the gathering, they break their imposed silence to express their sufferings and to find relief with the other women, 'at every one of these gatherings, they are trapped in the web of impossible revolt; each women tells her tale- loud exclamation of the one, raped whispers of another – gets something of her chest' (Djebar, 1993:154). They witness each other's stories within their limited areas and find relief from their sufferings and this is a proof that there are not always formulations of oppression and victimization towards women in their confined areas.

They are inflamed to guess at causes for merriment or happiness; by means of understatement, proverbs, even riddles or traditional fables, handed down from generation to generation, the women dramatize their fate, or exorcize it, but never expose it directly. (Djebar,1993:155)

Moon Orchid found her soul and happiness when she was among the other mad female patients in the asylum. She thought that they understood each other. Communicating with other females and understanding each other are very important for females. She used *we* and says 'we understand one another here. We speak the same language, the very same. They understand me, and I understand them' (Kingston,1989:160). 'the entry into language always entails alienation, for the very "self" captured in a statement such as "I am" is already at a distant from the speaker of that statement, subjugated to language even as it is subject of statement' (Elia,2001:22). Kingston does not feel herself different from her female Chinese friends in Chinese school. They are all alike. When Kingston has to speak in English, she remains frozen, in the same way, her sister and other Chinese girls say nothing and remain silent at American school. There is a collective identity of Chinese girls which is represented by their silence. When Kingston mentions about the silent girl and her older sister, Kingston states '[t]he girls did not work for a living the way we did. But in other ways we were the same' (Kingston,1989: 172).

As a difference to Kingston, in *Fantasia*, Djebbar describes females' gatherings in the harem. 'In her descriptions of all-female gatherings, Djebbar provides another example of strategies secluded women use for survival and could adapt for revolutionary change' (Steadman,2003:191). These gatherings unite females so they can be used by females to make social and political changes.

Apart from learning about women's experience of femininity from the oral tradition, they demonstrate the power of oral tradition to give places to women in the *histories*. They reread the *history* and they reverse it to *herstory* to recreate women within the history. To create *herstory* the role of female narrator is crucial for them, they articulate untold stories, document official exclusions and blend their autobiographies with myths and legends.

In their creating *herstory*, there remain some differences that are affected from their different post colonial contexts, while Kingston reads history through migrant subjectivity, Kingston is interested in women's roles in feudal China and process of immigration to America. Djébar reads it through the post colonial subjectivity. Djébar is interested in women's roles in the struggle against the French colonists. Firstly, they respond to the mainstream histories; American and French histories that ignore Chinese and Algerian, Kingston reinscribes immigrants' memories and Chinese American experiences as parts of the contemporary American culture. Djébar reinscribes Algerians' experience of French colonization of Algeria from Algerians' points of view. Secondly, from their feminist points of view, they respond to the patriarchal nationalists' narration of the histories that construct men as the agents of histories and ignore females' sufferings from the violence of political situation. Kingston and Djébar use feminist practice of oral tradition to create histories which include women as agents. Kingston and Djébar's autobiographies like other feminist autobiographical works go along with the oral history.

Kingston and Djébar like other feminists have seen themselves as recovering the women's lost collective memories, voices and histories, 'some women writers have utilized the resources of the oral tradition, moving back through the chain of transmission from grandmother to mother to daughter, in a process that provides new meaning to Virginia Wolf's image of "think(ing) back through our mothers"' (Green, 1993:959). Both establish contacts with their female relatives and feel their pain and hear their cries and try to think like them. They are under the weight of their female ancestors to bring out experiences of women in the past to the present. Kingston and Djébar record and reproduce women's oral narratives, testimonies and life histories in a feminist way. 'For the narrator, to listen is to learn, to trace back identity, to contextualize oneself' (Fayad, 1995:155).

In The Woman Warrior, there is only one woman; Kingston's mother functions as the source of oral history but in Fantasia, we hear the voices of different women as the sources of oral history, 'the old lady talks today and I am preparing to transcribe her tale' (Djebar, 1993:177). They are feminist writers and feminist writers:

see women's presence as historical characters with men in their women centred writings. An examination of relationship between two women, based on voice would be possible, utilizing the contrast between masculine voices which annihilate and destroy, and feminine voices which "watch over and save [the other]... (qtd. from Sellers) ...the narrational voice shadows or "covers" the other women, the way in which the author like Cixous, embarks on the project of "writing you." (Ringrose, 2006:32)

Through females' gatherings or females' oral traditions, they learn their cultural traditions, they mix their autobiographies with their cultural traditions to create another aspect of their writing *herstory*. This aspect of making *herstory* is much more intensified in Kingston's memoir because of her being a daughter of Chinese immigrant to America. She is away from her native country, she learns about her family's history and her cultural history through female narrator; her mother 'who is the main disseminator of truth and wisdom from China to her' (Wang, 1985:24). And she reinvents her mother's China and the place of woman in Chinese society by her mother's talk stories, she does not know all of them from the first hand. From the day of Confucius to her present life time, the Chinese put the men above the woman in their culture. When they get married, females serve their husband's family. And females, especially females from the upper class are kept under control of men through feed-binding and sexual slavery. Their feeds are bound to keep them smaller and this makes them physically incapable and leaves them in need of male's help. Djebar blends her autobiography with the cultural tradition when she writes about female

gatherings, wedding ceremony, ballad of Abraham, prophet's relationship with females.

