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Scopes of Resistance to the Oriental and Western Discourse: A Critical Study of the Narrative of Arab Women's Diaspora Writings

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Dedication

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مقتضب الأطروحة

في ضل تنامي الاهتمام بظاهرة الشتات"Diaspora" في الاوساط الثقافية والادبية والفكرية...، تهدف هذه الرسالة إلى استكشاف صياغة الخطابات المضادة لهيمنة الفكر الامبريالي الغربي والفكر البطركي العربي في سرد الروائيين الإسبان العرب, البريطانيين العرب والأمريكيين العرب مع إيلاء اهتمام خاص لبناء الهوية الهجينة."hybrid identity". كما تحاول هذه الاطروحة المساهمة في ازدهار الأدب العربي والنقد النسوي العربي. تتضمن منهجية البحث مجموعة مختارة من الروايات: (1)*The Last Patriarch*(2008) بقلم نجاة الهاشمي (2) *Sold* (1994) بقلم زانا محسن (3) *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* (4) بقلم فادية فقير (2010)My*Name is Salma* (2006) للمهجة كهف. تراهن هذه الاطروحة على أن فضاء الشتات "DiasporicSpace"يشكل منصةخصبة للروائيات الشتات والدراسات الدياس بورية لبناء استراتيجيات ادبية مضادة للخطاب الشرقي والغربي المهيمن.كما تزعم الاطروحة كذلك أن أدب الشتات للمرأة العربية هو أدب لرفع الوعي ومقاومة التعاريف النمطية التي تقصي المرأة العربية وتنبذها وكد الهياكل التقليدية لعلاقات القوة عبر الجنس والعرق والدين والحدود الثقافية.

يتناول الفصل الأول كيف تتخذ الروائية العربية الإسبانية نجاة الهاشمي والروائيةالعربية البريطانية زينة محسن موقفًا نسويًا تجاه تمظهرات البطريركية العربية المهيمنة والتقاليد وإخضاع المرأة العربية. كما تتناول أيضًا اعتماد الهوية الهجينة كآلية للتحرر من كل اشكال الاحتواء والسلطة والاضطهاد. يستكشف الفصل الثاني كيف أن الروائية العربية البريطانية فادية فقير، والروائية الأمريكية موهجة كهف تفكك الصور النمطية عن العرب وتعرف العروبة بشكل مختلف في ضوء الموقف الهش الذي يشغله العرب في الخطابات الأثنية والعنصرية في بريطانيا والولايات المتحدة الامريكية. ان عملية التفكيك هاته، في المستوى التحليلي، تسعى جاهدة، خاصة من خلال الكتابات الانغلوفونية، للكشف عن كيفية تمثيل هؤلاء المؤلفين لخطاب نسوي موحد ومناهض للفكر الاستعمار و البطريكي و تثمين الحوار بين الثقافات والأعراق.

Abstract

This dissertation aims to explore the counter-hegemonic discourses of Muslim, Arab-British, Arab-American and Arab Spanish novelists who live in different diasporic location with a particular attention to hybrid identity construction. It aims to contribute to the corpus of Arabic literature and to the burgeoning field of Arab feminist critique. The thesis involves the selected of the following works: (1) The Last Patriarch (2008) by Najat El Hachimi (2) *Sold* (1994) by ZanaMohcine (3) *My Name is Salma* (2010) by FadiaFaqir (4) *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* (2006) by MohjaKahf . In this dissertation, I argue that the diasporic space constitutes a suitable platform for Arab women diasporic writers to construct counter-discursive strategies to Oriental and Western dominant discourse. I argue further that Arab women Diaspora literature is a literature of consciousness-raising and resistance of the typical definitions of otherness and traditional structures of power relations across gender, ethnicity, religion and cultural borders. Chapter one looks at how the Arab Spanish novelist Najat El Hachimi and the Arab British novelist ZanaMohcine take a feminist stancevis-à-vis Arab patriahcal dominant institutions, traditions and the subjugation of Arab women. It deals also with the adoption of hybrid identity as a mechanism of resistance. Chapter Two explores the way the Arab British novelist FadiaFaqirand the Arab American novelist MohjaKahf subvert stereotypes about Arabs and define Arabness differently in the light of the precarious position Arabs occupy in ethnic and racial discourses in Britain and in the United States. It looks also at how they valorize trans-cultural and cross ethnic dialogues intheir novels. As this study is interested in exploring the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which Arab women writers on both sides of the Atlantic produce their work, the conclusion investigates how these authors have represented a unified feminist and anti-colonialist discourse to enhance the democratization process.

INTRODUCTION

Anglophone Arab literature in general and women's in specific witnessed unprecedented change in content and quantity after the Twin Tower collapse. The September attacks brought about great political, social, cultural changes to the situation of Arabs in the West and America in particular since it hybridized their identities, destabilized their sense of belonging and created an agony and hostility against them. At the same time, it shaped their literary developments. Lisa Majaj as cited by Jameel Alghaberi in his article on "Arab Anglophone Fiction: A New Voice in Post-9/11 America" affirms that, Arab Anglophone fiction "reflects in part the shifting historical, social, and political contexts that have pushed Anglophone Arab writers to the foreground, creating both new spaces for their voices and new urgencies of expression, as well as the flourishing creativity of these writers" [1] This new burgeoning literature stands as mirror that reflects Arab immigrants' anguish, anxiety and unfulfillment as well as their quest for an identity which converges distinct cultures and languages. On the other hand, it presents a voice of truth which negotiates Orientalists' stereotypes and introduces Arabic culture to Western readers.

During the last decades, Anglophone literature was marked by the significant contribution of Arab women writers in carving out creative spaces to foster a better understanding of their experiences, lives and identities as immigrant Arab women from purely feminist and womanly perspectives. Diasporic Arab women writers committed themselves to reflect a genuine representation of women's lives, identities and experiences beyond the andocentric patriarchy and colonial models which demean

[1]Jameel Alghaberi, "Arab Anglophone Fiction: A New Voice in Post-9/11 America," *Contemporary Literary Review India,* 5:3 (2018), p. 39.

Arab women as obedient, submissive, ignorant and under the mercy of men. These writers write from the very contact zone of many cultures and opt for a hybrid identity that refuses to dwell on one side of the hyphen. They transform their marginal position into a space of resistance and strategically reflect their multiple consciousness of the social, economic, and political corrupted values and attempt to change them. The increasing publications of Arab women diasporic writings was simultaneously followed by increasing scholarly and academic interests to which my dissertation is a contribution which focal the point of: Scopes of resistance to the Oriental and Western Discourse in Anglophone Arab women's Writings. The basic focus of Arab women diaspora writers speaks within the thorny event of 11/9. They are texts written from the effective experience of social marginality, from a disjunction, fragmented and displaced agency and the perspective of the hybrid. These texts sought to re-locate Arab immigrants, re-inscribe their identities and serve as a bridge of communication that blurs the divide between the East and the West.

Within the postcolonial and diaspora studies, Arab women's diasporic literature is ought to be read as a literature of resistance, exile, home and identity making. Thus, the concept of resistance recourses throughout this study since it presents a principal framework for the critical project of this thesis. Speaking on the concept of 'Resistance' many critics within postcolonial studies argue that it constitutes any opposition to, or subversion of, dominant authorities. For instance, Raby Rebecca asserts in her article "What is Resistance?" that limiting the scopes of resistance entail more than defining it. Resistance for her "is an integral part of power relationships, of domination, subjugation and as such may be viewed from different

ideological viewpoints."[2]Resistance is a prevailing feature of most of the Arab female diasporic literature which, recently, knew phenomenal improvement and thematic changes that emanate from the author's social, economic, political and psychological status.

On the one hand, the selected writers I examine in this study make use their imaginings and creative allegories to resistance and transform the mythical depiction of the western discourse on Arab Muslim women. On the other hand, despite living in the diaspora, they imaginatively revisit their homeland and culture in an attempt to affirm their stance on the cultural stereotypes attached to Arab women in Arab culture as well as combat the dominant patriarchal institutions. In this thesis, resistance takes the form of consciousness raising and inflaming the intellectual world on the necessity to reread and revisit the typical definitions of otherness and traditional structures of power relations pertaining to gender, ethnicity, religion and culture. It aims to examine the ways in which Arab women Diaspora writers, through the language of the dominant culture, resist the pre-conceived stereotypical Oriental discourses and its hostility against Third World female and, in this respect, language functions as a mode of transformation, subversion and resistance.

The primary resources tagged in this thesis are of varied Arab backgrounds and live in various diasporic locations. Najat El Hachimi is among the well known Moroccan Spanish authors who have travelled and settled down in a new foreign country (Spain). She writes in Catalina language yet most of her works including *The Last Patriarch* and *The Body Hunter* (2011) were translated into English and received

[2] Rebecca Raby, "What is Resistance?" *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8:2, (2005), p. 155.

transnational critical attention thanks to the topical issues she dears to treat. In her *The Last Patriarch*, Najat El Hachimi goes beyond the Moroccan restrictive cultural codes and trespasses the taboos of sex and sexuality uplifting Moroccan women's emancipation, freedom, and gender equality. She also encompasses the experiences of Moroccan uneducated female emigrants and the pursuits of liberation within the European hemisphere. In contrast, the Yemeni British author Zana Muhsen's Sold remains as one the few known literature written in English. The author is of Arab descendent who was born in Great Britain and was smuggled back to Yemen where she is subjectto all forms of violence under oppressive patriarchal regime. Her narrative unveils the reality of Yemeni traditions, culture, religious hypocrisy and social injustice with a sense of resistance. Both the authors paved the way to discuss matters like misogyny, discrimination, gender traditional roles of women, and in generally brought Arab women personal life into the public and political scenes.

Fadia Faqir's *My Name Is Salma* and Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* are the most acclaimed pieces of literature by Arab American and an Arab British authors. Unlike Najat El Hachimi, Fadia Faqir and Mohja Kahf was pushed into the diaspora following their parents and fleeing from them. Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* articulates a transnational belonging and trans-cultural identification that stems from her journeying through cultures. The Muslim writer describes Muslims' lives in United State of America where she challenges and the framing of Muslims as violent extremists, and Muslim women as victims of Islam and patriarchy. She stands up against Islamophobic stereotypes, the association of Muslim men with terrorism and Muslim women with fanaticism and tradition. The author digs deeply in exploring the dimensions of the veil. She affirms her identity as an Arab

Muslim American woman. Fadia Faqir in the same manner reflects on the dislocation of Arab female immigrant who accidently found themselves in a place of liminality which makes "hybridity" and "ambivalence" the best survival mechanism. She portrays her female characters as hybrid subject that undergoes various experiences in attempt to construct their subjectivity within the overpowering secularism of Western culture. Faqir Faqir's *My Name is SalmaMy* is a feminist piece of writing that deals with the ordeals of Arab Muslim women who are oppressed by archaic patriarchal codes and the aftermath of 'orientalism'. It dwells on the precariousness of her female character that flees death of dishonor in her motherland to find herself in a state of in-betweeness in the host land of Great Britain. Faqir adopts a non-linear narrative form which is fashioned in mixing the present and the past, English and Arab and cross-cultural journey between Jordan and England. The young Arab Bedouin girl Salma grapes between two different identities and undergoes a life time journey insearch of the self.

My project attempts to explore the intersections of Western stereotypical and racial discourses on Arab women that have intensified in the post-September 11 era, as well as Oriental and traditional constructions of Arab women's identities. The thesis delineates questions and traces the ways in which Arab Anglophone women writers forge a new consciousness for Arab women living in the borderlands, create bridge of communication between two worlds, and challenge multiple hegemonies adopting different strategies of resistance. It explore how diasporic authors uplift marginalized voices to the subject matter of the academic debate and by so doing, this dissertation aims to contribute to the corpus of Arabic literature and to the burgeoning field of Arab feminist critique by exploring the works of four contemporary Arab female

Diaspora writers. It aims also to examine the literary themes and aesthetics, as well as the nuanced narrative modes through which these novels imaginatively depict, articulate, and interrogate the intersections between diaspora, gender identity, and homeland. I believe that studying these texts will enrich our understanding of the concepts of Arab women's identity, resistance and diaspora, three concepts that I will critically explorein this thesis.

Having been a student of Women's and Gender Studies Master Program, I started to became interested in issues related to women's social, cultural and political emancipation in the Arab world and pursuits of liberation performed by feminists, scholars and academics in general. However, the shift of focus took place when I started to read about diaspora studies, literature and Resistance the most influential of which are Zahia Smail Salhi's *The Arab Diaspora: Voice of Anguished Scream*and "Cartographies of identities: Resistance, Diaspora and Transcultural dialogue in the works of Arab British and Arab American women writers". These works deal with the Arab diaspora experiences and the pursuits of integration, assimilation, affirmation and confrontation. They also examine the literary works of several Arab women writers in both sides of the Atlantic. The author introduced his work in a very interesting and appreciable way. Safest to say that these works provoked my curiosity to learn more and to make my own research on the issue of resistance and identity making in Arab women's diasporic literature. In my study, I have tackled different themes and adopted a postcolonial feminist Approach to study the scopes of literary resistance employed by Arab women diasporic novelists.

The following are questions underlying my examination: do Arab women novelists share the same conceptions of the dominant discourse and do they have react

differently or employ the same strategies of resistance? To what extent these writers succeed in giving an alternative and a more fair theorization and portrayal of Arab women diasporic identity? How do their different journeys through different geographies and cultures shape and influence their literature. And more pointedly, how do they cope with identity labels and Western assumptions and representations of Arabs? Mohja Kahf's *The Girl In Tangerine Scarf* depicts female characters' sense of being both Arab and American and none of them. In this context, the author refutes the western depiction of Muslim women identity and opposes the responsiblisation of patriarchy and Islam for shaping women's identity.

What can be hypothesized at this level is that the solidarity among Arab women and Arab feminist emanates primarily from being exposed to the same structures of power. It can be also hypothesized that the variety in terms of styles and themes is the result of the authors different experiences of immigration and settlement in their host countries, and to the unclear positions they occupy within the racial hierarchy which is one of the basic apparatus by which identity is constructed. The identity that the Arab diasporic women writers opted for in influenced by the ethnic affiliation and hybrid position Arabs occupy that is either recognized or made invisible in the western hemispheres.

Interestingly, despite the fact that Arab writers operate in different diaspora spaces with different specifities; it seems that there is a common bond in their fiction. They all converge on assigning diasporic displacement a central role in negotiating the constrictive construction of identities. Belonging to diasporic communities empowers them to contest the unified discursive structures. It seems that the characters analyzed

here are always dissatisfied with the home they inhabit and they show their quest for a comfortable home and a supply identity that resist easy homogenization and different incorporation. The thesis will be largely preoccupied with illuminating such form of textual resistance. The readers are enticed to ponder over the possibilities that the transnational 'home' creates. Acquiring a sense of difference from any stable homes cape enables the writers to invalidate the solidified discourses on culture, history, language and more importantly identity.

In this dissertation, I essentially apply a postcolonial feminist theory to examine the lives and experiences of Arab women Diasporas in both sides of the Atlantic and the challenges they face socially, culturally, politically and psychologically as postcolonial "Third World" immigrants. While I situate the experience of Arab women within a postcolonial/transnational context, I discuss the multiple theoretical developments that the postcolonial feminist discourse undergoes in light of contemporary global changes and the impact of different hegemonic forces on the lives of women worldwide. The postcolonial feminist theoretical frame provides a comprehensive study of the discourse of double oppression and marginalization faced by Arab women immigrants in the diaspora as well as in the homeland. In this regards, different issues of identity; hybridity, diaspora, and border-crossing are widely investigated. The major development within the postcolonial feminist discourse as a transnational paradigm has recognized the examination of the lives of diasporic, immigrant, and hybrid female subjects within a multiplicity of historical and global forces.

The textual analysis will demonstrate that a bunch of similarities characterizes the thematic forms of such texts no matter how their different diasporic experiences are. This explains why the first half of the thesis is consecrated to the theoretical

building of the diverse styles and strategies through which the writers' deconstruction of stable landscapes is performed. In order to proceed with the analysis of the texts under the study of literary resistance as well the Arab women's identity construction and transformation, a review of existing literature on home, women's writing, diaspora, immigration hybridity and identity must be discussed.

The intellectual interest given to the readings of the political injustice, the cultural stereotypes and social hierarchies between men and women constitute an important field of study and enriched the literature on women in the Arab world. Without any claim to chronological order, the First chapter tries to attend to the way homeland with its dominant regimes and cultural norms is negotiated in Arab women's writing and how its theorization expresses some resentment from the part of Arab women writers. Reading Arab women lives in the Arab world takes place in three significant stages in the life of postcolonial theory. Drawing on reflections on home, this stage will simply be referred to as Home as unstable site of Inhabitance. A new trend has recently emerged in the world of literature that responds to the cultural, political, religious and psychological needs of women who face transformations at different levels in homeland. This category of people has been confronting many challenges in the host countries while trying to assert their own hyphenated identities. The second stage is entitled Arab women Writings: A Voice of resistance. The next phase witnessed tremendous changes vis-à-vis the perception of Arab women's identity and how Arab and postcolonial feminist subjects react to the challenges locally and transnationally. The section on Arab Islamic Feminist: Translation, Appropriation and Transformation aims at highlighting how the Arab feminist theory interaction with Arab tradition and religious beliefs has led to the disruption of old

patriarchal ideologies and cultural authenticity. This being the case, the researcher chooses to deal with two stages separately.