The repressed memory of women and women's testimonial voice are important for the project of recovery of family history. They try to get in touch with their roots through oral history, memory, imagination and meditation on what happened to their female ancestors. While Kingston is away from her cultural land, Djébar lives in Algeria so Kingston needs to invent her genealogy and Djébar needs to hear it. Djébar attempts to recover a genealogy that is severed by colonialism, the suppressed memories of Algerians about the colonial past are effective for the genealogy of the contemporary Algerians. Kingston recovers a genealogy that is severed by the immigration to America and the racism in America. Kingston starts to discover the family's Chinese past by listening to her mother's stories about her aunt. Both are in a direct or in an indirect ways affected from their families' pasts so understanding of their families' histories are important for them. While real Algerian women help Djébar to form a sense of identity, in Kingston's novel, there are real, mythical and imaginary female ancestors help her to create a sense of identity.

Both devote pages to the their females relatives that are erased from the collective memories. Although the family decide to erase her aunt from their collective memories, Kingston doesn't agree to be part of that punishment, she is haunted by her aunt to tell her story, she rewrites the great tragedy of her aunt in *herstory*. 'I alone devoted pages of paper to her' (Kingston, 1989:16). In the same way, Djébar writes against the history's determination of erasing her female relatives' participation in the national history. Djébar is haunted by the women with bare faces that were created by the French. By writing their stories, Djébar resurrects her vanished female relatives. 'How are the sounds of the past to be met as they emerge from the well of bygone

centuries? . . . What love must still be sought, what future be planned, despite the call of dead? And my body reverberates with sounds from the endless landslide of generations of my lineage' (Djebar, 1993:46)

Females' story telling helps them to get rid of the violence of the patriarchy, it also helps the protagonists to revisit the reality of the violence in history which defines their individuality and their communities' collective identities. Both narrate the violence that their communities, especially females expose so they create collective autobiographies.

They work their way from speechlessness to eloquence not only by covering the historical stages women writers have travelled from suffering patriarchy to rebelling its convention, to creating their own ethos-but also by developing a style that emerges from their respective cultures. In the course of their odysseys the destructive weapon of tradition is turned into a creative implement, and speech impediment becomes literary invention. (Cheung, Don't Tell, 1988:162)

Cheung's statement for feminist writers is suitable for Kingston and Djebar. As feminist autobiographers, they reveal out traumatic memories of the women in their works; they respond to historical amnesia, they speak the unspeakable historical subjects. Each of these novels deals with different historical violence. Djebar writes the trauma of French colonization and the independence war on woman, Kingston writes the Chinese immigration to America and its traumatic effects on Chinese females. Kingston and Djebar adopt females' oral experiences of immigration and colonization to *herstory*. The importance of remembering and the treatment of tragic Chinese immigration history and Algerian colonial history in recreation of female identity through the gendered perspective are ones of their main subjects.

Females function for the benefit of their communities during the war; they use their traditional roles for their people.

Whether they wanted it or not, women have always been involved in wars, actively in many different roles, passively as victims of violence, hunger and displacement-yet, in the representation of wars, they have remained largely 'invisible.' It was only when women themselves began verbalizing 'their' and started to question the war myths of the gender separation into 'active men Fighting the war' and 'passive, non-fighting women at home' that they become more invisible. (Veit-Wild & Naguschewski, 2005:231)

In Fantasia, during war of Algerian liberation, moudjahidates function like nurses on the mountains like Brave Orchid in The Woman Warrior. During the Japanese war, Kingston writes 'in the mountains my mother set up a hospital in a cave, and she carried the wounded there. Some villagers' had never seen an airplane before. . . the bombing drove people insane...my mother explained airplanes to them as she wiggled their ears' (Kingston, 1989:94).

While Kingston's main interest is to recover her Chinese origin with which she has distance, Djebbar intends to recover Algerian females' history and to appreciate Algerian female's expression and experience; by doing so, Djebbar defends that Algerian national history and government must respond in any meaningful way to women's victimization. Their prior concern is not the historical accuracy. The central theme in their autobiographical writings is the quest for understanding and recreating the female identity. Djebbar comes from the discipline of history, so she is angered by the invisibility of women in the Algerian national history, while Kingston, as a Chinese American, is interested in the examination of the narratives of immigration and theorizing their specific national identities and the distinct histories that the Chinese born and American born experienced. '[M]inority experiences have so often distorted or altogether undocumented in mainstream "history," [Kingston has] even greater reason than most women authors and poststructuralists to

be leery of language as purveyor of objective knowledge' (Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:11).

Djebar directly deals with the national history through an insight to written colonial documents about French invasion of Algeria and oral sources about the war of independency, Djebar intends to create public historical documents because the history of Algeria was erased by the French colonizers, Djebar documents and rewrites the official exclusions to break history down into *herstory*. 'The social and cultural contexts at the centre of Assia Djebar's work seem to privilege oral traditions, but written traditions are equally--if in different ways—essential' (Gafaiti, 1996:813). Djebar directly attacks French colonial violence and its impacts on Algerian and Algerian women, 'through the opacity of colonial archives, between their silences or abundances of words, the writer/historian scratches the surface in an attempt to decipher and bring to light the traces of the presence of her people' (Donadey, 2001:46). Djebar places the marginalized groups into the centre by translating French colonial texts and re-imagining females' stories from an Algerian woman's perspective. Djebar places her people especially the Algerian women in the pages of the national history.