If any conclusion can be deduced from this introductory chapter, it would be the necessity of exploring the various socio-cultural and even political factors that contribute to the oppression of women in Arab and Islamic worlds. These factors and, in addition, to the political instability and war in many Arab regions represent the most important push factors that energies Arab women to immigrate towards western destinations. The following chapter on: A Historical Account of Arab Women Diaspora Literature will sketch out the general factor, the beginning of and the waves of Arab immigration towards Europe and America. It highlights also the development of the rapidly emerging field of Arab women Diasporic Literature in periods before and after 11 /9 terrorist attack. The first section entitled Arab Women's Immigration, provides a historical overview on the waves of Arab immigration and traces the beginning of Arab women's immigration. The second section presents a critical review on Arab women's diaspora writings, traces its beginning, development and changes before the world attack of the 9/11. The last section intends to explore the thematic and aesthetics concern of this literature changes in and the contributions of Arab women diasporic writers particularly in post 9/11 era.

Bearing in mind that this thesis applies a postcolonial feminist theory in its textual analysis, postcolonial theory is an applicable tool to approach Arab women's identity, images and status within various cultural, political and social discourses. Within this framework, this chapter, under the title Postcolonial Criticism and the Politics of Resistance is an exploration of different facets of postcoloniality that

centralize on giving voice to marginal people and subalterns wherever they are and despite of their ethnic, religious and gender belongings. This theory came to contest Eurocentric hegemonies, cultural imperialism and western epistemological knowledge and violence. In the first section of this chapter, the thesis defines, scrutinizes and provides readings of "postcolonialism" as a theory and a practice within the academic and critical discourses in the humanities. The second section of this chapter is concerned with the different stands points apropos the marginalization of third world women from the discourses of decolonization and a critical survey of postcolonial feminist theory as a discourse of resistance.

The section highlights the main challenges and struggles facing postcolonial feminism since it represents a theory as it stands against the alliance of western colonial thought, the western feminist essentialising discourse and the institution of patriarchy in the oppression of third world women. In the last stage, attention is given to the concept of Resistance as it represents the back bound of postcolonial criticism. Within the arena of post colonialism, resistance reflects the colonized subjects' awareness of the socio-cultural, political and psychological inferiority and marginality where it functions as a subversive tool to the colonial discourse and struggle for emancipation and agency of third world people and nations.

Historically, Arab and many ethnic marginal minorities are thought to be as one ethnic group, forgetting that not all Arabs are Muslims and fail to understand the diversity among Middle Eastern and the diversity among Middle Eastern women in particular. The images of Arab women in most of the western public discourse emulate the universal fixities of colonialist epistemology and the misconception Americans in

specific retain vis-à-vis Arab women given that they are equated with stereotypes and regarded as a homogeneous category turning a blind eye on their heterogeneity in term of history, culture, religion and socio-economic and political associations and belongings.

The diasporic consciousness of Arab author open multiple venues to escape the politics of exclusion and the oversimplified binaries of self/other, black white, and so forth that were instrumentalzed to create norms of identification whether in term of race, gender and sexuality. In the Anglophone Arab female literature, issues of racism, marginalization, identity construction, ambivalence, and resistance are clearly articulated and emphasized. The last chapter of this study: Arab Women Diaspora Writers' Challenge of the Double Discourses focuses on the ethnically and sexually marginalized minorities namely diasporized Arab women who are understood as monolithic category. The first stage is devoted to question the image of Arab women in the western discourses. That is, it provides a historical account of the misrepresentation of women in the western mass media and public discourses highlighting Jack Shaheen's analysis and Lura Malvy critiques on the representation of women in media. The second section will deal with the strategies of literary resistance employed to deconstruct hegemonic discourses. Obviously, the experiences of immigration, dislocation and exile Arab women go through are translated into empowering strategies for Arab women to affirm their difference, build their agency and construct an identities beyond the orientalist and traditionalist patriarchal lenses. The Articulation of Diasporic identity in Arab novels is the title attributed to the last stage of the last chapter. Notably, the diasporic experience raises the awareness of various identities that are reflected in many Arab women's novels. In some general

sense, most of the characters depicted in the diasporic narratives have a life whose basic feature is looking for home and identity. These characters try to cross the racial stereotypes and the certitude of colonial discourse making their writings an instrument of exhibition. Thus, the current section intends to echo how Anglophone female authors are in favour a hybrid identity.

This theoretical ground paving will be reflected on the practical reading of 'Resistance' in the Arab women Diasporas fictional writings. Most of the raised argumentations revolve around the authors' claim to perform a kid of discursive challenge to dogmatic and centralized norms of thinking and conceiving issues of cultures, migrant and subjectivity. Two chapters are presented in the second part of this dissertation. Each chapter attempts to approach some of the selected Arab diasporic fiction in relation to the concept of Resistance and identity construction and/ or transformation. In each chapter, very brief introduction to the general circumstance within which and perhaps the motives for which the work was written. Notably, the works under analysis employ various strategies and techniques to oppose the double jeopardy, oppression and ethnic marginalization. In the first chapter, the Moroccan-Spanish Najat El Hachimi and the Yemeni-British Zana Muhsine will be discussed since their novels opened the doors wide for a literary reflection of patriarchal oppression in the homeland, and pursuits of liberation in the diaspora.

The first section is devoted to Najat El hachimi's*The last Patriarch* where she dramatizes the full of the last Moroccan Patriarch and celebrates her female character's freedom and triumph. In the first sub-section El Hachimi unveils the true face of patriarchy that is manifested in different socio-cultural institution and

practices. The male Protagonist is portrayed as prototypical patriarch. This sub-section is entitled “Denunciating Patriarchy: Dramatizing the Fall of the Last Patriarch”. The second sub-section is devoted to the scopes of resistance employed by Mimoun’s daughter to topple down her father’s authority and construct her own diasporic identity. Perhaps similar to Najat El Hachimi, Zana Muhsine devoted her novel to narrate her true account of Modern slavery, human kidnapping and trafficking.

The second section entitled “The Patriarchal Persecutions and Creative Strategies of Resistance” paves the way for a linkage between religious, social, cultural beliefs and practices. This section is divided into two sub-sections, the first of which presents an analysis of how homeland becomes unbearable and unsuitable site of inhabitance because of the cruelty, Misogyny and cultural Alienation the female characters are exposed to in Yemen. The second sub-section poses questions of confrontation, homecoming, and hybridization. The protagonist of the novel knocks every door possible to gain her freedom and go back to Great Britain. The various counter-discursive strategies utilized to enact change are here analyzed in this sub-section entitled “Zana’s Politics of Resistance.”

In the second chapter entitled “Obdurate Origins and Precarious Identities: Hybridity, Resistance and Intersexuality,” attention will shift to the literary works of Faqir and Kahf in the light of the changing views on Islam, the veil and multiculturalism. The central issue of most of immigrants and diasporic Arab writers revolve around questions of belonging and identity of Muslims particularly those who reside in multi-ethnic communities like America and Great Britain. On the one hand, as it is the concern of this chapter, these migrants are torn between different life’s

styles, cultures and the requirements of life in metropolitan centers. Arab migrants seem to be victims of the requirements their Arab and Islamic culture and that of the adopted country with regard to modernity and the western life style. At this stage, the researcher has to question the extent to which Arab diaspora writers manage to transform all these drives and forces into positive power to build cross-cultural communication and identification. That is, the first section of this chapter will be laid on faqir's *My Mame is Salma*, an interesting novel which portrays a clear image of Arab women's life in the homeland and the exile (Britain). In the first sub-section, most of the issues pertain to the institution of patriarchy as the primary source of oppression. It explores Faqir's literary representation of her character's experiences with honor crime, sexism and gender based discrimination. The second sub-section looks at the literary image of migrant's experience which is always discernible by globalization. Salma's migratory process and exilic experience is comprehensively detailed by the author and this sub-section highlights how Salma moves from a state of ambivalence to resistance to the recreation of hybrid Identity as an Arab British "Sal".

Faqir representation of Salma resembles to great extent Khadra Chamy in Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* particularly in the theme of journeying and traveling across nation for self-conception, and understanding of one's position in the world. Both the characters experience marginalization and exclusion because of their ethnicity as Arabs and because of their religious affiliation as Muslims. Their migratory experiences are strongly connected with Western cultural stereotypes religious fanaticism, and Islamphobia. The religion of Islam, in particular, plays a big part of the characters' personalities and function as an alternative for the Muslim characters. In the case of Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*, as this last section exhibits, Khadra's

diasporic experience and her ethnic and religious consciousness is worsened as she, first, happens to live in an environment that very hostel to Islam and Muslims and, second, she belongs to an Islamic community "Indiana Police" which attempts to spreads Islamic principles. That is, the first sub-section entitled "Resisting Orientalist Narrative of the Post 11/9" will explore how the option to live in an American society and, at the same time, uphold the strong spiritual, ideological and political ties within the Muslim community (*ummah*) is made impossible without the extra-ordinary courage our female characters. The second sub-section will dwell on literary reflections of the lives and roles of Muslim women in America and back home and, from a Muslim position, how the author give a unique portrayal of a strong Muslim woman who goes beyond the Eastern and Western Paradigms of femininity. To deal with resistance and identity construction in *The Girl*, the last sub-section is entitled "Transgression of Patriarchy and Reclaiming Muslim Feminist Agency".

Critical focus on a female author tries to present examples of novelistic characters for whom identity and its rediscovery is at the core of their being. It seems that Muslim diaspora novelists are in a dilemma between transnational belonging, cultural heritage and Islamic affiliation. Since it is the case, these Muslim writers deploy the issues of Islam and its varied dimensions as an apparatus of analysis of the situation of Muslim women in the West. The restless diasporic subjects tend to perform a quest for a hybrid identity that is doomed to continuity in such open space of cosmopolitanism. This entails challenging the singularity of the authoritative discourses in host as well as sending countries. In this respect, the diaspora space becomes a stage for Arab female authors and Muslim to achieve more freedom, particularly the freedom of expression that is censored in their Islamic motherlands.

These authors express their views on traditions and religion from different womanly lenses.

PART ONE:

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

I- A Critical Account of Oriental Patriarchy: Arab Feminism and Women's Writings

A- Arab women's writings: The Transgression of Cultural Boundaries

The patriarchal regime dominates most of Arab societies as it gives males, by virtue of their masculinity, power and the utmost privileges compared to females. This system of power demeans the contributions of women in the socio-economic and political arenas. Arab women's awareness of patriarchy as the most harmful disease that menace their rights as human being pushes them to rebel against it. Arab women's rebellion against the patriarchal regime is manifested in different forms and contexts. One of the most noticeable forms of resistance is the intellectual and academic expressions of these feminist writers who simultaneously believe that, "The pen was an effective weapon that I could use against injustice and oppression."[3] The argument of this section is that Arab women's writings present a powerful discourse of resistance to the patriarchal stereotypical attitudes of women in Arab culture. Aiming to unveil the dark sides of patriarchy, many female authors endeavour, through their literary expressions, to undermine various traditional practices and cultural stereotypes that, for a long, contributed to women's subordination and oppression. This section, therefore, is a discussion and an exploration of the way Arab female feminist writers reflect their views on Arab women's emancipation.

[3]Nawal el-Saadawi, *Why keep Asking for my Identity*? (London: Zed Book,1997) , p. 4.

It seems that it will be interesting to start with Nawal El Saadawi's critical analysis of the social injustice and the cultural disparities between men and women in the Arab world. Nawal El Saadawi wrote many inspiring books about her first experiences with the dilemmas of writing in the Arab Islamic world. In *Memoir From Women's Prison* (1986) Nawal El Saadawi tells us about the difficulties of writing a novel in the sense that, according to her, it seems impossible to write in the homeland (Egypt under Sadat regime and later Hosni Mobarak) particularly when she made a lecture in Cairo University where she expressed her point of view on women, society, politics medicine and literature. Immediately after that lecture, her "name joined the government blacklist"[4]and all of the national security, the health ministry, houses of publication and the media become furious against her. Later on, as the author was overwhelmed by unbearable panic and anxiety when she was attacked in her house and violently arrested without any previous warrant or previous warning.

One has to note that Nawala El Saadawi's narration particularly in this book is meant to show the domination of the political regimes which tends to violate the right of speech and incriminate the act of writing. That is, the female writer's destiny if she tackles issues that are seen by the government as taboos is imprisonment. Nawal El Saadawi states in this regard:

> Writing: such has been my crime ever since I was a small child. To this day writing remains my crime. Now, although I am out of prison, I continue to live inside a prison of another sort, one without steel bars. For the technology of oppression and might without justice has become more advanced, and the

[4] Nawal El Saadawi, *Memoirs from the Women's Prison* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), p. 3.

> fetters imposed on mind and body have become invisible. The most dangerous shackles are the invisible ones, because they deceive people into believing they are free."[5]

Nawal El saadawi gives the impression here that writing in the Middle East has always been a violation of the law that is punishable. From her early childhood El Saadawi affirms, that she has been condemned to social and political exclusion because of her critical and political stances. Even when went out of the prison, her fate is to suffer from dismiss ion and an imprisonment of another sort since her image was associated with evil.

My own view is that Nawal El Saadawi's work hopes to mirror her opposition and resistance to state policies and the political oppression which confine women's intellectual freedom. Freedom, for Nawal El Saadawi, remains an illusion because personal autonomy is censored by an invisible banner of freedom. This book, in particular, is recognized as prison writings in which political prisoners stand against the law to change it. Resisting the political precariousness in the Middle East and the Arab World in general was not the only concern of Nawal El Saadawi but rather she delves into discussing and criticizing the patriarchal and capitalist systems that she claims to be dominant in the Arab world. Within this context Isam M. Shihada argues in her article entitled "The Patriarchal Class Struggle" in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile* (1974)

> My argument is that women in God Dies by the Nile are victims of the patriarchal class system consolidated by politics, religion, and social customs.

[5]Ibid., p. 200.

> El Saadawi deconstructs the patriarchal class system by showing us its dark side where women are raped and destroyed for being women and even men are eliminated for failing to support fully the patriarchal class system. [6]

In other words, *God Dies by the Nile* dramatizes its author's anger toward the religious beliefs and the capitalist system which confine both women and poor men to live under miserable conditions. She shows her feminist thought through articulating her dispute and criticism of patriarchy through her character Zakeya whose silence reflects her misery, suffering and anguish preyed upon her by the Moyer of Kafr El Teen (the representative of authority in the village). The later uses his political and economic power to sexually exploit, rape and enslave the females in the village and ruined poor people lives. In her work *Contemporary Arab Women Writers: Culture Expression in Context,* Anastasia Valassopoulos notes:

> When reading El Saadawi's earlier works, it appears that her characters negotiate an understanding of their position in the world whilst simultaneously coming to terms with how they have arrived at this position. Weighing up their civil liberties and rights, they also articulate the panic experienced at the moment where they attempt to voice their understanding.[7]

The characters El Saadawi that she uses and the attributes she associates with them are meant to make the invisible visible. Her characters are revolutionary and resistant in the sense that they never succumb to the oppressors. The Moroccan feminist Fatima Marnissi whom I will discuss below argues in "The Impacts of Capitalist Development

[6]Isam M. Shihada, "The patriarchal Class Struggle" in Nawal El Saadawi's God Dies by the Nile," Nebula, 4:2 (2007), p. 163.

[7]Anastasia Valassopoulos, *Contemporary Arab Women Writers: Culture Expression in Context* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 39.

in Morocco" that Rural women hold the responsibilities of the household (child caring, childrearing, food production), at the same time, they have to participating and work hand-in-hand in the fields without being reworded. It is safe to say, therefore, that both Nawal El Saadawi and Fatima Mernissi devoted themselves to question the oppression women under the capitalist system and the ways in which women are made the "*slaves of the slaves*"

What unites and repeatedly stimulates Arab feminists to produce a unified counter-discourse to defy patriarchal coercion, then, is male structures of power that are inscribed within culture and religion. On the one hand, Nawal El Saadawi is preoccupied with women's liberation from the cultural practices that subjugate them like female genital mutilation. In her groundbreaking book *The Hidden Face of Eve* (1980) that was the subject of great controversy particularly in Egypt, the author draws many conclusions which are the outcome of a long medical observation of her male and female patients who suffer from intricate sexual stress. She initiates her book by narrating about her traumatic experience of circumcision when she was a child. Female genital mutilation is a cultural practice that no girl was exempt from in many Arab countries.

In sudden, for instance, this tradition is deeply rooted in their culture and it is more brutal than that of Egypt as the author affirms "I was horrified to observe that the Sudanese girl undergoes an operation for circumcision which is ten times cruel than that to which Egyptian girls are subjected to."[8] The prevailing of this tradition in many Arab societies pushed Nawal El saadawi to question different traditional

[8]Nawal El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve, Women in the Arab World* (London: Zed Books, 1980), p. 16.

practices too that tends to favor boys over girls. She indicates that the female child is brought up differently in the sense that she has to be always careful about the way she stays or stands, the way she behave, speaks or laughs. Everything she does is counted particularly when it comes to her sexuality. "The female child therefore is trained to suppress her own desires linked to her own self and to fill the vacuum that results with the desire of the others". [9] It fair to say, therefore, that Nawal El Saadawi is considered by many critics an author and critic of her time. She is a feminist, activist, doctor and an author who refused to succumb to the wells of patriarchal regimes. Throughout her professional career, El Saadawi has been serving women's cause via instrumentalsing her psychiatrical observations, critical analysis and creative writings to bring about a radical change in the institutions that oppress women in Arab societies.

El Saadawi tackles issues of inequality between the sexes in Islam, female genital mutilation, the veil, politics, colonialism etc. Additionally, she has written more than 40 books each of which deals with women liberation. Indeed, many critics appraised her woks as revolutionary feminist books which assert that women in the Arab world are exploited on the socio-cultural, economic and political levels. The following will concentrate on tracing other features of Arab women's writing namely some of the contemporary Arab women autobiographies in which they reflected their personal experiences.

Is it interesting to note that the autobiographical novels which are part of this discussion are neither designed as autobiographies nor are written on their cover, but "there are at least three works whose form and style qualify them as autobiographical

[9]Ibid., p. 35.

novels"[10]. Fatima Mernissi's *Dream of trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* published in (1994) sheds light on the important evens of Fatima Mernissi's childhood in Moroccan domestic Harem in Fez. In *Dreams of trespass* Fatima Mernissi narrates about the "*hudud"* or the frontiers that no woman dares to trespass and all women, within the harem, dream to go beyond. In an early age, she learned to respect these frontiers given that "to respect the hudud was to abbey"[11] even though Mernissi was preoccupied with identifying the geometric lines of the frontiers since they were invisible. She portrayed the harem as a cage form which no female could go out without permission and within which there are also frontiers between men and women.

On the other hand, the young Mernissi was socialized not only to respect the hudud but also how tobe mature even in her use of language and in this sense the young Mernissi learned from the story of *Scheherazade* how to chew her words before letting them out. Aunt Habiba, the story teller in the harem, used to tell stories among which Scheherazade's Thousands and One night which were all based on the skillfulness of using words. This tale helped the young Fatima to learn how to avoid troubles through saying the right things in the right moment. Moreover, her Aunt Habiba plays imperative roles in the formation of Mernissi's personality. She educated her to be strong, defensive, expressive, rebellion and positive agent in her milieu.

> But Aunt Habiba said not to worry, that everyone had wonderful things hidden inside. The only difference was that some managed to share those wonderful things, and others did not. Those who did not explore and share the precious

[10]Radwa Ashour, *Arab Women Writers: A critical References Guide* (New York: Cairo Press, 1999), p. 150.

[11] Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Childhood* (US: Cambridge, Press Books, 1994), p. 3.

> gifts within went through life feeling miserable, sad, awkward with others, and angry too. You had to develop a talent, Aunt Habiba said, so that you could give something, share and shine. And you developed a talent by working very hard at becoming good at something. It could be anything - singing, dancing, cooking, embroidering, listening, looking, smiling, waiting, accepting, dreaming, rebelling, leaping. 'Anything you can do well can change your life'."[12]

In an early age, Mernissi was introduced to art and performance and was encouraged to be good at something in order that she could localize herself and be useful. In the theater that Shama organizes, Fatima worried about not having an important role in the theatric performance, but Aunt Habiba ascertain her that the most important thing is to assume a role in the social order that can contribute to the common interest. I here would like to connect these to what Mudrika Anisahri affirms in her critical book on Fatima Menissi's life story. She stated that:

> Dreams of Trespass: Tales of Harem Girlhood (1994) is one of her memoir that expresses the multiplicity if experiences faced by women living in Harem and talks about the confusion Mernissi's experience as a young girl in a harem against the backdrop of Moroccan nationalism, westernization and nascent women's right movement.[13]

This statement presumes that Fatima Mernissi lived a unique experience in the harem where she was introduced to different clashes; the clash of the frontiers, the clash of

[12]Ibid., p. 12.

[13]Mudrika Anisahri, *Feminist Thoughts in Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: State Islamic University, 2011), p. 5.

colonialism and the clash of women right movement and her situation in the harem. However, the harem that Fatima Mernissi described is nothing like the way Westerners imagined it to be.

Here I would like to recall Malek Alloula's Critical book entitled The *Colonial Harem* (1986). Malek Alloula delved into analyzing text and post-cards that were fabricated about Algerian Harem. These fabricated images and texts were part of the colonizers colonial discourse that was meant to unveil the Algerian anti-colonialist women who were part of the Algerian notional resistance. On the other hand, because the French colonizer could not invade the Algerian harems, French anthropologists endeavored to make the Harem public through eroticizing and exoticsing it.

The post-cards that Malek Alloula analyses in his *Colonial Harem* include naked women and portray the harem as a homosexual space. The Harem is depicted as an essentialised space of eroticism.Laura Chakravarty Box stated in her book, *Strategies of Resistance in the Dramatic Text of North African Women: A Body of Words*. (2005) that, *The formal harem tradition was never as common as westerners supposed. This type of sequestration happened only in the great families, usually urban households, who could afford to do without the labor of women outside of the home*.[14]That is, when reading Dreams of Trespass, it does not appear clear that Fatima Mernissi narrates about the harem in gloomy way. She does not represent it as space of severity and violent oppression of women but rather, the harem is a world where she acquired the pre-requisite mechanism of life from her mother, Aunt Habiba, Chama and other female members of the harem.

[14]Laura Chakravarty Box, *Strategies of Resistance in the Dramatic Text of North African Women: A Body of Words* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2005), p. 52.

In brief, *Dream of trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* has always be considered an autobiographical novel that traces the life story, the experiences, and events that Fatima Mernissi undergoes while a child. Giving voice to the self via narrating about the life story is one of the major features of Arab women writings. This characteristic, in fact, is quite common among Arab women Writers like Nawal Saadawi Fatima Mernissi, Malika Mustazraf, Leila Abouzid and others who wrote novels to talk about themselves and to make their experiences public. Leila Abouzid for, instance, is famous for writing narratives which are mainly concerned with her childhood adulthood during and after the independent.

To tell about her childhood in Morocco during French envision, Leila Abouzeid wrote a novel which is titled *Return to Childhood: Memoir of a Modern Moroccan Woman* (1998). In this memoir, Leila Abouzeid tells us about her childhood and the different places in which she lived including al Quseiba, sefrou, her mother's place of birth, Rabat and Casablanca. She also speaks about colonialism and the national resistance in which both men and women played a role in the struggle for independent from French colonial rule. Abouzeid's father is a center figure in her autobiography as a strong advocate of Moroccan nationalism. Her father (Ahmed abouzeid) has been arrested many times because of his political affiliations and activism.Leila Abouzeid published another autobiographical text in 2000, *al-Fasl al-akhir* (The Last Chapter), recalling her youth and first experience with writing. Within postcolonial criticism and cultural studies, understanding Moroccan literature sensitively requires attention to history and context. In her novel *The Last Chapter*, Leila Abouzeid positions herself within the context of Islam, modernity and Morocco's post-colonial politics. […]The novel establishes a hierarchy of narrative voices to

challenge the patriarchal ideology and to problematize individual and political identities. Her allegory exposes the failure of post-independent Morocco to emancipate women and to establish national independence, even though this post-independent patriarchal ideology has been touted as an authentic national and religious identity. The novel constructs a narrative based on women's struggles, men's crises of identity and Morocco's socio-political and religious upheaval.[15]

Moving from Egyptian and Moroccan context, many critics argue that Lebanese Civil war and the Golf war been treated extensively in Arab literary works in the sense that many Middle Eastern writers took the war, resistance, and peace as subject matter of their writings. Writing about the war and its aftermaths has been a distinguishing feature of Arab Writers in general and women in specific. Arab Women writers mirror the traumatic experiences in the outbreak of the war in Lebanon and the Iraqi envision of Kuwait in which they had to participate in liberating their countries. However, writing during the war time has always meet participating in the war as many feminist critics argue. To cite an example, Anastasia Valassopoulos argues that "*writing during war time is, to cook, an experience that is part of war itself. An experience that informs the socio-political roles that precedes it*." [16]As remarked by Anastasia Valassopoulos in her critical work on Arab women's writings that Arab women writers dealt with both the patriarchal oppression and the distress of the war take advantages of reality of the war voice abjection of both.

[15] Touria Khannous, " Islam, Gender, and Identity in Leila Abouzeid's The Last Chapter: A Postcolonial Critique". *College Literature*, 37: 1 (2010), p. 175.

[16]Anastasia-Valassopoulos, Anastasia Valassopoulos, *Contemporary Arab Women Writers,* p. 55.

The Lebanese Writer, Hanan Al Shyakh is considered one the typical writer whose writings documented the epidemic of war on Lebanese society. Her two well-known novels *Beirut Blue* (1992) *The Story of Zahra* (1996) have a great historical value in providing access to events and attitudes that profile the makeup of Lebanon 1975 until 1990. Additionally, they present a far-reaching insight about women's socio-political situation while seeking to localize themselves and constitute an identity.

Hanan Al Shyakh's *the story of Zahra* essentially includes two books. The first book entitled "*The Scores of Peace"* which deals with Zahra's up bringing in a rigid patriarchal society. In her early age, it is clear that Zahra is introduced as silent character that does not react to the ill-treatment of her tyrannical father who "*beats me whenever he caught me standing in front of the mirror squeezing at my incipient spots*".[17] Her fierce father rejects her because of her spots which dramatize the deep down sadness inside her. In this book the character of Zahra tells us about the brutal behaviors of her father, uncle, and husband who intensify her feeling of isolation and rejection in the sense that, because she does not match the standards of an ideal womanhood, she is discriminated against, unwanted and unloved by the closest people to her. The second book is sub-titled "The Torrents of War" in it, we can notice that Zahra become a different person. She dramatizes the character who abhors the war and who seems to be ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of putting an end to the war even on the expense of her body. "The war must stop here and now!"[18].

[17] Hanan Al Shaykh, *The Story of Zahara* (London: Quartet Books, 1986), p. 123.
[18] Ibid., p. 135.

It is, in this respect, fair to say that Hanan Al Shaykh gendered the war and approached it from a pure feminist perspective. Joseph T. Zeidan made the following comment while critiquing Arab women novelists:

> The most impressive work in the history of Arab women's novels is Hanan al Shaykh's Hikayat Zahra (The Story of Zahra) which is remarkable not only in its portrayal of life during the civil war in Lebanon (presented in the second part of the novel) but also in that it is milestone in terms of its feminist commentary on Lebanese society in general.[19]

Certainly, The Story of Zahra is ought be read from a feminist perspective because it unambiguously defines the roles of women in the patriarchal dominated societies through the character of Zahra who challenges the male designed notions of sexuality, obedient, gender relationships and social ties. It is in this vain that some critics of Hanan Shaykh's works asset that the act of representation is simultaneously an exercise of power. Here I would like to engage with remarks noted by Khalid M. Al Mansri and Lisa Suhair Majaj who read Zahra as the representative, a symbol and a metaphor of Lebanon itself. Al Mansri notes:

> While Zahra's bodily imperfection and scars can be read as signs of the war to come or the wounds inflicted upon Lebanon herself during the confessional conflict, as the notion literally turns in words against itself. Zahra's acne is also an expression of her mere personal struggle. It reflects both the emotional scars

[19] Joseph T. Zeidan, *Arab Women Novelists: The Formative Year and Beyond* (US: State University of Newyork Press,1995), pp. 143-146.

of her childhood and also literalizes the even increasing gender conflict carried on society. [20]

The point here is that Zahra is represented with an ugly face to metaphorically emphasis the ugliness and cruelty of the war. She is, indeed, a representative of both Lebanon during civil conflict and Lebanese women who were victimized by the war and patriarchy. Similarly Majaj observes that Zahra is a "*metaphor of Lebanon, a country that has been used and abused by its own people, in a sense Zahra's body, which is private and personal, cannot be separated from its function as public and communal.*"[21]Zahra has always been abused by the closest people to her. Her father plays the role of the cruel patriarch who beets her mercilessly, her uncle is being sexually assaultive towards her and her husband see her a sub-human. This is a clear reflection of Lebanese society that has been shattered and damaged by its own people. In fact, because she believes in peace, humanity and co-existence Al Shaykh among other Arab women writers offer a discourse that differs from that of patriarchy which has patronized, and subjected them.

In brief, Arab women writings have been for a long underrepresented and understudied in both the Arab world and the West because, in addition to the afore-mentioned reasons, their relative prominence in the Arab literary life is comparatively recent. This is especially true for the new genres in Arabic literature - novel, shorts

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[20] Khalid M. Al Mansri, *Telling Stories of Pain: Women Writing Gender, Sexuality, and Violence in the Novel of the Lebanese Civil War* (Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation: University of Michigan, 2010), p. 116.

21 Lisa Suhair Majaj, PaulaW. Sunderman and Therese Saliba,eds.*, Intersections: Gender, Nation, and Community in Arab Women's novels* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002), p. 234.

and drama, which continue to be fertile ground for experimentation by Arab writers, both men and women, as they try to adapt these western forms to suit their purposes.In western academic circles, the matter is further complicated by the process through which this material may be discovered, due mainly to the physical distances separating scholars and critics from literary events as they take place, forcing many to rely on the recommendations of those present or traveling in the Arab world and translations which, important as they are, provide only fragments of the Arabic literary scene, with chance playing a significant role.

In their own words, Arab women express their own epistemological views and their emancipator discourse which emanates from a space definitely governed by their local cultural determinations. Arab women narratives are a discourse that emanates from a liminal space, joining a feminist consciousness with a cultural awareness. Therefore, I believe that more writings as such will surely lead to a path where Arab women and feminists can display their thought fully and justly.

To conclude, the main aim of this section was an endeavor to introduce the reader to the sequences and circumstances in which women's literature emerges. It has highlighted some of the constraints that have hindered the evolution of women's literature and the feminist theoretical framework that precedes it. This section has also emphasized some of the most authoritative female feminist critics and some female writers who work sustainably to strengthen and broaden women movement towards liberation. It should be noted, therefore, that literature trespass the geographical boundaries in the sense that it brings all women from all over the world closer and it

contributes to the unification of all women against the same regimes and for national and social emancipation.

A- Arab Islamic Feminist: Translation, Appropriation andTransformation

One of the important issues pertaining to gender equality and women's agency in the Arab world and beyond is the relationship between Islam and women's rights. Many secular feminist reject the notion of Islamic feminism alleging that Islam is the primary cause of Muslim women's subordination and oppression. Islam basically is understood as a patriarchal institution which legitimate sexism, oppression and gender inequality. Similarly, other female scholars reject it because they feel that feminism is an imposed western product and it is incompatible with Islamic idea and culture. For Moghissi Haidah, as cited in Miriam Cooke critical book *Women Claim Islam* (2001), Islamic feminism is in incoherence with concept that is meant to connote women's rights within Islamic lows. For her "the Qur'an, is unequivocally opposed to gender equality, and the Sharia is not compatible with the principles of equality of human being".[22] Mariam Cooke explains that Moghissi Haidah holds this stance arguing that Islamic feminism cannot be contextualized in Islamic states as the religious, cultural and tradition are not in coherence of the utility of the term. Islamic feminism supposedly is another face of the western secular feminism with a different make up given that it is the outcomes of the diasporised experiences of Arab scholars and academics living in international location.

[22] Miriam Cooke, *Women Claim Islam: Creating Islamic Feminism through Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 57.

For Mariam Cooke "the term 'Islamic feminism' invites us to consider what it means to have a difficult double commitment: on the one hand, to a faith position, and on the other hand, to women's rights both inside the home and outside. The label Islamic feminism brings together two epithets whose juxtaposition describes the emergence of new complex self-positioning that celebrates multiple belonging."[23] This means that being an Islamic feminist connotes having a multifaceted identities or rather unsettled character where the Islamic feminist allege having a place in a religious network at the main time engages in activism for the sake of women's emancipation. To Mariam Cooke, this seems paradoxical as it may leads to extremism. However, Mariam Cooke affirms that transnational Islamic feminists like Assia Djebar, Fatima Mernissi, Nawal El Saadawi, among others take advantage of their experiences of transnational contacts to empower themselves as women and Muslims and from transnational milieu, they address their multiple critiques to the dominant institutions at home and on a global level.[24]

Safest to say that the rejection or advocacy of Islamic feminist thought, according to many Islamic feminists, steams from the understanding or misunderstanding of the true spirit of Islam and its relation to democracy and egalitarianism between the sexes. pioneers of Islamic feminists, and third world feminists such as Chandra Telpane Mohanty and Gayatri Spivak go to argues that first world feminist's discourse on third world women deniesthem their diversity and difference by the generalizations and homogenization of women in the third world. On the other hand, scholars and many Islamic feminists namely Margan Badran, Asma Barlas, Fatima Mernissi, Fatima Sadiqi among others explore in-depth the Qur'anic

[23]Ibid., p. 59.
[24] Ibid.

and Hadith (The prophets commandments) accounts of gender relations under the umbrella of Islam. By so doing, they fashion an alternative view and a bottom up approach to analyze women's status in Islam beyond the fundamentalist's and western secular feminist paradigms. Notwithstanding, Islamic feminism as socio-political and cultural movement which emanate from Islamic teachings is basically important for Muslim women who reside in the West given that they face competing binary discourses of Islam and the western Orientalism. In fact, Muslim women writers function as a native informer for the western reader whose knowledge on Women and Islam is subverted. This section presents a historical overview on Islamic feminism and its relevance to Muslim women's rights in Arab Islamic word and beyond. It aims also at exploring the relevance of the term to women's emancipator endeavors not only in the homeland but the western hemispheres as well.