But Kingston makes references to the national history, in her writing, her mother's stories seem much more dominant than the national historical facts. Chinese female immigrants hold on retelling their different experiences of how they come to America. Kingston does not apply to the written documents because Chinese history is documented on the pages. She can learn about the history of China and Chinese immigration to America from the written documents. She has no need to create a national historical document, she writes against the undocumented manipulation of Asian American history.

Kingston does not directly attacks the wrongs of communist rule in China and immigration policy in American. No name woman's story keeps the cultural history and Chinese immigration history alive. Her aunt's event took place in the 1920s when there was a political chaos in China, many men left China for America. Chinese revolutionaries attacked the social order established by Confucius. When the country was in unrest, warlords ruled China, revolutionaries aimed to adopt western ideas instead of imperialism, this period in China is described as "may forth" by the historians. Communists aimed to destroy the influence of Chinese warlords and bring the socialism in China. The story of Fa Mu Lan refers to this period of warlords and the communist rule in the political history of modern Chinese. Kingston adopts Fa Mu Lan myth to the contemporary Chinese history. She imagines herself as a woman warrior to take revenge on the revolutionaries and the communists who torture her family and her relatives. She writes its effect on her people especially the females Ordóñez states about ethnic women writers that

women writers respectively, each text explore a particular female and ethnic socio-historical identity. Yet, at the same time each narrative moves beyond cultural nationalism to a commonality of textual coding as the text itself becomes both the means and embodiment of modifying and reshaping female history, myths and ultimately personal and collective identity. (1982:19)

Kingston follows unwritten form of Chinese history such as traditional stories, myths, legends, songs, and poems. She rereads and retells them to reject their patriarchal implications and to empower Chinese American, especially Chinese American women for their future lives. Instead of abandoning the project of history, she attempts to create a new mythology for Chinese American history, she does not rework Anglo-American history in the same way as Djebbar reworks Algerian history. She attempts to create a

new mythology for Chinese American history, her intention in The Woman Warrior is to find her a place within her family and community not only as an individual but also as a Chinese American in America. Kingston is criticized by Chinese American male writers for recreating new versions of Chinese myths to take the interest of the westerners, and to service oriental discourse by showing Chinese people and traditions as irrational. Kingston deals with national history in China Men in which she reinstates the Chinese Americans who are erased from Anglo American history by using mythologies,

The Woman Warrior describes a very different relationship between the female protagonist and mythology than is found in China Men. The formulation of Chinese American history is under the gendered politics. These two opposing sides men and women form a whole experience of immigrants. The former focuses much more narrowly upon Chinese myth rather than exposing the mythology of Anglo-American history. (Nishime, 1995:67)

While Kingston blends her autobiography with Chinese myths and legends, Djebbar does not apply to myth and legend in Fantasia as much as Kingston to make *herstory* because Kingston finds relief in fantastical world for her confusion about the place of women. 'She can write her own history. Through her rewriting of Chinese myth she can include her own voice within a Chinese - and, since she learned these stories from her mother in America, a Chinese-American - tradition. The protagonist of The Woman Warrior inserts herself' (Nishime, 1995:67). Fa Mu Lan is a mythical a woman warrior, in traditional reading, she fought for her nation and turned to her traditional female roles after completing her mission. Fa Mu Lan's story is similar to the stories of female freedom fighters; moudjahidates during the Algerian war of national independence. Kingston breaks a real traditional Chinese myth into *herstory* by rewriting it. But the myth in Djebbar's writing is completely different from the myth in Kingston's writing. Djebbar breaks a false mythology which is created by Algerian patriarchy into *herstory*. After

the war of national liberation, the reality of Algerian women's emergence on the public scene during the war is assumed as a myth by the Algerian patriarchal national projects, Algerian women are pushed back to their homes and their conventional lives. Djébar writes *Fantasia* to prove that Algerian females' appearance in the public space is a reality rather than a myth.

To sum up, Kingston and Djébar are both autobiographers and storytellers. They are indulging with the oral history as a way of recovering the voices of the suppressed groups. Both access to the lives of these subaltern women who have only words of their mouths to keep their cultural stories, mythologies, family histories and national histories alive. Both are listening to stories of the women speaking in their mother tongues and record and interpret their oral narratives, testimonies and life histories from a different point of view than the traditional historians. They come to understand that females' oral traditions transmit their cultures to the next generations, shape their sensibilities and construct the bases of their creative writings. They are creative writers rather than historians so they are not so much deal with historical accuracy. As storytellers, each time they chance the stories according to their listeners, their contexts and their needs. They make their research for women, for all the women in their feminist discourses. Their readers learn about these women's oral words in the form of written words of Kingston and Djébar. Their first concern is their female characters' private struggle for a personal identity. Kingston and Djébar articulate stories of silent females. They feel a need to record them to bring out females' existence, this help them to recreate females as the woman warriors. Their autobiographies are discursive practices that they add meanings to lives of females from their subjectivities.

3.3. Woman Warriors in The Woman Warrior and Fantasia

Chinese American history and culture and Algerian history and culture are the histories and cultures of the oppression and victimization which can hardly serve as inspiration for the next generations. In their social surroundings, females face colonial, racial and sexual handicaps and it is wrong for women to exercise the freedom of individuality. Both Kingston and Djebbar succeed to convert their female characters' disabilities into their facilities. When Kingston and Djebbar create *herstory*, they present the female victims as heroines in two different ways:

[w]hilst Anglo-American concern to value women's experience has given rise, in literary study, to the search for a female literary tradition and the positive representation of women characters, for many French feminist this search is an erroneous one, since an 'other' (woman's) meaning can only exist in the gaps and blanks of our present language system. (Sellers, 1991:xv)

Djebbar does it by filling the gaps that are left by patriarchal and colonial discourses with fiction, imagination and mediation. Kingston articulates women's experiences and creates them as positive role models. Their patriarchal societies function as barriers for females' freedom so Kingston and Djebbar struggle to recreate the females in their societies by using fiction. Through fiction, their female characters gain their personalities, freedom and voices. They apply to fiction to create woman warriors. It is impossible to write an autobiography as a fact or isolate it from fiction. Factual and fictional events are the counterparts of their autobiographies. Elnaggar states truth's relevance in autobiography by referring to Robert Elbaz's saying '[a]utobiography is fiction and fiction is autobiography' (2002:171). They write the facts of their lives and also add fiction to their writings; especially the parts about the other females consist of fiction. 'Her name is Cherifa.

When she tells her story, twenty years later, she mentions no interment nor any other form of burial for the brother lying in the river bed' (Djebar 124). Both write the details of females' stories in the name of them. They convert their histories of female victims to the traditions of the inspiring characters. In their writings, women warriors are not born, they undergo a process of transformation, they show signs of weakness and overcome this weakness.

War and fighting are believed to belong to men in the patriarchal discourses. The stereotypical image of *damsel in distress* is criticized by the feminists, this stereotypical female is portrayed as naive, foolish, helpless and in need of a strong man's help, especially princes to rescue her. European literature and eastern literature portray this image. Angela Carter is a feminist writer who criticizes this gender oriented characterization in The Bloody Chamber. She reverses damsel stories, folk tales to feminist writings in which damsels are powerful to rescue the men in distress. Like the other feminists who study the woman warriors in literature and in popular culture, Kingston and Djebar study the woman warriors to respond the oppressive powers by attributing power to women through fiction. Both dismiss the traditional belief of women's being unsuitable for the war. They show that women can have glories like men. They functioned as partnership with men, and, as it is seen in the stories of Fa Mu Lan and moudjahidates, they played roles that men could not do, they helped the revolutionaries and supported their efforts. This reminds one the mythical woman warriors; Amazons. In The Woman Warrior, these Amazons became the prisoners of the baron whom the female avenger murders. Fa Mu Lan freed these women, Kingston mentions about them, 'they. . . rode as women in black and red dresses. They bought up girl babies so that many poor people welcomed their visitations. When slave girls and daughters-in-law run away, people would say they joined these witch amazons. They killed men and boys' (Kingston, 1989:44-45). Amazons in The Woman Warrior only killed the

men and they became a threat to the patriarchy. They did not seek revenge for their nations. Unlike the Amazons in The Woman Warrior, Algerian women fighters and Fa Mu Lan fought for their nations.

In their fictional autobiographies, women are portrayed as determined to have personalities, strength, they accomplish to fight against the colonial, racial and gendered discourses as female fighters. Colonized females; those caught up in the Dahra caves, the anonymous women whose hands and feet were severed for their jewels, the bride of Mazuna, Pauline Rolland, Nayletts, Hauoa and moudjahidates in Fantasia and Fa Mu Lan, Ts'ai Yen, Brave Orchid in The Woman Warrior are the real woman fighters. Apart from these real women fighters, the other Algerian women in the harem and No name woman, Moon Orchid and Brave Orchid are portrayed as the women fighters from the writers' feminist perspectives.

Kingston and Djebbar intend to write about the women who suffer from the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses and they create woman warriors who struggle against the political unrest in their national histories. The woman warriors in their works fight against the different political unrest. While Djebbar reaches back to colonial times and continues through the war of liberation, Kingston reaches back to the ancient mythical times with the story of woman fighter Fa Mu Lan and continues through the contemporary Chinese national history. Fa Mu Lan fought against the political unrest in her country like Algerian woman fighters, her fight was against the communists yet Algerian women's fight was against the French colonists in their countries. They respond female's being pictured as inactive during war; 'the enduring war time picture of "man does, women is" has depended on the invisibility of women's participation in the war effort' (Veit-Wild & Naguschewski, 2005:231).

Apart from the mythical woman fighter, Fa Mu Lan, No name woman, Moon Orchid and Brave Orchid are created as woman warriors who fight against the communists in China or the racist in America for survival like the Algerian women during the French colonization and anti-colonization eras. For example; Brave Orchid encounters with the certain difficulties, she encounters with the ghosts of the racial and patriarchal discourses. She fights against the ghosts who control her life, she struggles for keeping her tradition alive by teaching it to her children in America. The Woman Warrior's subtitle Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts refers to the ghosts that invade all of the Chinese Americans' identities. Chinese American women's identities are shaped in accordance with the discourses of sex and race. Kingston depicts that ghosts have various and many forms because the ghosts in Brave Orchid's Chinese life which oppress Chinese women sexually turns to the racist ghosts that oppress Chinese women in America racially. Kingston criticizes the racist Americans' attitude that built on ignorance and discrimination against the Chinese. Patriarchal Chinese culture is known as an oppressive culture but American culture is celebrated for giving rights to people especially to women. It is seen that the discourses that are oppressing women are the same all around the world. Brave Orchid is *the other* according to the racists in America. She loses her opportunities and her profession in America; she works hard in laundry and washes potatoes and works in tomatoes field to support her family in the land of ghosts. The hard conditions make her worn out but she fights to struggle in America. She tries to rebel against the American racism by 'adding no American name' (Kingston, 1989:77).