Historically, Islamic feminism remains of the most influential intellectual and academic movement of the 1990s. It emerged first in Iran as a counter discourse to the biased interpretations of religious texts namely Qur'an to affirm women's rights. Many scholars around the globe embark discussing and reinterpreting (tafsir) the Qu'ran and the prophet's teachings (hadiths) focus on (ijtihad) to promote gender equality, change family codes and guarantee women political rights. "The Iranian debate spurred the emergence of Islamic feminism as an intellectual movement. Articles published in the Iranian magazine Zanan ("Women"), which was created in 1992, opened up the prospect of a feminism that took Islam as the source of its legitimacy, thereby stripping feminism of the "pejorative" connotations with which it had hitherto been associated in Iran. Ten years after the Islamic revolution of 1979, religious women from the middle classes became involved in this movement in

reaction to discriminatory laws enacted by the regime – a regime that had nevertheless made social justice a theme of its campaign and proclaimed its desire to "restore their 'true and elevated' status to women within Islam."[25]

Aiming to explore in depth the scrupulous meaning of the concept, Margot Badran exposes many question related to the term, she clarifies that "Islamic feminism" is an emerging discourse that question the status of women depending on Islamic holy text (the Quran) and the teachings of the Prophet to achieve rights and justice for both men and women. Margot Badran as cited in Suraiya Sulaiman article, highlighted in the Quran that, "If any do deeds of righteousness – be they male or female – and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them" (Quran, al-Nisa', 124; see also Quran, ali-Imran, 195).[26] According to Margot Badran, Islamic feminism opens a new space where women's rights within Islamic low become open for negotiation in public debates. Hence, Muslim women's unfair situation has nothing to do with Islam but it is much more related to the patriarchal nature of Arab societies in particular. Thus, Islamic feminism, according to her, emerged out of a critique of both patriarchal Islam(ism) as well as of secular feminism.

In her study *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (2002), the Pakistani-American writer Asma Barlas who specializes in Islam, Qur'anic hermeneutics and women's studies delves into questioning the position of women in Islam and Islamic societies. Asma Barlas goes back to the

[25] Ziba Mir- Hosseini, "Stretching The Limits: A Feminist Reading of the Shari'a in Post-Khomeini Iran," *Women living Under Muslim Laws,* 17 (1997), p. 3.

[26] Mohammad A. Quayum "Negotiating Muslim Women's Rights and Identity in American Diaspora Space: An Islamic Feminist Study of Kahf's The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*," KEMANUSIAAN,* 25: 1(2018), p. 47.

Original Islamic texts to develop a different theory to approach women's status on various levels. She analyzes the Qur'anic stance on sex/gender in support of the idea that Islam opposes patriarchy and gender differences in which men are considered the center whereas women are seen as marginal. She argues that, "the Qur'ān does not even associate sex with gender, or with a specific division of labor, or with masculine and feminine attributes"[27] but, for her, the Qur'an treats both gender on equal basis as equal parts of the same block. That is, Barlas clarified that, "the Qur'ān affirms the principle of the ontological sameness/similarity of women and men, it does not use man as the paradigm for defining sameness/similarity."[28] She summoned various Qur'ānic verses to back up her stance. For instance, the first verse of Surah an-Nisa in which Allah stated

"

يَاأَيُّهَاالنَّاسُاتَّقُواْرَبَّكُمُالَّذِيخَلَقَكُممِّننَّفْسٍوَاحِدَةٍوَخَلَقَمِنْهَازَوْجَهَاوَبَثَّمِنْهُمَارِجَالاًكَثِيراًوَنِسَاءوَاتَّقُواْاللَّهالَّذِيتَسَاءَلُونَبِهِوَالأَرْحَامَإِنَّ اللَّهَكَانَعَلَيْكُمْرَقِيبًا".

As a translation, Barlas stated "Your [Rabb], who created you From a single *nafs*[''Person''] Created, or like nature, [its] *zawāj* [mate] and from them twain Scattered (like seeds) Countless men and women; - Reverence God, through Whom Ye demand your mutual (rights)."[29]Similarly, she recalled the verse 98 from Surah al-An'am in which Allah states "وَهُوَالَّذِيأَنْشَأَكُمْمِنْنَفْسٍوَاحِدَةٍ" which translated as "It is [God] Who hath Produced you Froma single person." Barlas also stated the verse 198 from Surah al-A'rafin which "هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا" translated as

[27] Asma Barlas, "*Believing Women'' in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (United States of America: University of Texas Press, 2002), p. 130.

[28]Ibid., p.133.

29 Ibid.

"It is [God] Who created You from asingle person, And made [its] mate of like nature, in order That he mightdwell with her (In love). [30]Through these verses, Barlas clarified that even though men and women are biologically different; they are ethically and morally equal since they are originated from one self. This means that the Qur'an treats men and women as equal partner who are supposed to co-exist and enjoy the same rights and privileges.Barlas adds that the Qur'an does not privilege day over night, light over darkness or males over females, but rather, it privileges good over evil. She also rejects the idea that males are associated with good, day and light whereas females are associated with evil, night and darkness

The argument that the equality and women's empowerment on the social-economic and political level are principally the backbone of Islam has been also advocated by Suad Joseph and the Egyptian feminist Leila Ahmed. Suad Joseph argues that "Islamic feminists are not advocating the abolition of Islamic law in matter of personal status; rather, they argue that the solution to women's empowerment is to be found through a re-interpretation of the fundaments of Islam."[31] The basic argument of Islamic feminists is that the Quran supports the principle of equality and justice of all human beings but that the practice of equality of women and men in today's Muslim societies have been corrupted by patriarchal ideas, customs and practices.

As cited in Suraiya Sulaiman study "Negotiating Muslim Women's Rights and Identity in American Diaspora Space" Leila Ahmed, on the other hand, provides an insightful argument concerning the egalitarian conception of gender inherent in the ethical vision of Islam by giving evidence from the Quran and the Hadiths. She cites

30Ibid., p. 134.

[31]Tønnessen Liv,"Islamic Feminism. Regional Institute of Gender, Rights, Peace & Diversity*" chr. michelsen institute*, 1 (2014), p. 6.

from the Quran, surah al-Ahzab, verse 35, which, in her opinion, illustrates the balanced virtues and ethical qualities, as well as concomitant rewards, for both male and female believers. God states: "For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women […]For men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give charity … For them has God prepared forgiveness and a great reward" (Quran, al-Ahzab, 35). This passage, according to Ahmed, is "a clear statement about the absolute identity of the human moral condition and the common and identical spiritual and moral obligations placed on all individuals regardless of sex"[32]

The rereading of Islamic religious text according to these feminists will undo the doings of patriarchy, culture and traditions. As cited in Liv Tønnessen and Anne Sofie Roald report on "Discrimination in the Name of Religious Freedom" that Hasan al-Turabi distributed a flyer upholding a reinterpretation of women's rights in Islamic fiqeh. In this pamphlet, he contended that numerous parts of Islamic law were embraced so as to adjust Sharia to conventional traditions. Male Islamic legal advisers deciphered the standards giving priviledges to men while perusing those commanding constraints on women. This has brought about a Muslim society in which the essential privileges of women and the basics of equity, as cherished in the Sharia, have been deserted.Turabi says that, "*Women played a considerable role in public life during the life of the Prophet, and they contributed to the election of the third Caliph. Only*

[32]Mohammad A. Quayum "Negotiating Muslim Women's Rights and Identity in American Diaspora Space, p. 47

afterwards were women denied their rightful place in public life, but this was history departing from the ideal".[33]

Turabi's statement is very significant in the sense that women's contributions to the public in prophet's life were hidden and concealed due to the growing dominance of patriarchal reading of religion. In the present era, despite women's contributions to development in the Arab world the disparities in opportunities available to men and women in economic, social, and political arenas are still wide. These disparities hamper the achievement of gender equality and the prosperity of the Arab societies and thus the need to return to true spirit of Islam becomes a pre-requisite for gender equality and women's empowerment. Islamic feminists believe that Islamic feminism is a policy, a practice and a realistic movement that presents a serious challenge against patriarchy. Islamic feminism, asa discourse of resistance, is not only meant to challenge the oriental injustice towards Muslim women in the Arab world but also it represents a counter-discourse against racism. It aims at challenging the surveillance and pressure Arab Muslim women face while attempting to adapt to the mainstream western societies. The image of Arab Muslim and veiled women particularly in the west is very schematic and prejudiced. As it is explored in due chapters, attitudes towards Muslim women is marred with racism and ethnocentrism. The Muslim women are frequently presented as submissive, oppressed, and backward. Even in the Western feminism discourse, third world women as Chandra Mohanity notes the image of "third world women" reinforce the major discourse of the inferiority of Third women and the superiority of women in the west. Mohanty points out that many

[33] Liv Tønnessen and Anne Sofie Roald eds, "Discrimination in the Name of Religious Freedom: The Rights of Women and Non-Muslims after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan," *Chr. Michelsen Institute*, 5 (2007), p. 6.

feminists write about Muslim women being powerless and oppressed, about their needs and problems. But there are few feminists who write about their choices, freedom, or power of action. Western feminists merely use images of Third World women as objects in defining themselves who are the real object of their studies. She means that in feminist theory, Asian, and particularly Muslim, women, are depicted as powerless individuals who need to be guided by Western feminism in order to become politically mature. It is unrealistic view all women or all Muslims as a homogenous group, ignoring their historical differences.

Islamic feminism has been critiqued for being a predominantly diaspora and convert phenomenon. Indeed, a lot of the scholars mentioned reside outside of their original countries or are Muslim converts such as Amina Wadud. Many of them urge reform in their country of origin and sometimes they have been criticized by local activists for this, saying that the country has changed during their time in exile. Currently many Islamic feminists are involved in the transnational movement *Musawah*which tries to engage local activists in the project of reform in Muslim family laws. The advocate the principle that equality within the family is necessary and possible within the frame of Islam. But*Musawah* has been criticized for being detached from local contexts and further for excluding concerns about the rights of non-Muslim women in the Islamic world. [34]

Islamic feminism is not a coherent identity but rather a contingent, contextually determined strategic self-positioning. Actions, behaviors, and writings that bridge religious and gender issues work to create conditions in which justice and freedom

[34] Ibid., p. 10.

prevail. Indeed, Islamic feminism works in way that may be emblematic of postcolonial women's jockeying for space and power through the construction and manipulation of apparently incompatible, contradictory identities and positions.

Islamic feminism, therefore, is very relevant approach to the present paper given that it presents an alternative view of feminism, a view that can contribute to women's emancipation in both the Islamic world and the western world as well. Through Islamic feminism, Muslim women forge their own way to negotiate their subjectivity and individuality within discourses that homogenize them as monolithic category. Muslim women's reinterpretation of the sacred texts enables them to express the multifaceted identities, challenge oppressive norms and create a space for themselves within the Islamic Ummah and western borderlands. Arab women diaspora writer's multiple consciousness of the multiple jeopardy they encounter not only as women but also as Arab and Muslims made of the approach of Islamic feminism an applicable discourse which endow them with courage, strength and autonomy to articulate their identities, experiences, and selfhood through their literary representations. These representations enhance the ritual of resistance of both the patriarchal authority in their cultures and western hegemonic discourses.

II- A Historical Account of Arab Women Diaspora Literature

A- Diaspora and Arab Women's Immigration

In the post-colonial and cultural studies, the utmost importance is given to the new heavy emerging phenomena of migration, transnationalism, diaspora, and

hybridity. These phenomena are a direct consequence of the mass mobility that the twentieth century has known which led to the destabilization and hybridization of identities. Identity in the terrain of diaspora cannot be penned down to one definition since it is over-shadowed by ambivalence and ambiguity in the sense that diasporas and exiles lose any sense of belonging to nation, to a geographical or cultural location. Fluctuated and torn between two nations, many diasporas resolute to writing as survival mechanism and as a compensation of what they left behind. They write in order to question and resist the marginalization and the in-betweeness they encounter in the host land and to reflect their dreams of return to their land of origin. Bearing in mind that the present study is concerned with the mechanisms of resistance employed in Arab women's diaspora writings, it is of much importance to the study to trace the beginning of Arab and Arab women's immigration towards western destinationsand also highlight the general factors that energies these immigrants to leave their countries of origin. Because Arab women diasporic writings became an interesting field of research, it is also of much relevant to discuss the growing body of Arab diasporic literature before and after the 9/11 terroristattract. That is, the main aim of the current chapter is to explore the thematic and aesthetics changes in and the contribution of Arab women writers to the rapidly emerging field of Arab Diasporic Literature. More specifically, this chapter aims at delineating Arab women' identification, self understanding and diasporic subjectivity within the intersections of diaspora, gender identity, and homeland.

Diaspora has been a prolonged sorrowful experience particularly for people who were forced by political, economic, or cultural factors to desert their homelands. In the host lands, consequently, their destiny is to feel displaced, scattered,

marginalized, radicalized and most regret leaving their countries of origin against their well. Migrants try to find conciliation in either participating in political actions against the forces that marginalize them or leave the past behind and try to integrate and malt into the new environment they find themselves in. Others, notwithstanding, prefer to live in nostalgia and memories with the hope of returning back.

The notions of diaspora and diasporic identities feature highly in contemporary debates about belonging and displacement in fiction and culture studies. Before attending to the appropriation of these concepts in literary criticism, a pause on the different definitions of diaspora is worth undertaking. Diaspora has always been a synonymous of the situation in which individuals or a group of people live outside of their homeland. In the online Oxford English dictionary diaspora is defined as "The dispersion or spread of any people from their original homeland:*the diaspora of* boat people *from* Asia. Origin: Greek, from diaspeirein 'disperse', from dia 'across'+ speirein 'scatter". [35] The term originated in the Septuagint (Deuteronomy 28:25) in the phrase *esē diaspora en pasais basileias tēs gēs* 'thou shalt be a dispersion in all kingdoms of the earth'.[36] Similarly in theOxford Advanced Learner's DictionaryDiaspora means"(1) the movement of the Jewish people away fromtheir own country to live and work in other countries (2) the movement of people from any nation or group away from their own country."

These definitions describe the origins of diaspora where it used to connote the diffusion and scattering of groups of people in different parts of the globe. diaspora

[35]Diaspora, retrieved on (Jun, 23,2018), from :https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/diaspora

[36]Ibid.,

implies dislocation over geographical spaces. Inherently, the concept was exclusively used to describe the traumatic and exilic history of Jews who were dispersed in many nations. In the encyclopedia of Jewish Diaspora Carl D. Evans notes that

> the deputation of Jewish to Babylonia at the beginning of the sixth century BCE created the diaspora that defines much of the Bilical writers and prophets expressed a variety of view as they struggled come to terms with the events that divided the Jewish people between those in the homeland and those in exile. They agreed, however, that the exile did not break the bond of the diaspora Jews to the homeland. The word "diaspora"enters the Jewish lexicon for the first time in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of Hebrew bible) where it is used to translate a variety of Hebrew terms.[37]

That is, the diaspora dates back to the sixth century and it emerges with the immigration and mobility through nations. Diasporaowns significant critical interests thanks to its implications and influence on the settling countries. However, in the present time, recalling diaspora in culture studies yields more than one profound dimension. It tends to signify displacement, dispersion, nostalgia, boundaries, loss of identity and lack of belonging even if the technological development in the Tele-communication has shortened and bridged the divide of diasporas. It is of much interest to engage here with a broad and significant definition accumulated by James Clifford in his Article entitled “Diaspora”. The author discusses the meaning of diaspora with the aim of comparing and making a distinctive line between the Jewish diaspora and diaspora of the present time. He uses what he calls Sarfran model as a

[37]Mark Avrum Ehrlich, *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture, Volume 2* (United States of America: acid-free paper, 2009), p. 249

distinguishing feature and in this vein he presents definitions of diaspora as the following:

> Safran discusses a variety of collective experiences in terms of their similarity and difference from a defining model. He defines diasporas as follows: "expatriate minority communities" (1) that are dispersed from an original "center" to at least two "peripheral" places; (2) that maintain a "memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland"; (3) that "believe they are not-and perhaps cannot be-fully accepted by their host country"; (4) that see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right; (5) that are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland; and (6) of which the group's consciousness and solidarity are "importantly defined" by this continuing relationship with the homeland[38]

According to James Clifford, Safran presents a comprehensive definition of diaspora which stands for the withdrawal and forsaken of one's native county to live elsewhere and to renounce allegiance to one's native home. It also means the dispersion of people by political, economic or cultural factors from an original center to the margin of the host country where exiles and diasporas keep in touch and try to maintain their relationship with their country of origin which they see as the paradise to which they dream to return.

Diasporic people, accordingly, cannot fully adapt to and completely integrate within settling country because of the cultural, linguistic and religious differences which most ofthe time leads to racism and marginalization as well it be discussion in the following

[38]James Clifford, "Diaspora"*Cultural Anthropology,* 9: 3 (1994), p 304.

chapter. Safran definitions comprise the main features of diaspora: alienation, dislocation, marginalization, and hybridity in the settling county. It also comprises memories, nostalgia and dream of return to home country.

Nawel Meriem Ouhiba emphasized, in her thesis, that, Robin Cohen, a social scientist, posits that, "diasporas are positioned somewhere between nation-states and travelling cultures," meaning that although they are physically from a political organization in which a group of people who share the same identity, history, traditions, or language...etc live in a particular area under one government. The nation-State is held together by its physical boundaries, its government and the fact that people believe they are connected to each other."[39]Situated within the borders of a nation-state, they are simultaneously located outside its boundaries through their symbolic relationship with the homeland or their past. Cohen's reference further implies the voluntary movement of cultures, which is a feature not traditionally ascribed to diasporic cultures.[40]One would come to the conclusion that diaspora has got a crucial critical interests as it offer a wide space critical inquiry and researches which are primarily centered on the configurations as well as rearticulating of identities. These identities mix culture and blur the divide of two or more nations and cultures. "The impetus of current critical dialogues surrounding diaspora has shifted to notions of multicultural heterogeneity, transnationalism, multiplicity and pluralities." [41] Having provided exploration of the different meaning of diaspora, the momentum concern of the following is to trace the historical beginning of Arab immigration.

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[39] Nawel Meriem Ouhiba, *Resistance and Transcultural Dialogue in the Fiction of Anglophone Arab Women Writers: Towards Diasporic Arab-American and Arab-British Poetics of Identities*(Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation: University of Bel Abbes, 2016), p. 12.

[40]Ibid., p.11.

[41]Ibid., p. 12.

Arab immigration is historically defined in three main waves; the first waves started in 1880s till 1920s, the second wave began 1950s-1960s while the third wave started in 1970s until the present time. Arab immigration dates back to the 1880s, a period which was known as the Great Migration until the 1924. During this period, Arab immigrants, from different Arab countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Palestine) moved to the United State. They were encouraged by the motives of realizing their dreams of having a better life for themselves and their families they left behind. Living in hard living condition and poverty in their home country, Arab immigrants of the 1880s immigrated to escape misery and to achieve a better life. However, these migrants were unskilled, untrained and uneducated which hinder their capacity to accumulate wealth since they worked in the fields and agricultural domain and factories later on. Michael W. Suleiman elucidates

> These travelers were mainly poor, uneducated, and illiterate in any language. They were not trained for a particular profession. As unskilled workers, after they learned the rudiments of the English language, they could work in factories and mines. However, such jobs were taxing and monotonous and, most importantly, did not offer opportunities for the fast accumulation of wealth, which was the primary objective of these early Arab arrivals.[42]

Meanwhile, Arab women immigrants arrive, in a considerable number, to the United States By 1919 even though they contributed to the development of the American society, they were, as Cainkar argues, neglected in the immigrant literature. They were examined only when they enter into the workforce. Wingfield Marvin argues further that Arab women's immigration to the United States was of two types; one that is

[42]Michael W. Suleiman. *Arabs in America* (Temple: University Press,1999),

involuntary in which Arab women was brought to the diaspora as brides or relative and the second type which Arab voluntarily immigrated seeking education or self-realization.[43] That is, Arab women immigrants found themselves in a new environment where issues of gender, relationship, identity, education, religion, and culture come to the front.The recognition of Arabs as Arabs was not distinguished in the sense that they used to be identified with other races. Sometime they were classified as Turk, Africans, white, Europeans or white but they were not identified as Arabs. "Before World War I, Arabs in North America thought of themselves as sojourners, as people who were in, but not part of, American society. Their politics reflected and emulated the politics of their original homeland in substance and style, because they were only temporarily away from home."[44]In fact,Arab immigrants of the first generation moved to the America not to settle down but rather they came for economic purposes and they had the intension of returning back to their countries. They, purposely, kept strong ties with their families and try to conserve their culture within the settling countries. More than that, immigrants encourages their relative to join them in the settling countries both in America and Canada. However, "By 1908 immigration of Muslims to Canada was effectively curtailed while the U.S. immigration laws of 1921 and 1924, which imposed nation-specific quota system, greatly limited the number of new Muslim immigrants. There was minimal immigration during this period until after the end of the world war two."[45]The quota system of the 1921 was the result of the World War I

[43]Marvin *Wingfield, "Arab Americans: Into the Multicultural Mainstream." Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39:3 (2006), p. 253

[44]Michael W. Suleiman. *Arabs in America*

[45] Eqrle H. Waugh and Sharon M. Abu-laban eds, *Muslim Families in North America*(Canada: University of Alberta press, 1991), p. 14.

when the war lead to the destruction of factories and as result the phenomenon joblessness among natives becomes pervasive which push the American government to limit the number of immigrants.

The second wave (1950s-1960s) of Arab immigration took place in the post-World War II period, and it deferred considerably from the first wave in the sense that it is also termed as the brain drain phenomenon. In that period, the demand for highly skilled and educated people raised and Arab immigrants among Asian and African educated segments gave rise again to the phenomenon of immigration. Many scholars who study the Arab diaspora assert that Arab immigration after the end of American restrictive laws on immigration was encouraged by the so called pull and push factors. In other words, the political instability, the social unrest, war, the declining quality of educational system and the unsatisfactory living conditions on the one hand and the advances in technology, the intellectual freedom, high wages and better working conditions on the other constitutes were the main reasons behind Arab immigration to the West in general and United States in particular. Both of Emily Wang and Darcy Zabel respectively argue that the domestic instability and foreign prosperity were primarily the main factors behind Arab immigration of the second wave. Emily Wang argues that, "The new law of the 1965 marked a specific impact on immigrant women (Spickard, 2007) due to the open door policy, many professional and intellectuals and international students come to the United States to work or to attend universities. Because of the trend of family immigration, overall women's immigration increased sharply."[46]Darcy Zabel, on the other hand, notes in the edition of "*Arab Americas:*

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[46]Emliy Wang, Identity and Self Reflection: Six Arab and Muslim Immigrant Women Tell their Stories" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Michigan University,2007), p. 21.

Interdisciplinary Essay on Arab Diaspora" that, "Arabs were pushed into the diaspora by a desire to flee sectarian the and political conflict' with tensions accompanying economic and social transformations; the imposition of conscription; the spread of foreign education, the improvement of transportation and massacres of 1860"[47] In addition to the pull and push factors, many scholars largely agree upon the fact Arab diaspora was constructed primarily by the political conflict in the Arab world like the Lebanese Civil war (1975-1976), the rough treatment of the Assad regime and the Arab Israeli war. That is, "war and political, social, and religious caused by war is the motivating factor for migration during the second wave of migration."[48] In both cases either immigrants who flee from the instabilities of their countries or those highly skilled and educated people or students who come to Western countries seeking higher education a large number of them got a job and decided to stay.

The main distinction between the first wave and the second wave of Arab immigration is that immigrants of the first wave identified more with their country, villages, culture, mosque, and other aspects of ancestor's lives. The second wave immigrants, in contrast, try to assimilate into the new environments. They were more open to the culture and life style of the receiving countries. They established national pan-Arab organizations such as the Organization of Arab Students, as well the Association of Arab-American University Graduates. It was at this time when the "Arab American" identity started to emerge. This is also when Arab Americans started to become more involved in American politics on both the local and national levels.

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[47] Darcy A. Zabel, *Arabs in Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on Arab Diaspora* (New York: Peter Long Publishing. Inc, 2006), p. 6.

[48] Ibid., p. 7.

It is evident that after the World War II and even with the floods of Arab immigrants to the United States, Canada or Europe Arab diaspora's identities and status remain unclear and they were not radicalized a certain ethnic minority or identifies as Arab communities. Their identities remain complex as Nina Shoman-Dajani asserts in a documentary entitled Not Quite White: U.S. Census Race Classification and Arab-Americans. She reinforces the assumption that Arabs are sometime seen as white, sometimes as Asian and other as colored. According to theU.S. Census Race Classification, "white refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as white or reported entries such as Irish, Germans, Italian, Lebanese, Arab, Moroccan, or Caucasian."[49]According to the U.S Census Arab are considered white but they were not treated as white. Their status even in post-World War II remained indistinguishable and they were not granted U.S. citizenship. Arab American's identity in particular was a central theme for Arabs whose ambiguous status made them relatively invisibility. Their identity was filled with a kind of paradox where Arab Americans were simultaneously racialized as whites and as non-whites and also were racialized according to religion (Islam) rather than biology.

The Third Wave of Arab immigration to the U.S marked its beginning in the 1970s five years after the U.S government declined it immigration restrictive laws. This wave is further distinguished in terms of the variety of Arab immigrants in the U.S society. It contained migrants from variety of Arab countries forced by variety of

[49]Nina Shoman-Dajani , "Not Quite White: U.S. Census Race Classification and Arab-Americans" retrieved on (05,05,2015), from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WT5lXLU6Uo

socio-economic and particularly political reasons. More Arab immigrants both males and females flee the social inequalities of their nations particularly women who immigrated seeking more liberation from the cultural boundaries which hinder their capacities and seek a new more democratic space.

The phenomenon of brain drain continues since the working condition, the wages, and the economic development of the home countries has been unsatisfactory. These economic circumstances pushed the highly educated and highly skilled Arab immigrants to look for other alternatives. Similarly, Arab students from different Arab regions were encouraged by the advances in science and technology of the West to leave their countries. On the other hand, this wave is characterized by the high percentage number of war refugees high as many of the new Arab immigrants came from regions confounded by long wars among which Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon. In the second edition of the Encyclopedia of the political, social and cultural change of American Immigration, James Ciment and John Radzilowaki insisted that:

> The third wave of Arab immigration from 1967 to the present has had a significant impact on the American society. These immigrants came to America because the political situation in the Middle East had intensified, especially in Israel. Not surprisingly some 60 percent of these third-wave immigrants were Palestinians. But, there also were significant numbers of Algerian, Egyptians (Christian Copts and Muslims), Iranian, Iraqis (including Chaldean, or Assyrian Catholic, and Muslims), Libyans, Moroccans, Syrians, and Yemenis, all of whom established communities in America. [50]

[50] James Siment and Jhon Radzilowski eds., American *Immigration: An Encyclopedia of political, Social and Cultural Change* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 775.

.

Finally, there have been very few immigrants from the Arab North African countries of Libya, Tunis, Algeria and Morocco. Recently, however, more immigrants from these areas have begun to arrive. These immigrants tend to be diverse in their socio-economic backgrounds and settle in major cities like New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and Boston.It is fair to say that immigration is the backbone of many Western societies in the sense that American society, for example, was primarily constituted by immigrants coming from all over the world. That is, Arab immigrants of the first, second and third generation contributed fully to the social and economic fabric of the US society. Arab Diasporas play crucial roles not only in the economic development of America but European societies as well.

> Similarly, they ignored the diasporas' various roles in host societies and their contributions to those societies. The host societies, again consciously or unintentionally, overlooked the wider domestic, regional, and global political implications of the existence of such diasporas in their midst. Yet, although various host societies and governments viewed the presence of ethno-national diasporas as a marginal and temporary phenomenon, they often regarded them as actually and potentially menacing and therefore undesirable. [51]

Gabriel Sheffer puts it clear that host societies and governments overlook and do not take into account ethnic minorities of diaspora groups and diminish diasporas' socio-cultural and economic important contribution. At the same time, the existence diaspora group among which Arab, in particular, in host lands are most of the time viewed and represented as menacing to the stability of nations and for this reason host government have the propensity to force immigrants either assimilate the culture and milt into the

[51] Gabriel Sheffer, *Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 2.

social fabric of the countries where they resided or leave. In brief, the hostility, racism and marginalization Arab immigrants face in their adopted lands either in America and elsewhere became the center interest of many Arab academics and intellectual namely women. Arab diasporic intellectuals, is it shown in the second part of this thesis, embark their resist to the global hostility against them and the way they are inspect as traditional bound, submissive, and controlled by their husbands. Educated Arab women work for the sake of improving their rights and the quality of their lives. At the same time, they rail against any attempt on the part of Arab-American men to determine what their role should be in maintaining Arab culture in the host land. More specifically, Arab women among which writers wish to reject the notion that family honor resides in women and that the way a woman behaves, especially concerning her modesty and sexuality, can bring honor or dishonor to the family. They tend to discard to be transmitters of tradition and culture stereotypes as it is the case with women in the original homeland. All these issues are dealt with extensively in the following chapter which concern itself with Arab female Diaspora writings.

B- Arab Women's Diaspora Writings Before 11/9

Arab Diaspora writing or the so called Anglophone literature appeared noticeably in the 21th century with the founding of *Al-Rabita al-Kalamiyya* (*The Pen League*) or the so called the the Mahjar School by the Egyptian writer Gbran khalil in

1920[52]. This new genre is also used to be labeled as hybrid literature according to Bhabha and or Minor literature as Guattari and Deleuze named it. Arab writers or writers from Arab origins from different backgrounds whether it is from Middle Eastern countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Syria …) or North African Countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia….) have been trying to bridge the gaps between the Arab and Western worlds and between the Arab communities and Western societies through their writings. Moreover, the enormous number of works penned by Anglophone Arab writers tried to meet the needs and curiosity of Western readers to know about Arabs particularly after the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Works by Anglophone Arab writers gained more visibility and even greater critical attention since western readers desired to understand the Arab world and culture.

Susan Muaddi Darrj observes that, "The Western world has welcomed to its book shelves the increasing number of works penned by Arab writers Naomi Shihab Nye, for example, is well known for her poetry and books for children- most notably the young adult novel *Habibi* and the edited collection *The Space between Our Footsteps* and Painting from the Middle East. Edward Said non-fiction, including Orientalism and Covering Islam, has revolutionalised literary criticism and political

[52] In the beginning of the 20th century, the first Arabic literary societies and journals were established: in 1920, Kahlil Gibran and Ameen Rihani, together with other Arab intellectuals, founded the Al-Rabita al-Qalamiyya (The Pen League) and the so-called Mahjar School of Arab-American writing. Most of the works produced in this period were written in Arabic or English with the intention of bridging the distance that separated the Arab from the American community (Majaj, ―Arab-American Literature‖).

analysis.*"*[53] It should be noted that the literary texts authored by Arab Anglophone women writers mainly novels and short stories elevated Anglophone Arab women writers from the margin and made them even more visible. In this section the attempt will be made in order to explore Anglophone Arab Diaspora writings from multiple viewpoints giving much important to the specificity of Arab Anglophone women writings.

Arab Anglophone Diaspora writing is a genre of writing that is distinguished by its main characterizing periods; one in which it was hardly visible or known as it was the case with the ambiguity that used to overshadow Arab American and Arab British immigrants' identities and the other in which, the tragedy of 9/11, raised the interest in writings produced by Arab writers in the diaspora. Looking back in the pre 9/11 history, Zuzana Tabačkováexplains that "Arab American writing has for a long time been outside the scope ofliterary criticism." [54] Even with the burgeon of postcolonial and ethnic literature in the second half of the 20th , Arab writing in the diaspora remains unrecognized by western reader unit 21st century where the first generation of Arab immigrants gave birth to the literary community (the Mahjar school) of Arab writers in the diaspora. Quoting Edward said in his well-known paper published in Nation 1990, Zuzana Tabačková explains that very few interest was given to a literature that was labeled by Edward Said as "embargoed literature before September 11 after which this embargo become the interesting for Western readers.

[53]Susan M. Drraj, "Writing Relocation: Arab Anglophone Literature of the Last Decade," *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies,* 2: 1 (2002), p.123.

[54]Zuzana Tabačková, "Constructing the Twin-Tower Identities: Reflections on September 11 in Arab American poetry," *Journal of language and cultural education*, 2:3 (2014), p. 208.

On the one hand, The September 11 attack initiates the birth of readers of Anglophone Arab literature whose curiosity led them to ask "who those Arabs really were"[55]. On the other hand, the September attack enhanced the orientlist stereotypical discourse which holds Muslims as terrorist and veiled women as traditional bound whose life is under the mercy of patriarchy. These attitudes created a situation of lack the sense of belonging for Arab immigrants "on one side, they could not identify with the hijackers, on the other, they were unable to agree with the demonic images of Arab constructed by the mainstream media" [56] and consequently this slit of identity encouraged Arab Writers to use writing as a tool to reconstruct their identity and challenge the prejudices on their Arabness.

Yet, in the pre 9/11 era, Arab Anglophone texts particularly women's used to be labeled by many marginalizing attribute *Migrantenliteratur, letteratura della migrazionein* Italian language *multikulturelle Literatur* in French language, and "minor literature"[57]. Arab women's diasporic writing in particular were labeled as

[55]LaylaAl Maleh, *Arab Voices in Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature* (Amersterdam-New York: Rodopi, 2009), p.1.

[56]Zuzana Tabačková, "Constructing the Twin-Tower Identities," p. 210.

[57]A 'minor literature' is political, collective, revolutionary, and even spatial—deterritorializing one terrain as it maps another. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the 'minor literature' maps the passage of this deterritorialization; as such, it is a literature of the people; as such, it is also thoroughly political. "The literary machine thus becomes the relay for a revolutionary machine-to-come, not at all for ideological reasons but because the literary machine alone is determined to fill the conditions of a collective enunciation that is lacking elsewhere in this milieu: literature is the people's concern" (18).

As a 'minor literature' it refers to no subject. "There isn't a subject"), Deleuze and Guattari write, "there are only collective assemblages of enunciation" (18). As an asubjective assemblage, the "minor no longer designates specific literatures but the revolutionary conditions for every literature within the heart of what is called great (or established) literature" (18). Thus, a 'minor literature' is a "revolutionary force for all literature" which

"minor literature" since it shares many common element and fit into the aspects of minor literature mapped out by Deleuze and Guattari. Hence, the later delineated the features of minor literature with the following three main components:

1) "The deterritorializations of a major language through a minor literature written in the major language from a marginalized or minoritarian position". To put in other words, the first aspect of minor literature as Deleuze and Guattari explain is writing using major language from a subordinate and marginal position. The use of English, for instance, which is a major language by minorities in the USA like Arabs, Indians or the use of the colonizer's language instead of the mother tongue.