In their responds to the political unrest in their national histories, there remains a difference in terms of their woman fighters' being fictional and real. Fa Mu Lan is a mythological woman warrior and Brave Orchid is treated as the woman warrior by Kingston yet in Fantasia, Djébar tells about the real woman warriors who lived through the colonial era and who played highly

active roles in the resistance to the French occupation during the war of liberation.

Kingston's response to the political unrest in the national history is much more imaginative, there are no real woman warriors that fight against the communists in China and the racists in America. She reflects that the Chinese suffer from inequality and oppression both in China and America. When her racist boss yelled her as nigger, she could not defend herself against her racist boss. She wants to fight against both the racists who took their laundry and the communists who took their farm and tortured her relatives in China. She wants to go to China to take back their farm from the communists and then she wants to return to America to take back her family's laundry. She says nobody in history has conquered and united both north America and Asia so she returns reality and states 'I mustn't feel bad that I haven't done as well as the swordswoman did; after all, no bird called me, no wise old people tutored me. I have no magic beads, no water guard sight, and no rabbit that will jump in the fire when I'm hungry. I dislike armies' (Kingston, 1989:49). She is not a woman warrior like mythological Fa Mu Lan who fights to save her people from the baron, this baron takes the shape of the racist in Kingston's life in America.

Kingston's fantasy is thus closely tied to the realities she wishes to surmount, rather than removed from them. Further, the end of the woman warrior story is followed immediately by the statement . . . plunging the reader again into the narrator's difficult childhood. As is the case in other novels, fantasy is not in itself a solution to the young girl's problems of selfhood, and the juxtaposition of fantasy to uncomfortable reality underscores this fact. (Walker, 1990: 125)

During the political unrest in their societies, their patriarchal societies need these real or imaginative women fighters' help. And woman warriors become aware of their personalities, for example; in Fantasia, a female fighter

expresses, 'I've gained the respect of my compatriots and my own self-respect' (Djebar, 1993:140). These women present self-denial for their societies so they gain movement out of their houses and the respect of their patriarchal societies. After the wars, their patriarchal societies impose silence upon the women, they are made inactive parts of their patriarchal societies and their national histories. When they are read from feminist points of view, the female warriors are seen as new figures and as avengers for women rather than their patriarchal societies as one sees in the stories of Fa Mu Lan and moudjahidates.

As a difference to Kingston, Djebar uses the written historical documents to recreate a national history in which woman warriors exist. Djebar imagines the details that were not written by the chroniclers so she hears the suffering voices of the Algerian women and creates a fictional history in which women are the warrior figures.

Chinese and Algerian women's lives are formulated by sexual, racial and colonial discourses. Kingston and Djebar recreate women who fight against the sexism in their patriarchal societies apart from fighting in the political areas. Djebar listens Saint-Arnaud's pregnant hostage in 1843 and writes 'I imagine you, the unknown woman, whose tale has been handed down by storytellers . . . I re-create you, the invisible woman' (1993:89) like Kingston's recreating her invisible aunts whose tales are handed down by storytellers. They present females' struggle to define themselves as individuals in their community oriented societies. They are women warriors that resist against their expected traditional female roles that are described in Brave Orchid's talk stories in The Women Warrior and in their confined areas in Fantasia. They prefer their individual desires to the traditional females' self-denial roles. 'The struggle to derive a sense of selfhood while mediating between the Western emphasis on personal uniqueness and the Oriental emphasis on connectedness is responsible for the structure of The

Woman Warrior' (Walker, 1990:78). The protagonists are in between their individualities and self-denial feelings, to overcome this feelings they write these works.

In both of their patriarchal societies, there is a desire in woman to express herself but it is difficult for a woman to exist as individual. 'The only really guilty woman, the only one you could despise with impunity, the one you treated with manifest contempt, was "the women who raises her voice"' (Djebar, 1993:203). Their expressions of their sexual desires which bring out adultery or incest are indicators of the danger for their social orders. Traditions in their communities are necessary to ensure social stability because a person is related to all the people in the society. A female's sexuality affects all the related people. The patriarchy expects a woman to keep the traditional ways in their round system; but females in their works revolt not to be kept in the round systems of their societies, No name woman was as an indecent woman in traditional Chinese society. Her 'aunt crossed boundaries not delineated in space' (Kingston, 1989:8). She gained her individuality in a society where one had no singularity. She wanted to get rid of her slow life and paid attention to her desire and to her looking. She experienced sexual affair out of marriage which was made public by her illegitimate child. While giving birth to her baby, she fought against her society and her helplessness, weakness. 'She got to her feet to fight better and remembered that old-fashioned women gave birth in their pigsties to fool the jealous, pain-dealing gods, who do not snatch piglets' (Kingston, 1989:14). No name woman's greatest crime was her private interests which were believed to affect the rest of her village. Her untraditional sexual experience made her different from the other females, she became a heroine who revolted against the patriarchy and disrupted the social order of the village. She had to be punished with disastrous consequences, at the end, she committed suicide,

although constructed as a passive victim in Kingston's story, No Name Woman demonstrated her own sense of courage, honour and rebelliousness. Refusing to tell the name of the villager and to collaborate with the patriarchal rule in the village, the aunt took the blame entirely on herself. (Shu, 2001:210)

Shu agrees that No name woman showed her strong and silent protest against the oppressive patriarchal society. Her fight against the patriarchal society continued even after her death, her family forgot her ghost so it suffered from hunger. Her ghost had to fight with the other ghosts' for the scraps of their foods.