2) The second element of minor literature, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is its political nature in the sense that writers from minor positions write to advocate certain political agenda. The third aspect of minor literature is inseparable from the second since the political consciousness is deeply rooted in the thought of Arab immigrants, perhaps because Arab countries particularly the Middle East have been deeply traumatized by colonialism and wars to the extent that most of the works produced by Arab writers entail political references. In this vein, Arab women Diaspora literature was not only distinguished as minor literature because it holds the already mention aspects but also because of the perception of migrant's literature particularly in European countries. Tesi di Dottorato Argues in her PhD desertion under the title *Creolizing Diaspora* (2011) that Arab European writings were not perceived as it is the case with Arab-American and Arab-English authors, for they

proceeds through "dryness and sobriety" and "willed poverty, pushing deterritorialization to such an extreme that nothing remains but intensities" (19).

were marginal and distinguished from the writings of natives. Arab-European literature used to be excluded from the mainstream European literature. Tesi di Dottorato notes:

> In Italy, the term *letteratura della migrazione* [migrant literature] (Gnisci 1998) designates a range of works written by migrants of different origins living in Italy and writing in Italian. In Germany, literary critics have coined and employed a variety of definitions, such as, among others, the term *Gastarbeiterliteratur* [host-workers'literature], *Migrantenliteratur* [migrants'literature], and the so-called *inter- multikulturelle Literatur* [inter-multicultural literature]. In France, the contested definition ―Beur‖ literature1 was coined in the 1980s and was temporary replaced in the 1990s by the so-called ―banlieu‖ literature (Hargreaves, 2005).[58]

The attributed names like *letteratura della migrazione* [migrant literature], *Gastarbeiterliteratur* [host-workers' or *Migrantenliteratur* associated with the literary texts written by writers of Arab origin who either were born in Western landscape or immigrated to the Europe for different socio-economic, cultural and political reason, denote a lucid isolation of the works written by native authors from those written by migrants. However, the establishment of the Al Rabita al Qalamaiyya (the Pen League) by Khalil Gibran, Ameen Rihani and others (1920) gave rise to a literature in multiple genres. Arab American writings in both languages Arabic and English served as a bridge between the West and the East and also used to prove Arab existence in the US contexture. Certainly, the idea of proving ones existence and worth

[58] Lisa-Marchi. *Creolizing Diaspora: Home and Identity, Language and Hospitality in Arab Diasporic Literature* (Unpublished PhD Disseration: University of Trento, 2011), p.1-2.

in the US social framework strongly resonate in the literature of the first Arab-American as Joanna Kadi puts it in her edited book *Food For Our Mothers* (1994) that,

> My experience in the United States in many ways reinforced this sense of exclusion. Upon my Arriving in Michigan for graduate school after four years at American university of Beirut during which both my American and Palestinian identities had been inevitably politicized, I yearned, yet again, for the simplicity of belonging, consequently drawing as little attention as possible to my name, my family, my background, I avoided Middle Eastern organizations, and made no Arab friends at all".[59]

Aspiring to assimilate the new culture and prove themselves worthy in the US, Arabs of the period went far in assimilation process to the extent that there was a great possibility for them to lose their Arab identity. Arabs used to write about their origins and backgrounds with fluctuation.

In her Article "Arab-American literature: Origin and Developments", Lisa Suhair Majaj notes that Arab American hesitation in reflecting their Arabness was more pronounced in their autobiographies since many Arab immigrant writers shift from reflecting on their original home to the adopted one. Further, she cites many examples of first Arab generation immigrants who wrote within the new established genre to echo their belonging to the new world. Those autobiographers, such as Abraham Mitrie Rihbany and Salom Rizk, Lisa Majaj argues, tended to reveal their adaptation of aspect of American identity in order to be more accepted as American.

[59] Jonne Kadi, *Food For Our Mothers* (USA: South End Press, 1994), p. 79.

"In particular, they stressed their Christian identity, their geographical origin in the "Holy Land," and their "spirituality," employing biblical rhetoric and religious parallels in their attempt to engage American readers and familiarize the "exotic" even as they implicitly or explicitly sought to distance themselves from Islam".[60] These self distance narrative strategies denote the assimilation process Arab immigrants writers went through particularly after the American restrictive lows on immigration of the 1924. The later limited the number of new Arab immigrants at the same time it restrict Arab immigrants contact with their origin, home and culture.

Things begin to change when the U.S ended its restrictive lows and opened the doors wide for immigration. The Civil Rights and Black Power movements opened new spaces for immigrant and ethnic literary voices more generally. With the publication of works by African Americans, Jewish Americans, Asian Americans and others, Arab-Americans found it easier to write about their ethnic heritage and find publishers and audiences, even as demographic changes resulted in more Arab-Americans' turning to literature and the arts as a form of self expression. At the same time, there was also an influx of new immigrants from the Arab world. These immigrants, who were from a variety of Arab countries, frequently Muslim, and often better educated and more politically engaged than earlier immigrants had been.

A 1979 memoir by Eugene Paul Nassar, *Wind of the Land*, similarly proved pivotal in the attempt to narrate Lebanese ethnic experience and to preserve it from the erasure of time and assimilation. Celebrating life in a Lebanese American community in upstate New York, Wind of the Land offered a poignant affirmation of identity and

[60]Lisa Majaj, "Arab-American Literature: Origins and Developments," *American Studies Journal*, 52 (2008), p.

a celebration of familial and communal bonds, and stood as an example of the growing need of authors to lay claim to Arab-American identity with lyricism and celebration rather than defensiveness. However, what also emerged in such texts was the problem of nostalgia. In asserting Arab and Arab-American identity as something valuable, nurturing and in memorializing the traditional values of the past, authors such as Nassar and Hamod made a significant intervention in the invisibility of Arab identity, but they also inscribed a nostalgia for patriarchal structures.

Take for example Palestine's and war torn migrants, they are more likely to be filled with nostalgia since they are unable to visit their home. This category in particular long for remote past and moor a home and a culture to which the dream of return becomes futile. Blunt discussion of the difference between homesickness and nostalgia may illuminate the idea of home as a glorified 'mythical place'. She quotes Roberta Rubenstein who see that nostalgia

> Encompasses soothing more than yearning for literal places or actual individuals. While homesickness refers to a spatial/ geographical separation, nostalgia more accurately refers to a temporal one. Even if one is able to return to the literal edifice where s/he grew up, one never truly return to the original home of childhood, since it exists mostly as a place in imagination[61]

This connotes sentiments of loss, displacement, homesickness, and lack of belonging to a root. "the expression of yearning for an earlier time or place or a significant person in one's history, the memory and significance of which or whom contributes to

[61]Alison Blunt, *Domicile and Diaspora: Anglo-Indian Women and the Spatial Politics ofHome*(Oxford: Blackwell Publishinf Ltd, 2005), p.14.

the sense of the self in the present moment"[62]. The notion of nostalgia is linked to memories of the remote past, the geographical location, the mother tongue and childhood. This, consequently influence their day to day life in the country of settlement. All these feeling of expatriations feature intensively in the writing of first Arab immigrants. Layla al-Maleh makes a compelling addition to the discussion of the Anglophone literature. In her edited collection,*Arab Voices in the Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature,* she makes an overview of a collection of the Arab-American, and Arab-British writings laying out a schema useful for understanding Arab-British and Arab-Australian writers and successfully mapped out the main literary features of this field. According to her, Anglophone Arab literature at first did not get much critical consideration until the twin tower attack of the 2009 September 11 attack. She states that, "Anglophone Arab literature is certainly not in its swaddling-clothes, and dates back to the turn of the last century when the first Arabs to immigrates had to grapple with the language and culture of the host country."[63] She quotes Wail Hassan's article on Khalil Gibran where he states that, "it was in America that writers produced the first Anglophone Arab poetry collection, *Myrtle and Myrrh* (1905), the first play, *Wajdah* (1909), the first novel, *The Book of Khalid* (1911), and the first Arab-English autobiography, Abraham Mitrie Rihbany's *A Far Journey* (1914). Save for Gibran Kahlil Gibran (1883–1931), who broke sales records with his *Prophet* and enjoyed unprecedented success for an Anglophone" [64]

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[62] Hannah Lendon, *Home is Where the Hear Lies: Nostalgia in the work of Contemporary Diasporic Caribbean Women Poets* (USA: University of Wollongong press, 2005), p. 5.

[63]LaylaAl Maleh, *Arab Voices in Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature* (Amersterdam-New York: Rodopi, 2009), p. 3.

[64]Ibid., p 2.

Whether accused of mysticism, naiveté, primitivism, excessive idealism, or self-exoticizing, the first Anglophone Arab writers to put pen to paper reflected in their works a sense of collective optimism, celebration, and exultation. Indeed, one cannot fail to detect a note of jubilation, a certain delight in being able to negotiate boundaries beyond the spaces of their birthplace, an in-dwelling contentment quite unlike the expressions of pain and agonizing dislocation that characterize postcolonial hybridity of late. Theirs is a kind of 'metropolitan' hybridity, to borrow R. Radhakrishnan's words, "ensconced comfortably in the heartland of both national and transnational citizenship,"[65]a hybridity that undoubtedly helped them negotiate the 'identity politics' of their place of origin and their chosen abode with less tension than their successors. Moreover, theirs was not a literature of displacement – true, there was the typical 'now' and 'then, the 'here' and 'there', the 'them' and 'us', but the writers seem to have maintained their balance amidst the disjunctions of temporal and spatial distance and to have preserved their dual allegiance.[66]

The U.S literary mainstream have witnessed a prosperous and mushrooming of Arab-American literature across multiple genres. The history of Arab American literature began with the arrival of Arab immigrants to North America in significant numbers fleeing from wars and traumatic situation of Arab lands. Remarkably, as has been explored in the previous chapter, the immigrants of the first generation did have the intention to settle down in the USA but rather were preoccupied with the idea of returning back one day. However, despite the dream of return which used to hunt the thought of the first Arab immigrants, they could not help assimilate and melt in the

[65]Ibid., p13
[66]Ibid., p 4.

new western life. Maintaining Arab identity was a focal issue for the early Arab immigrants. This Diaspora consciousness was evidently reflected in their newspapers, which were often sectarian, political and geared toward events in the Middle East.

In her article on "Writing Relocation: Arab Anglophone Literature of the Last Decade" Susan Muaddi Darraj, notes that, "political events of recent decades, along with a major rise in the number of Arabs emigrating to the United States and other Western countries, have altered the geographic, political, and literary landscape, thus impacting the content and production of Arab Anglophone literary expression."[67]The writer explains that most Arab literature published in the last decade revolves around a central theme mainly politics essentially because the Middle East has been deeply traumatized by colonialism, war, and religious strife in the past century arguing that, any work delivered by an Arab writer, or by a writer of Arab origin, is fundamentally saturated primarily with political issues. Arab scholars, nonetheless, are investigating different subjects, for example, hyphenated identities, racialisation, gender and their lives in-between cultures.[68]

In summary, Anglophone Arab literature witnessed various developments particularly in the thematic levels. Before the attack of 9/11 and the war on terror, Arabs were more centered on expressing their viewpoint of their home, origins in a nostalgic manner. First Arab immigrants found themselves living in increasingly assimilationist situation and pressures to maintain Arab identity was a matter of great importance that they reflect in their literary expressions. Issues of ethnicity, nostalgia, and fixed gender roles overwhelm most of Arab writings in the sense that they

[67]Susan Muaddi Darraj, "Writing Relocation," p. 124.
[68]Ibid.

attempted to recreate their home virtually through their ethnic food, community, language, and traditional social roles. However, in the post 9/11 Arab Anglophone Literature would whitenessunprecedented change as the public image of Arabs has became radically affected by the "war on terror". Anglophone writers shifted their attention to the Orientalist's representations that demean everything that's Arab. These writers, as it will be shown in the upcoming section, aim at establishing a different discourse that sometime negotiates the orientalist representations and other attempt to corrects them. As far as Arab female writers are concerned, their task is essentially doubled as they have to subvert the racial stereotypes at the main times engage with issues of oriental patriarch, sexism and their gender identity as women and as immigrants. Therefore, the upcoming section is mainly devoted to explore Arab women diaspora writer's negotiation of their status, belonging and identities in post 9/11 dilemma.

C- Arab Women Diaspora Writings after 11/9

Having traced the development of Anglophone Arab women's writings between 1900s and until 9/11 attack, Anglophone Arab literature in general and women's in specific witnessed unprecedented change in content and quantity after the Twin Tower collapse. September 9/11 attack brought about great political, social, cultural, changes to the situation of Arabs in the west and America in particular since it hybridized their identities, destabilized their sense of belonging and created an agony and hostility against them. At the same time, it shaped their literary developments. Lisa Majaj as cited by Jameel Alghaberi in his article on "Arab Anglophone Fiction: A New Voice in Post-9/11 America" exhibits that Arab

Anglophone fiction "reflects in part the shifting historical, social, and political contexts that have pushed Anglophone Arab writers to the foreground, creating both new spaces for their voices and new urgencies of expression, as well as the flourishing creativity of these writers"[69] This new burgeoning literature stands as mirror that reflects Arab anguish, anxiety and harsh experience they went through and on the other hand it presents a voice of truth which negotiates American stereotypes and introduce Arabic culture to the Western readers.

Post September 11 attack Anglophone Arab's literature was significantly different from that of the pre 9/11 in the sense that Arab Anglophone writers attempted to reconstruct and affirm a hybridized identity that combines distinct cultures, languages, and ethnicities. The history of Arabs in the West continues to witness series of changes after the hijacked passenger planes crashed into the World Trade Centre of the USA. "Anglophone Arab literature is uniquely different given that it encompasses various elements from the host literary tradition and culture as well as the literature and culture of its place of origin."[70] These changes have prompted a new awareness of the subjectivities, ethnic, racial, religious and cultural identities and of the ways, these are constructed in metropolitan centers. That is, Arab in the west and Arab American's situation in particular differs from one historical period to another in the sense that in the pre9/11 period Arab immigrants were relatively invisible and their status was ambiguous, even though discrimination towards them was present. However, things began to change dramatically after the tragic attack of the Twin Tower Centre of the USA in the September 2001. To study Arab women's Diaspora writings, it would be

[69] Jameel Alghaberi, " Arab Anglophone Fiction: A New Voice in Post-9/11 America," *Contemporary Literary Review India,* 5:3 (2018), p. 39.

[70] Ibid.

interesting to highlight the situational attitudes towards Arabs and Muslims of the post 11, 2001 as the attack by the terrorist worsen the general public's outlook toward mainstream Arab immigrants.

In his study of the 9/11 backlash, Mehdi Bozorgmehr maintains that Tuesday, September 11, 2001, remains of the most remarkable and memorable gloomy day in both American as well as Arab American's history. "It will long be remembered by the millions of Americans who witnessed the collapse of Twin Towers over and over on their television screens." For Middles Eastern and Muslim Americans likewise the tragic incident of "9/11" marks the beginning of victimization, discrimination, hate crimes and more significantly profiling them as the first public enemy of the world's safety. "Though stereotypes and discriminatory actions were not new to these minorities, the post-9/11 backlash was overwhelming and relentless. *York Times* put it most succinctly: "since the attacks, people who look Middles Eastern and Muslim, whatever their religion or nation of origin, have been singles out for harassment, threats and assaults"[71]

More genuinely, a number of weeks after 9/11 massacre, the U.S government produced policies and approaches that target Middle Easterner and Muslim migratory populations specifically men. Apparently, these orders and regulatory system was meant to prevent terrorism and a declaration of the war on terror. Consequently, they legitimize the backfire for Americans. Given the tremendousness of the 9/11 backfire, one would come to the conclusion that the focus on Middle Easterners and Muslim migrant population get into activity and defense. 9/11 energies Arab Americans to join

[71] Mehdi-Bozorgmehr, *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans Respond* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2009), p. 1.

organization to voice their battle back against hate violence, inclinations, segregation as well as the American government's abuse of power.[72]

That is, the basic focus of Arab women diaspora writers speaks within the thorny event of 11/9. They are texts written from the effective experience of social marginality, from a disjunction, fragmented and displaced agency and the perspective of the hybrid. These texts sought to relocate Arab immigrants, re-inscribe their identities and revise their home and belonging beyond the existing American political discourses and socio-cultural binaries. The emerging generation of post-september 11 Arab diaspora writers appeared as a response to the American biased political discourse against Arab and Arab Americans and also serves as a primordial bridge of communication between the Americans and the Arab world.

Consequently, the stereotypical discourse that resonate in American mass media, news report, and literature did not contradict the Orientalist's discourse that incriminate and present Arabs and Muslims as threat to the world safety. Louis Cainker notes that the September 11 event turned Arab status and life upside down where their existence started to be exhaustively questioned especially in the United States of America and they become the subject of scrutiny, violence and hate crimes.

> Unlike other ascribed and self-described "people of color" in the United States, Arabs are often hidden under the Caucasian label, if not forgotten altogether. But eleven months after September 11, 2001, the Arab-American is no longer invisible. Whether traveling, driving, working, walking through a neighborhood or sitting in their homes, Arabs in America-citizens and non-

[72]Ibid., pp. 2-3.

> citizens-are now subject to special scrutiny in American society. The violence, discrimination, defamation and intolerance now faced by Arabs in American society has reached a level unparalleled in their over 100-year history in the US.[73]

The same stance has been reinforced by Zahia Smail Salhi and Ian Richard Netton in their work on Arab Diaspora where they insisted that the gloomy race Arab used to have in the pre- September 11, 2001 attack shifted from ambiguity to clarity "when inscriptions on Arab and Muslim bodies exploded, positioning "American" and "Arab" as polarized and seemingly irreconcilable. Post-9/11, we witness a shift from invisibility to visibility"[74] Arab and Muslims encounter a plan radicalization on primarily religious basis where they started to be seen as religious fanatics, murderous, bloodthirsty and suspected terrorists. Islamophobianow is a part of world's psyche and the changes in the world since 9/11 have refocused attention on the displaced persons, the migrant and the strange Arab who has been dispossessed and separated from his identities and history. Theses historical moments and critical transition Arab went through were plainly expressed in their diasporised post-colonial Anglophone Arab women's literature. To deflect the terrorism and fanaticism preyed upon them and to point out the historical injustices that fellow Arabs in the Middle East had beensubjected to by US foreign policy in Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan, Arab-American poets, fiction writers, journalists, andessayists use language as a mode of transformation, subversion resistance and self-representation. Naomi Shihab Nye's

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[73] Louise Cainkar, "No longer invisibel Arab and Muslim Exclusion after September 11,"

Social and Cultural Sciences Faculty Research and Publications, 10:1 (2002), p. 22.

[74] Zahia Smail Salhi, *The Arab Diaspora: Voices of an anguished scream* (London: Routledge, 2006). P. 128.