In Fantasia, like No name woman, the cloistered Algerian girls break the tradition's control of their expression of their feelings and desires by writing love letters to men all around the world. One of the girls' cry is a promise of her revolt against the patriarchy, 'I will never let them marry me off to a stranger who, in one night to touch me! That's why I write all these letters! (Djebar, 1993:13) Like No name woman, she won't let the patriarchy direct her life and abuse her body. They fight like the moudjahidates and Fa Mu Lan, but their fight is for freedom against the patriarchy's oppression, it is not for their nations' freedom, their swords are their personal desires. This takes us to the conflict between the individualism and community. They are successful in claiming their personal voices. 'Every night the vehement voice would utter the same childish vow. I had the premonition that in the sleepy, unsuspecting hamlet, an unprecedented women's battle was brewing beneath the surface' (Djebar, 1993:13).

In The Woman Warrior, Brave Orchid is a real woman warrior against the patriarchal discourse. Brave Orchid's life is surrounded with the ghosts. She fought against a sitting ghost which represented the patriarchy. She was called as ghost fighter. She told her friends to help her. 'You have to help me rid the world of this disease, as invisible and deadly as bacteria'

(Kingston, 1989:74). Kingston presents that discourses are dangerous like a deadly bacteria for all the people. Her fight with the ghost was a difficult match but she had bodily strength to defeat the ghost as a woman without fear, she talked to ghost that 'you have no power over a strong woman' (Kingston, 1989:70). She teaches Kingston not to be afraid of patriarchy. In Fantasia, one of the Algerian females who fought against the patriarchy's desire is the naked bride of Mazuna, Badra. 'By encoding and enacting the terms of her resistance to the paternal dictation of the conqueror, Badra nullifies her status as female object and turns this attempt at an imposition of alterity into a paradigm of postcolonial feminine resistance' (Murdoch, 1993:85). She is a good model to inspire all the females to have their subjectivities. Djebbar identifies herself with Badra to state her being an individual, she does not want to be an object of the patriarchy's desire.

Social disabilities of the Chinese and Algerian women turn to be their abilities and make them woman warriors who fight against the patriarchal discourse which impose silence and inactivity on them in the public life. No name woman, Moon Orchid in The Woman Warrior and Algerian women in the harem are created as woman warriors against the social restrictions. Kingston and Djebbar recreate them as woman fighters who fight with patriarchy with their weapons; silence. Their silence say many things, for example; No name woman revolted against the society and entered into her family's history and her nation's history with her silence. Shu agrees that 'the disgraced woman showed her strong but silent protest against oppressive forces and made sure that her tragic story would become part of the histories of the family and the village, as well as Chinese-America' (2001:210-11). And in "At the Western Palace" Kingston writes about her aunt, Moon Orchid as a silent and passive woman who behaved in the way the patriarchal tradition expects, who was unable to adopt herself to a new life in America because of her being silent. She became a ghost in America in terms of the racial discourse, but Kingston recreates her as a woman warrior

who faced with many difficulties in a strange environment and with the cultural and generational conflicts. She had a tragic life in America but 'the tragedies of Moon Orchid and of Kingston's nameless kinswoman (violate the taboos of ancient sexual codes) lies in the fact that neither women, once set on to course to outwit the social restriction which enclosed her, could, in the end, attain a victory over these systems' (Blinde, 1979:70). Kingston gives voice to this insignificant figure.

Both attribute strength to female's body which is seen as weak. From Kingston's perspective, in The Woman Warrior, a female's features such as menstruation or giving birth are not described as dangerous handicaps that prevent females' physical activities and make them weak. Brave Orchid says 'now that you have started to menstruate, what happened to her could happen to you. Don't humiliate us. You wouldn't be forgotten as if you had never been born' (Kingston, 1989:5), her mother warns her about her menstruation as she can be pregnant. But in her fantasy, the old woman on the mountain encourages her to see this feature of the female as a way of being an adult and having children, she says her let it run. It is not a frightening or shameful experience for a female or a handicap that prevent her physical activities. 'Menstrual days did not interrupt my training; I was as strong as on another day' (Kingston, 1989:30). In Fantasia, women fighters are strong like men, one of the woman fighters says 'if he comes near me again, I'll hit him with the iron bar and finish him off with the knife! . . . when the French arrested me in the mountains, they were astonished! They just had to look at my wrists to see how strong I was' (Djebar, 1993:138-39).