(2002) online piece, for instance, “An Open Letter from Naomi ShihabNye to Any Would-Be Terrorists,” was published weeks after 9/11, and simultaneouslyexemplifies the anguish of national trauma as well as its ostracizing effects on Arab-American and Muslim-American minorities. [75] In “any would-be terrorists,” [76] Naomi Shihab Nye recounts the personal experience and lives of her family members like her Palestinian father and Americanmother who devoted their lives to build America “My Palestinian father became a refugee in 1948. He came to the United States as a college student. He is 74 years old now and still homesick. He has planted fig trees.”[77], her Palestinian cousins in Texas and their “beautiful brown little boys,” [78] andher Palestinian grandmother who lived in Jerusalem till she was 106 years old. All ofwhom persistently rebel against all conflict-ridden political and religious forces pulling peoples and culturesapart and all of whom show compassion, sympathy and a shared humanity.

Nye, addressing the Faceless terrorist says “I beg you, as your distant Arab cousin, as yourAmerican neighbor, listen to me. Our hearts are broken, as yours may also feel broken insome ways we can’t understand, unless you tell us in words. Killing people won’t tell us.We can’t read that message. Find another way to live ... Make our

[75] Carol N. Fadda-Conrey, “Writing Arab-American Identity Post 9/11,” *al-raida,*Issue 118 - 119 (2007), p. 60.

Al Harbi, Mohammad Hassan Al Harbi (2016), “Passport Control: fear and anxiety among Arab travellers,” retrieved on (date), from http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/passport-control-fear-and-anxiety-among-arab-travellers-1.1244150

[76]Alan, Godlas "Letter from Naomi Shihab Nye, Arab-American Poet:To Any Would-Be Terrorists,” retrieved on (Mar,17,2017), from http://islam.uga.edu/shihabnye.html

[77] Ibid

[78] Ibid

family proud"[79]. Thus, as Carol N. Fadda-Conrey notes in her article entitled *Writing Arab-American Identity in post 9/11* that Nye identifies herself as not only a Palestinian with deep roots in the Arabworld, but also as an American devastated by the loss of human life as a result of the 9/11attacks,[80] Nye exhibits her transnational identity without biasing to one part over the other,but rather she aims to bridge the gap between Arabs, Arab-American and Americans. She stresses on theimportance of the writing in making the world looks different and more harmonious. Naomi Shihab Nye, notwithstanding, was the only Arab American author to engage in voicing Arab American concern of the Twin Tower collapse but rather a considerable important works by Arabs were established in order to provide a different self-representation and subvert the unfair portrayals that circulate in American and western discourses.

Arab American's literary publications sought to explore the reality imposed on them by the aftermath of 9/11 and thus produce what we may call counter-narratives to voice their own perception of home, identity and belonging. Like Naomi Shihab Nye, Suheir Hammad, for instance, produced a very significant poem entitled "First Writing since" where she grapples with the issue of trauma and violence. Few weeks after the 9/11 Hammad as Harb Sirene notes, explores "the difficulty of recovering faith in the power of words to convey meaning and mediate representation. Her questioning of the role of poetry and words in the aftermath of 9/11stresses the possible repercussions of the events on Arab-American men. She implores the divine, "Please god […] doesn't let it be anyone/ who looks like my brothers".[81] Hammad, in this respect, reflects the

[79] Ibid

[80] Carol N. Fadda-Conrey, "Writing Arab-American Identity Post 9/11," p. 60.

[81]Sirene Harb, "Perspectives on Violence and Reconciliation: Arab-American Women's Writing about September 11," *Dissidences*, 4: 8 (2012), p. 6-7.

complexity of her identity and belonging as she belongs to both Palestine and America yet because of her belongs she and many Arabs like her would be seen terrorists and face marginalization. Hammad's depiction of the occasion, be that as it many, negates quick rationalization and clarifications of savagery, which pollute her insinuate right to lament her companions and family. Portraying her enthusiastic indecision at the emails connecting 9/11 to U.S transgressions, Hammad is dissimilar to Nye, challenges the idea that America could be homogeneous substance which all Americans are "bad people" who" who support "their country's bullying".[82]

Arab American authors endeavor to negotiate their hyper-visibility and otherness enacted on them by the post 9/11 massacre. Jameel Alghabri observes that, "attitudes of the first generation differ from those of younger generations, as the first generation emphasized that they had maintained their 'authentic' Arabness, while the later generations easily identify with American language and cultures."[83] It true that Arab Americans and Arabs immigrants of the third generation identify with the culture and life style of their host countries, yet the assimilation did reach the scale to strip of one's Arab identity. In fact, Arabs especially Arab American writings function as bridge, cultural mediators and their writings center more specifically on their present and life in the western hemispheres introducing Arab traditions, cultures and customs to the western readership. This migratory literary community of Arabs proved to be in favor of cultural diversity and hybrid identities. The advocacy of cultural difference and cross-cultural dialogue are asserted in many publication of Arab American female author such as Mohja Kahf and Laila Halaby. Reham Mohammed Abu Zaid

[82]Ibid., p.7.
[83]Jameel Alghaberi, "Arab Anglophone Fiction," p. 51.

emphasized that the poem "We Will Continue like Twin Towers" by Mohja Kahf celebrates coexistence and the tolerance towards the “other” . Kahf, according to him, draws an image of a man and a woman holding hands and jumping together out of the burning WTC Tower symbolizing the Eastern and the Western Civilizations. The motif of being connected is repeated thrice throughout the poem. As cited by Reham Mohammed kahf writes that:

> before they flew
>
> through the last air, the woman and the man
>
> who held hands and leapt together
>
> from the burning tower
>
> of the World Trade Center.[84]

One would come to the conclusion that Arab women’s poetry, of that era, emphasized the plurality over individuality coexistence over otherness. “Through their poetry, the Arab American women poets have fought marginalization and played an important role in the American society. They have faced the new dilemma of the Arabs in the American society after the attacks of September 11, 2001 on the North and South towers of the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon.” They have successfully overcome their increasing Diasporic consciousness, forming a new shape for their position both inside and outside the American society.[85]

[84]Reham Mohammed Abu Zaid, “Feminine Diasporic Consciousness in the Arab-American Poetry after 11 September 2001,” *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies,* 3:4 (2017), p. 33.

[85]Ibid., p. 34.

After the event of the of September 11, 2001, many Arab American writers managed to echo, through their fictional characters, the struggle of Arabs with identity making, defend their ethnic affiliation beyond the American configurations of Arabness. While 9/11 did not establish anti-Arab factions within the United States, it amplified their existence exponentially; what is more, 9/11 propelled Arab Americans out of the realm of the invisible and into a "highly visible community that either directly or indirectly affects America's so-called culture wars, foreign policy, presidential elections, and legislative tradition"Arab American authors have responded by portraying characters attempting to come to terms with the complexity of both their hybrid identity and fraught position in the United States, finding themselves disconnected from Arab and American cultures alike. Arab American characters who are unable to position themselves in either Eastern or Western cultures are common to many fictional accounts of post 9/11 America.

To readdress their feminist concern in relation to the post 9/11 repercussions against Arabs and Arab-American, many Arab scholars including the recent work of Rabab Abdulahadi, Nadine Naber, and Evelyn Sultany in their edited work entitled, *Gender, Nation and belonging; Arab and Arab American Feminist Perspective,* intended to revisit and "disrupting the dichotomies of private/ public, fact/ fiction, oppressed/ liberated, us/ them"[86]. In her *Politics of Legibility* (2009) Dana, Olwan provides an important analysis of both race and gender in relation to Arab American women's literature. She goes against the argument that patriarchy is the singular sit of Arab American women's oppressed and contradicts positing Arab American culture as

[86]Dana M. Olwan, *The Politics of Legibility:Writing and Reading Contemporary Arab American Women's Literature* (Canada: Queen's University Kingston, Ontario, 2009), p. 6.

a monolithic, static entity to shape Arab American identities. She uses Arabs women's literature as an instrument to contest dominant marginalizing discourses. In this respect, Dana Olwan quotes Barbara Nimri Aziz who concerned herself with the aftermath of the stereotypes on popular understanding of Arab women's identities and how in turn Arab American women writers challenge and undo these prevalent discourses through literature.

Amal Talaat Abdelrazek's essay on women's literature and resistance is worth mentioning here since she exhibits how Arab women writers tell their story which differ from the mainstream prejudices. She says in this regard:

> Like Scheherazade (sic), Arab-American women writers are telling their stories over and over again, using them to change the dominant configuration of their identities. In telling their stories, contemporary Arab-American writers take a stand against both the Orientalist and Islamic or Arab fundamentalist streams.[87]

Abdelrazek's argument is that Arab women should tell their stories to represent themselves, challenge and revolutionize the dominant configuration of Arab American women's identities and experiences. Arab diaspora literature tends to resist the orientalist and Arab fundamentalist stream that demean their roles and constructs their identity as secondary citizens at the same time answer back orientalism that frames them in biased representations. Abdelrazek believes that fiction has the ability to undo the systemic and legislative forms of racism and discrimination.

[87] Susan Muaddi Darraj, *Scheherazade's Legacy:Arab and Arab American Women on Writing (*United States of America: British Library Cataloguing, 2004), p. 4.

Like Talaat Abdelrazek and many Arab women writers, Amal Amireh (2005), criticizes the vilifications of the image of the Muslim woman after 9/11 attack. In her piece of writing entitled "Palestinian Women's DisappearingAct: The Suicide Bomber through Western Feminist Eyes, she argues that Palestinian women suicide bombers challenge the Orientalist view or Arab and Muslim women's bodies as passive and submissive. She discusses what she sees as a prejudiced representation of Palestinian women by western feminists who joined the western colonial discourse. The female suicide bomber challenges the image of Muslim and Arab women as docile bodies that is dominant in the Western discourse. In the Western feminist discourse Arab and Muslim woman remain submissive to Arab culture which abuse and victimize them. This tenet according to Amal Amireh, the docility of Arab women is deeply rooted in the orientalist history. Indeed, "in the aftermath of September l1th, the image of the veiled and beaten body of the Afghan woman under the Taliban was deployed on a massive scale and came to stand fix Muslim and Arab women generally.[88]This becomes more visible and even more employable to legitimize the invasion of Afghanistan and the overthrow of Taliban rule particularly when outstanding U.S. feminist organization joined the forces of Bush administration to liberate of Afghani women. The explosive female body, Amal Amireh notes, goes beyond the stereotypical attitudes of western feminism to form an active agent that never succumb to the well of colonialism.

To sum, Arab Anglophone literature which has emerged out the Arab immigration to the West becomes an important tool to form Arab's self-representation, identity

[88] Rabab Abdulhadi, Evelyn alsultany and Nadine Naber eds., *Arab and Arab American Feminisms, Gender, Violence and Belonging* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2011), p. 32.

affirmation and a bridge for cross-cultural communication. This unique literature is a hybrid genre of literature which neither bears the features of Arab literature nor that of the host countries. On the one hand, it reflects the convergence, the intersection and the clash/ harmony of different cultures, and languages. On the one hand,it echo the displacement, otherness, identity and exilic experiences of Arab Diasporas on the other. More specifically, using their imagination, Arab fictions intend to rewrite the history of Arab in American and the west in general by responding to the monolithic stereotypes that were augmented in the post 9/11 trauma. Additionally, caught betweentheir American and Arab allegiances, Arab female diaspora writers use their pen to achieve their autonomy as immigrants and as Arab women.

Chapter Three: Postcolonial Criticism and the Politics of Resistance

A- Postcolonialism: A Critical Account

In the last decade, "post colonialism" has taken its share within the scholarly investigations, academia and critical discourses in the humanities side by side with the existing theories of post structuralism, psychoanalysis and feminism. The concept has multiple usages in major occupations and areas of research along side with theories of imperialism, racism, ethnicity, identity and cultural studies. Postcolonial theory, as Navadeep Khadnal; notes "is a body of academic study that draws on critical theory to understand the loss of power, identity, and culture when a group of people is dominated by a conquering force".[89]The postcolonial theory incorporates the classical works of decolonization namely Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, white Masks* (1978) and Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) that primarily attempt to decode and deconstruct the history of colonialism, colonial missions and ambitions. At the same time it paved the way for the emergence of voices of decolonization in once colonized nations such as India, Africa, Asia and Latin America. "Postcolonial theory is applied today across a range of fields in the humanities and socials sciences- such as anthropology, political science, linguistics, literature, history, film studies- often illuminate issues of race,

[89] Navadeep Khanal, *The Lens of Postcolonial Theory in Lis Research and Practice*(Unpublished Ph.D dissertation: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012), p.1.

poverty, and the loss of cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge."[90]Postcolonialism as a theory and practice is centered on giving voice to marginal people and subalterns wherever they and despite their ethnic, religious and gender belongings. This theory came to contest Eurocentric hegemonies, cultural imperialism and western epistemological knowledge and violence.

That is, dealing the Arab women's representation, self-representation, identity formation and Resistance of western imaginings of the Orient, postcolonial theory is a fundamental tool to analyze Arab women's agency among various cultural, political and social factors in metropolitan centers. Within this framework, this chapter, as a whole, is an exploration of different facets of postcolonial theory out of which other theories, of the same importance emerge namely Resistance in cultural and literary theory and postcolonial feminist theory. More specifically, the first section of this chapter explores postcolonialism as a resistant theory that traces the aftermath of European colonialism on the lives and culture of the colonized people as well as the impacts of postcolonial theory that has been enacted in the field of literary criticism. The second section of this chapter questions the relationship between Resistance and postcolonialism and Arab women's diasporic literature while the last section dwells on postcolonial feminist theory as an important tool of analysis that concern itself with postcolonial female subjectivities.

Colonialism and imperialism are often used interchangeably but in fact are considerably different in the sense that imperialism refers to construction of a colonial enterprise or an empire which target the domination of several neighboring nations.

[90] Ibid.

Edward Said provides a distinctive feature between colonialism and imperialism saying that, " Imperialism means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory; colonialism, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory[…]imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintain an empire "[91].

This empire, as Edward Said puts it, can be achieved using whatever necessary means being it force, political collaboration, economic, socio-cultural means to maintain control over the targeted nations. 'Colonialism', however, is only one of the ideologies of imperialism, and specifically concerns the settlement of one group of people in a new location. The word colonialism, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, come from the Roman 'colonial' which means 'farm' or 'settlement' and referred to Roma who settled in other lands but still retained citizenship. Accordingly, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) describes it as:

> A settlement in a new country[…] a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendants and successor, as long as the connection with the parent state is kept up.[92]

The implications that these definitions yield are more related the colonizer as the most active agent while the colonized has no reference in this definition which

[91] Edward W. Said,*Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1994), p. 9.

[92]Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism : The New Critical Idiom* (London & New York, Routledge 2005), p. 7.

denies them any sense of existence or they exist according to the existence the colonialism. The later refers to a long period of the European economic and cultural exploitation of Third world nations. This expansion which lasted more the 40 years has been defined from different angles of vision. Take for example Elleke Boehmer's definition of colonialism in her book Colonial and Postcolonial Literature. She defined it as "a settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands".[93] The history of colonial envisions dates back to the ancient times for in 1900 almost every country or region in the world had been subjugated by European colonialism at one time or another due to the European capitalist and economic greediness as Ania Loomba remarks that, "Colonialism was the midwife that assisted the birth of European capitalism, or that without colonial expansion the transition to capitalism could not have taken place in Europe"[94].

That is, the colonial ambitions take colonialism as a vehicle to bring wealth and richness to colonial nations through exploiting the other nations like Africa Asia etc. colonialism and capitalism are two faces of the same coin, serving the commercial enterprise of the Western. Dennis Judd argues, "no one can doubt that the desire for profitable trade, plunder and enrichment was the primary force that led to the establishment of the imperial structure."[95] As a politic and a practice, colonialism has not involved a single system of thought but rather it has a collective work developed

[93] Pona Mahanta,"The Impact of Colonizer on the Colonized: A Postcolonial Study of Nigerian Igbo Culture and History in Chinua Achebe's Things," *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 19: 11 (2014), p. 2.

[94] Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/ Postcolonialims*, p. 4.

[95] Will Podmore, *British Foreign Policy Since 1870* (United State of America, Xlibris Coorporation, 2008), p. 258.

by different anthropological theorists who hold the colonized world as inferior, childlike, feminine, low-graded and weaker to manage their lives.

By so doing the colonizer legitimized its colonial expansion, exploitation and extortion of the raw material, slaves, goods and wealth from the countries that they conquered. In fact, one of the consequences of colonialism is the creation of what is known nowadays as Diaspora which means a mass mobility from Europe to the colonized lands and vice versa. Colonized slaves, workers and servants were transported to Europe while at the main time the colonizers among which soldiers, administrators, merchants, settlers, travelers, writers, domestic staff, missionaries, teachers and scientists were moved to colonized land.