A female's body become a site of revolt to the patriarchal values. No name woman revolted to the social values with 'paying more attention to her looks' (Kingston, 1989:10) and with her pregnancy. When she was pregnant, she was getting broader. Her body's situation frightened the men, the patriarchy. A reference to The Rainbow by D.H Lawrence can be made, Anna was

pregnant, she began to watch herself in the mirror every day, she was proud of her getting broader, 'how proud she was, what a lovely proud thing her young body!' (Lawrence 192), at the same, she lost her communication with her husband. Her husband became irritated from this situation, because women had to be seen and defined only through the eyes of the men who stated "Adam as big as god, and Eve like a doll" (Lawrence 174). With one of the three cloistered girls' cry, one hears their revolt against the patriarchy's control and abuse of their bodies. 'I will never let them marry me off to a stranger who, in one night to touch me! That's why I write all these letters! One day, someone will come to this dead-and-alive hole to take me away: my father and my brother won't know him, but he won't be a stranger to me!' (Djebar, 1993:13) 'Letters allow them to redefine and subvert some of the most basic rules pertaining to the women in their village, including, who a "stranger" is and who has a right to a women's body' (Al-Nowaihi, 2001:489). Both Kingston and Djebar deconstruct the traditional symbols; feet-bound and tongue cutting in The Woman Warrior and the harem and the veil in Fantasia to empower women.

The women warriors in their national or cultural histories reflect the new woman warrior models who are not suppressed, weak or in distress, they defend their voices, existence and strength. Kingston and Djebar devote pages to the Chinese and Algerian female heroines in their autobiographical writings but the new woman warriors are Kingston and Djebar who are the real and central woman warriors. Both identify with the woman warriors who fight against the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses that inflict injustices to females. 'Language is seen as being in the control of men, with women left out, silenced' (Walker, 1990:42) and they use their words as their swords to fight against these discourses' violence to the females, they write about females' experiences of these discourses, 'for Cixous, as for many other feminist languages is tied intimately to gender: "women must write women. And man, man' (Walker, 1990:41).

They become storytellers who tell the traditional stories from their feministic points of view in the written words. This reminds one A. S. Byatt's The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye, it tells about a woman whose business is storytelling. She rewrites the traditional stories from her feminist point of view and describes her role as 'the phase was of course, not her own; she was, as I have said, a being of a secondary order' (Byatt, 1998:98). Like her, Kingston and Djébar are secondary orders of the stories told by the other females in their societies. They tell their stories in their second languages. there is roundness in females' story telling like the roundness in their cultures, It is closed to everyone outside their communities. Kingston and Djébar break this circle by rewriting females' stories and then telling them to the ones outside their communities. In the chapter "A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe", the beginning of the Ts'ai Yen's story is her mother's, the rest of it belongs to Kingston. Brave Orchid mentions that her female classmates sit next to her to get one glimpse at her paper so they keep go on writing after catching a word, 'they only needed to pick up a word or two, and they could remember the rest. That's not copying' (Kingston, 1989:64), these words of Brave Orchid foreshadow her stories' being the source of Kingston's written stories. In the similar way, the written accounts of French colonization of Algeria and the females' oral tradition are the sources of Djébar's writing.

The act of writing is important in both Kingston and Djébar's works. Writing means the females' existence in their works. Djébar writes love letters to prove her existence 'you see I'm writing, and there is no harm in it, no impropriety! It is simply a way of saying I exist, pulsating with life! Is not writing a way of telling what "I" am?' (Djébar, 1993:58). And she gets these letters for the 'women who never received a letter: no word taut with desire' (Djébar, 1993:60). Writing allows women to express their desires and breaks the silence that capture them. 'That a central issue in the apparently

autobiographical narratives of minority women is the struggle to find a voice with which to communicate' (Walker, 1990:21).

They have approached writing's different meanings. Djebbar focuses on the act of writing's being an escape from the veil. For Djebbar, writing means bodily freedom. Through writing, Djebbar raises her voice and refuses to be wrapped up by the veil, she removes her veil and other women's veils; she sees the connection between the veil and silence. The illiterate and silent Algerian women are wrapped by the veils. Djebbar concludes that '[m]ake her more unseeing than the sightless, destroy her every memory of the world without [...]. The jailer who guards a body that has no words--and written words can travel--may sleep in peace' (3).

Kingston makes a connection between writing and sanity in The Woman Warrior. Kingston hangs on sanity by writing different stories. Through her written words, she avoids the madness that caught her aunt Moon Orchid.

She cannot figure out from which perspective to speak. It's only through the mastery of literary form and technique--through creating this autobiography out of family stories, Chinese myths and her own memories--that she's able to articulate her own ambivalence and hereby find an authentic voice (Hunt, 1985:6).

The narrator Kingston desires to be a good story teller so she satisfies her desire to be a good story teller in her imagination. After she tells what happened in the mountains of the white tigers, Kingston writes "'[y]ou tell good stories," they said"' (Kingston, 1989:28). Kingston writes to tell many good stories in The Woman Warrior, she believes Brave Orchid's words 'sane people have variety when they talk--story. Mad people have only one story that they talk over and over' (Kingston, 1989:159). Moon Orchid lost her identity and became mad because she had only one story to tell, her madness awakes Kingston to tell a variety of talk stories. 'Maxine resorts to

writing as a way to escape mental contortions and usage loneliness and pain. The more they are ordered to keep quiet, the more irrepressible their urge to cry out. If only on paper' (Cheung, Don't Tell, 1988:164). She believes that telling different kinds of talk stories keep her mother alive. In the same way, moudjahidates and women in the harem tell stories to keep themselves alive. Kingston and Djebbar write a variety of talk stories to keep themselves alive and not to lose their identities.

To sum up, by the help of the words, Kingston and Djebbar overturn the lies that are told about Chinese, Chinese American and Algerian women. They free these women's memories from all the discourses that are put in their minds to make them inactive and submissive. They are angry to women's silence. In their autobiographies, they document their battles to break *the enforced silence* in the women's lives and to give existence to the women in the histories. By writing, they revolt against the oppressive powers for freedom. 'But my sole ambition in writing is constantly to travel to fresh pastures and replenish my water skins with an inexhaustible silence' (Djebbar 63). One can infer from the silence of the women in The Woman Warrior and Fantasia that if a woman goes on being silent, she can be erased by the dominant languages and histories. Their narratives prove the vivid validation of the articulation of the women's silence. Their aim in their writings is to create a more peaceful future for all the females.

CONCLUSION

In my thesis, I study re-creation of women through word in The Woman Warrior by Maxine Hong Kingston and in Fantasia, an Algerian Cavalcade by Assia Djebar. My thesis recasts feminism by analyzing the autobiographies of these women writers who are constantly in between different cultures. Their works concern post colonial and feminist issues. Although different historical and social forces constructed the lives of Chinese, Chinese American and Algerian females, common themes such as the oppression of colonial and racial powers, the reality of females' oppression, the problem of identity, oral tradition, collectivism, talk-story, female body, language, voice exist in their feminist autobiographical writings. They reject all the external imposed authorities and restrictions to have chance to gain voices, self-expression and individual growth. They wish the other females in their communities to have these chances. By writing their autobiographical books which represent some phases of their lives, 'an autobiographical act, therefore, at once the creator and makes a writer at once the creator and recreator of his or her personal identity' (qtd. in Elnagger, 2002:194). They blend their personal histories with their cultural and national histories because they are not able to define themselves without defining their cultural and national histories.

I have studied these works in two different chapters before comparing them. Despite the similar themes and intentions in their writings, they have different cultural and national characteristics, 'necessarily project a political dimension in the form of a national allegory: the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society' (qtd. In Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:14) Kingston is one of the first generation of Chinese immigrants to America; she is between her Chinese heritage and her American life. She

struggles to form her Chinese American female identity so she tries to construct a bridge between two cultures, she experiences the discrimination of the racism in America. Djébar as a postcolonial writer intends to reflect the violence of French colonization and it's being kept hidden from the historiography. She aims to prove that this violence not only affects the Algerian men but also it affects Algerian women so Algerian women deserve a good place in the national history and the social life.

Their writing in unconventional autobiographical modes help them to create their feminist discourses. They cross the borders of their cultures, languages, and histories in their fictional autobiographies to break the imposed silence on the females. They look back through their foremothers and their oral traditions are functional in their fight against the imposed silence. Females' need for self expression have direct effects on their identities. Their story telling supplies the sources for their writings. Cixous writes that 'write yourself: your body must make itself heard. Then the huge resources of the unconsciousness will burst out' (Sellers, 1991:39). Writing helps them to make females' voices to be heard. Both of these feminist writers access to the lives and words of the subaltern women. Through listening to the women's words, they recover the suppressed memories and hidden histories in their feminist writings. They reclaim the buried or marginalized truths about women. They rewrite the women's words to recreate them as the members of the national history. Their readers hear the women's voices and witness their sufferings, courage and existence in the histories. Trinh Min-Ha's statement about the process of rewriting history is a good statement to understand Djébar's writing, she 'works at unlearning the dominant language . . . also has to learn how to unwrite and write anew. And she often does so by re-establishing the contact with her foremother, so that life keeps on nurturing life, so that what is understood as the past continuous to provide the link for the Present and the Future'"(Green, 1993:965). After giving identities to their foremothers, Kingston and Djébar

can start to write their autobiographies because they form their fragmented selves.

They recreate women as warriors whether they are real or imaginary, these woman warriors fight against the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses. They deal with their influence upon them, it is quoted from Eakin 'the stories become [their]pre-texts for "self-invention"'(Cheung, Articulate Silences, 1993:84). Through identification with their characters, they become fighters.

Kingston and Djebbar are not tough fighters, they are gentle and effective rebels. They make themselves heroines who escape from being victims of the discourses. They are heroines of their own destinies through their written words. Females in their societies use the oral tradition, after listening to their foremothers, Kingston and Djebbar feel a verbal power in themselves and a sense of validation to create stories. They give voices to the silent females who are deprived from writing. These new woman warriors are feminist writers whose weapons are their pens to fight against the oppressive powers which display their desires to make women illiterate, this desire of the patriarchy echoes in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse with Mr. Tansley's words, "'women can't paint, women can't write'" (Woolf, 2000:54). They reach their goals through persuasive written words as writers in their post colonial contexts. '[W]riting is precisely the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought, the precursory movement of a transformation of social and cultural structures' (Walker, 1990:41). They break their dependency on men who bind females' feet, cut their tongues in The Woman Warrior and who lock them in harems and wrap them in the veils in Fantasia, 'to write confronting love. Shedding light on one's body to help lift the taboo, to lift the veil' (Djebbar, 1993:62). Both discover their lives through the oral and written words. They rediscover spaces for the females to get breath. They focus on the language as 'the key

to change' (Sellers, 1991:98) to inscribe women's existence, voices and demands within the racial, colonial and patriarchal discourses.

They succeed in reconciling two cultures through writing their autobiographical works. Djébar identifies herself with Pauline Rolland who created connections between French and Algerian cultures at the end of Fantasia and Kingston adopts her voice to American feminine and translate her Chinese past into her American normal life to create reconciliations between two cultures. Kingston and Djébar make the reconciliation of their societies' concepts of the females in their autobiographical writings.

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