Thus, colonialism produced economic imbalance that was necessary for the growth of European capitalism and industry. In his book entitled *The Intimate Enemy* (1983), Ashish Nandy distinguished the effect of colonialism in term of two main forms; the first is the physical invasion of territories. This first form was based on violence which was exercised against the colonized in the process of taking the wealth of the colonized nations. The second mode was the colonization of the minds, selves and cultures. This mode was embodied in the civilizational mission that the rationalists, modernists and the liberals allege that they have the responsibility of civilizing the uncivilized world.[96]

Having provided some basic definitions of colonialism, it is necessary to delve into exploring the period after colonialism which in, the intellectual context, addressed as

[96]Sawant,Shrikant. "Postcolonial Theory: Meaning and Significance," Proceedings of National Seminar on Postmodern Literary Theory and Literature , V; N (2012), pp. 27

postcolonialism. Postcolonialism by definition refers to a historical period after the anti-colonial era which took place after the Second World War two. The prefix 'post' indicates after colonialism, however, the term remains slippery because it cannot be pen down to one singular definition or related to a specific historical moment since there has been not just one period of colonialism in the history of the world as Peter Childs Patrick Williams remarks critics rise many question concerning the point of depart for postcolonialism where they question the beginning of postcolonialism. For them, decolonization process did not take place definitely at the same time for all colonized nations and hence postcolonialism did not begin at one specific time. As cited by Hisha Vijay. Hodge, Bob that Stuart Hall correspondingly argues that postcolonialism is not the end of colonization. It is after a certain kind of colonialism, after a certain moment of high imperialism and colonial accupation[97]. Postcolonialism, as have been mentioned earlier, is a not an easy captured concept provided that it has various connotations and it is actually a heterogeneous field of study where the term refers to a certain end of colonialism as well as to all the characteristics of a society or a culture from the time of the colonization to the present. The same stance has been held by the postcolonial critics Ilan Kapoor who, in his introduction of his book *The Postcolonial Politics of Development,* introduces postcolonailism as:

> A contested field, with porous boundaries and no single or coherent position. Nonetheless, it is a field haunted by the complex connections between domination and subjection/resistance, connections rooted in colonial history

[97] Hisha Vijay and Hodge, Bob. "New Literary History," *Johns Hopkins University Press*. 36: 3, (2005). p. 377.

but which continue in various guises until today. A key postcolonial theme, in other words, concerns the process of decolonization currently taking place globally, which throws new light on the relationships between hegemon and subaltern, colonizer and colonized, West and Third World.[98]

Ania Loomba, similarly, argues "definitions of the 'post-colonial' of course vary widely, but for me the concept proves most useful not when it is used synonymously with a post- independence historical period in once colonized nations, but rather when it locates a specifically anti- or post-colonial discursive purchase in culture, one which begins in the moment that colonial power inscribes itself onto occulted tradition into the modern theater of neo-colonialist international relation"[99] Post colonialism is more concerned with giving the political and cultural freedom to once colonized notions by overcoming political and cultural imperialism. It investigate and analysis the residual effects of colonialism on cultures and societies attempting to give voice to voiceless people as well as combating all ideologies and powers which deems themselves superior to others. The writer of Post-colonialism: A Very Short Introduction (2003) Robert Young states:

> for now, what is important is that postcolonialism involves first of all argument that the nations of the three non-western continents (Africa, Asia, Latin America) are largely in a situation of subordination to Europe and North America, and in a position of economic inequality. Postcolonialism names a political and philosophy of activism that contests that disparity, and so continues in a new way the anti-colonial struggle of the past. It asserts not just

[98] Ilan Kapoor, *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (USA: Rutledge, 2008), p. xiv.
[99] Ania Loomba, Colonialism/ Poscolonialisms, p. 13.

the right of African, Asian and Latin American people to access resources and material well-being, but also the dynamic of power of their cultures, cultures that are now intervening in and transforming the societies of the west.[100]

One of the conclusion we can draw from this debate is that the concept postcolonialism does not indicated the end of colonialism since the colonial residuals, effect and values are still enact up to the present time. It is true that postcolonial theory and practices have achieved its many promises and challenges yet is still far from radically curing the tribulations and ills of the past. To quote John Mcleod in his *Beginning Postcolonilism* (2000), he identifies three main principles that fall within postcolonialims's remit. "Very basically and in a literary context, postcolonialism involves one or more of the following:

- Reading texts produced by writers from countries with a history of colonialism, primarily these texts concerned with the working and legacy of colonialism in either the past or the present.
- Reading texts produced by those descended from migrant families, which deal in the main the diaspora experience and its many consequences.
- In the light of theories of colonial discourse, rereading text produced during colonialism; both those directly address the experiences of Empire, and those that seem not to."[101]

Thus, postcolonialism is a discourse or an emancipator theory particularly for the students of literature in and outside the Western world. It presents a vast field of study

[100] Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: A very Short Introduction* (United States: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 4.
[101] Ibid., p. 33.

to question the literature and representations that have long been taken for granted as well as reread the western old canon and explores ways of representation, and modes of perception that are used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonized people subservient to colonial rule. The post colonial theory as cited by Navadeep Khanalrepresents a complex field of study, encompassing an array of matters that include issues such as identity, gender, race, racism, and ethnicity[…] focuses on exploding knowledge systems underpinning colonialism, neocolonialism, and various forms of oppression and exploitation present today.[102] It Challenge epistemic viciousness and questions the underestimating, annihilation and apportionment of once conquered people's knowledge that is utilized by the colonizers against the colonized to serve the colonial interface. Postcolonial theory, in this manner, offers an alternative perspective to evaluate colonial knowledge that legitimize colonial conquest. Postcolonial theory bargains with points of views and dominating discourses among individuals and in communities that have endured abuse of different forms. Thus, it represents an explanatory and analytic device.

Postcolonial discourse was the outcome of the work of several writers such as Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Azaz Ahmad among others. In the 1970s, the publication of Edward Said's Orientalism has revolutionalized literary analysis and led to the development of what is known as 'Colonial discourse Theory'. Orientalism is one of the most significant books that has revolutionalized the study of the Middle East and contributes to create a new field of study mainly postcolonial theory. This book mingled history, anthropology, political science and

[102] Navadeep Khanal, "The Lens of Postcolonial Theory in Lis Research and Practice," p. 162.

cultural studies. "Orientalism continues to be discussed and translated all over the world, in thirty-six languages"[103] and required readings in many universities and colleges. Leela Gandhi apprised Said's book as the ground upon which postcolonial theory was based. She quoted said saying in this respect that Orientalism is "commonly regarded as the catalyst and reference point for postcolonialism, orientalism represents the first phase of postcolonial theory. Rather than engaging with the ambivalent condition of the colonial aftermath- or indeed, with the history and motivation of anti-colonial discourse.[104] Edward Said argues that 'Orientalism' as "Western style for dominating, restructuring having authority over orient"[105]

The term 'Orientalism' which refers to the historical and ideological process whereby false images of and myths about the Eastern or the "orient" world have been constructed in various Western discourses, including that of imaginative literature. The orient was imaginatively constructed in western discourse as different, stranger, barbaric, uncivilized etc by virtue of Easterners' color of their skins to create a binary opposition and a cultural superiority between the west and the East which paved the way for imperialism.

Specifically, Edward Said's argument is that the way the Europe and the US look at the nations of the Middle East through a lens that tarnish the actual reality of those places and those people. This lens for Edward Said is called Orientalism which draws the unfamiliar and strange so as to make the people of the Middle East look different and threatening. Said's project is to show how knowledge about the non-

[103]Edward Said, *Orientalism* (United States of America: Manufactured, 1978), p. xvi.

[104] Leela Gandhi. Postcolonial theory: A Critical Introduction(Australia: Allen & Unwin. St. Leonards, N.S.W. Publication, 1998),p. 64.

[105] Ibid.

Europeans was a part of the process of dominating them. Western attitude towards Orient is not based on actual realities but rather on ignorance of the Eastern culture and literature. To put it differently, the Orient is frequently described in a series of negative stereotypes as Edward Said argues that Western views of the orient 's culture are mere fantasies and assumptions that made the orient an exotic, wired, static and stagnant world that exists outside of history.

Orientalism has not disappeared with the anti-colonial movement but it moved to take a new form mainly demonizing Arabs and Muslim in the news and popular culture. In American orientalism, Arabs and Muslim are vilified as terrorists and threatening by journalist and Hollywood focusing on one negative aspect and as a result the Islamic and Arab world come to be understood from the same negative and paranoid way. Arabs are demeaned fanatic, extreme and violent. The portrayal and presentations of Arabs in such essentialist way becomes a central motif and theme for the majority of postcolonial author male and females alike. Arab women authors in particular envisage their challenge of sexism, racism and colonialism. They sought to reflect on many thematic concepts that are directly related colonialism and more precisely foreground questions of cultural dominance, Racism, discrimination, quest for identity and hybridity while Arab female authors sought to challenge sexism, racism and colonialism in their works and in the field simultaneously.

> In fact, as the Postcolonial literature deals with framing identities, the politics of rewriting, translations, relation between nation and nationalism. It is a most dominant form of literature and it has a great appeal. In most of the postcolonial novels which have been mentioned connected with many colonies

such as Africa, Australasia, the Caribbean, Ireland, Latin American and South Africa.[106]

The reading of postcolonial literature offers various perspectives and interpretations. On the one hand, postcolonial literature is concerned with the long history of European conquest and fitch in the past of the colonized/ colonizer where the later used whatever means necessary to conquer other lands which brought about devastating impact on the culture, economy and politics of colonized territories. On the other hand, postcolonial literature envisages the future of colonized people and their comprehensive emancipation locally and transnationally. Given that colonialism and western imperialism is a direct factor for the increasing of the immigration phenomenon, a mass Arab migrants become refugees in UK, USA and other European countries trying to adopt themselves to the new environment while relocating themselves in an alien land, undergo traumatic experiences of alienation and become 'hybrid' individuals due to linguistic and cultural differences. The postcolonial intellectual and writer endeavor to challenge the ambivalent nature of their existence.

Elleke Boehmer has tended to bring into focus the postcolonial migrant writers in her work *Colonial & Postcolonial Literature*(2005)and recorded the significant contribution of migrant writers in the field of postcolonial literature. Boehmer further notes that the postcolonial migrant writing is the writing of 'in-between' and their 'cultural creolization' becomes one of the factors that resulted on 'linguistic

[106]Simhachalam Thamarana, "Significance of Studying Postcolonial Literature and its Relevance" *Research Journal of English Language and Literature*, 3:3 (2015), p. 540.

creolization'. As a result, the English language has become a process of literary transplantation. Thus, the migrant writers have become members of the 21st century[107]

From the previous discussion of colonialism, postcolonilsm and postcolonial theory, we came to the conclusion that the fundamental ration of postcolonial theory is to articulate a politic of resistance to the inequalities, exploitation and all forms of discrimination not only on a local basis but internationally as well. Safest to say that each publication in the postcolonial field offer an alternative and an innovative path towards challenging ideological validity of colonialism and pre-existed stereotypical assumptions linked to colonized people's and lands and the migratory and diasporic communities in the western societies. Within the framework of this study that aims to analyze the various mechanism of resistance to the Western and Oriental discourse in Arab women Anglophone literature, postcolonial theory and postcolonial Feminist theory in particular remains an essential apparatus of analysis of western hegemony in relation to colonized people social and cultural marginalization. It constitutes an innovative lens to evaluate how the Arab diasporasas well as the dislocated Arab female individual construct their identities and forge spaces of their own to exercises their agency. Having said this, it becomes essential for the study to revisit the principle of postcolonial feminist theory through which Arab Muslim women 's creative text emphasize strategies of writing back to patriarchal as well as Western discourse. "I broadly agree with Chandra Talpade Mohanty when she suggests that postcolonial

[107]Elleke Boehmer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 6.

creative work can encode new forms of resistance, including 'the creation of a communal (feminist) political consciousness through the practice of storytelling' and the expansion of our understanding of political action to include acts of coming-to-consciousness of self.[108] Arab, Muslim, Woman. Thus, the following section entitled " Postcolonial Feminism" which is primarily concerned with resisting both the biased discourses of colonialism on third world women and the sexist patriarchal discourse as well.

[108] Lindsey Moore, *Arab, Muslim, Woman: Voice and Vision in Postcolonial Literature and Film*(New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 6-7.

B- **Post-colonial Feminism**

In the previous section, a conceptualization of post colonialism was introduced to trace how this theory is basically concerned with the politics of colonialism in which the natives were economically, politically and culturally exploited. It focused primarily on the way European imperialism conquered third world cultures and societies and how in turn the colonized subject resisted this conquest. That is, the postcolonial theory is broadly defined as an intellectual discourse that is inextricably tagged to the colonial legacies. Postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. As it has been emphasized earlier, it is a discipline that studies also the colonized subject's awareness of the social, psychological and cultural inferiority and marginality and the resistant reactions enacted to subvert the colonial discourse and struggle for emancipation and agency of third world people and nations. However, postcolonial theory was not exempted from criticism mainly from Third world, and postcolonial feminists who demean it as a biased theory that does not count for gender issues and third world female subjects. On this basis and having in mind that this study adopts a post colonial feminist theory to critically analyze selected works of Arab women diaspora writers, this section presents an interpretation of different stand points apropos the marginalization of women from the discourses of decolonization and a critical survey of postcolonial feminist theory as a discourse of resistance.

Post colonial feminist theory emerged to primarily concern itself with the representation of women in once colonized countries and in western discourses and to concentrate on the construction of gender difference in colonial and anti-colonial

discourses. On the one hand, Postcolonial feminism criticizes homogeneous perspectives and presuppositions that are held apropos Third world women in most of western feminist's texts, and it questions and responded to the postcolonial theory which tends to marginalize third world women from the resisting discourses. On the other hand, it tends to exhibiting the way third world women have been excluded by postcolonial theory from the national discourses of resistanec. Raj Kumar Mishra maintains, in this respect, that, "Postcolonial feminism is an exploration of and at the intersections of colonialism and neocolonialism with gender, nation, class, race, and sexualities in the different contexts of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality, and rights"[109]. Despite the fact that postcolonial feminism draws heavily on postcolonial thought given that "it has never operated as a separate entity from postcolonialism; rather it has directly inspired the forms and the force of postcolonial politics the postcolonial discourse.",[110] it lacks the systematic study to account for gender issues and third world women's specifities. Postcolonial thought is seen by many postcolonial feminists as a masculine field.

According to Rini Fernandes, third world women are objectified and mostly represent as the lower sex upon the white male achieves his superiority. Rini Fernandes cites, in his Thesis, McClintock remarks that the superiorly strong position that the western male enjoyed was produced through the sexual subjection of the 'Oriental' woman which enabled the discourse about the 'Orient'. According to Said this Orientalist's thinking took the perverse form of 'white male fantasy' that sexualized an Orient woman for the pleasure and possession of the Western power.

[109] Raj Kumar Mishra, "Postcolonial feminism: Looking into within-beyond-to Difference," *International Journal of English and Literature,* 4:4 (2013), p. 130.

[110]Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p.116.

The arguments of Said's work as McClintock observes lacks a systematic analysis of gender as a constitutive dynamic of imperial and anti-imperial enterprise."[111] In contrast, "Feminism in a postcolonial frame begins with the situation of the ordinary woman in a particular place, while also thinking her situation through in relation to broader issues to give her the more powerful basis of collectivity. It will highlight the degree to which women are still working against a colonial legacy that was itself powerfully patriarchal - institutional, economic, political, and ideological[112]

If the task of the postcolonial theorist is to challenge the aftermath of colonialism on the colonized nations and resist the discourse that represent him as other, inferior and different, the aim of postcolonial feminism has been not only to decode and resist the discourses of colonialism on third world women but resist the patriarchal discourse as well. Postcolonial feminists focus is fore grounded on third world women particularities and their everyday social challenges in a patriarchal network that is supported by its institutional and legal discrimination: of domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, honour killings, dowry deaths, female feticide, child abuse.

Dr. Ritu Tyagi made it clear in her article "Understanding Postcolonial Feminism in Relation with postcolonial and feminist Theories" that postcolonial feminist "suffers from "double colonization" as she simultaneously experiences the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy. She has to resist the control of colonial power not only as a colonized subject, but also as a woman. In this oppression, her colonized brother is no

[111]Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p.14.
[112]Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 116.

longer her accomplice, but her oppressor."[113] In this regards, Dr. Ritu Tyagi explains how postcolonial feminist theory dealt with the misrepresentation of women in the national discourses as marginal and also the representation of third world women in Western discourse as a different and strange other. Similarly, the most significant collision and collusion of postcolonial and feminist theory occur around the contentious figure of the 'third-world woman'. Some feminist postcolonial theorists have cogently argued that a blinkered focus on racial politics inevitably elides the 'double colonization' of women under imperial conditions. Such theory postulates the 'third-world woman' as victim *par excellence*–the forgotten casualty of both imperial ideology, and native and foreign patriarchies. While it is now impossible to ignore the feminist challenge to the gender blindness of anti-colonial nationalism, critics such as Sara Suleri are instructive in their disavowal of the much too eager 'coalition between postcolonial and feminist theories, in which each term serves to reify the potential pietism of the other'. The imbrication of race and gender, as Suleri goes on to argue, invests the 'third-world woman' with an iconicity which is almost 'too good to be true'[114]

Talking about the notion of 'double colonization' of women John McLeod explores this issue extensively in his *Beginning Postcolonialism* (2000). John Mcleod prospect the intersection of colonialism and feminism and the way both western colonialism and the institution of patriarchy contribute to the oppression of Third world women. The writer affirms that the institution of patriarch and colonial

[113]RituTyagi, "Understanding Postcolonial Feminism in relation with Postcolonial and Feminist Theory," *International Journal of Language and Linguistics,* 1:2 (2014), p. 45.

[114] Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*, p. 274.

discourses work as oppressors of women in the sense that "The term patriarchy refers to those systems- political, material, and imaginative- which invest power in men and marginalize women"[115]. He delves into discussing Rana Kabbani 's *Imperial Fiction: Europe's Myths of Orient* (1994) where he shows that not only western hetero-sexual male are to blame for producing eighteenth and ninetieth century third world women as exotic, bizarre and singular in their painting and travel writings but also western women contributed to this oppression and marginalization. John Mcleod argues that:

> Also like colonialism, patriarchy exists in the midst of resistance to its authority. Furthermore, as a singular term, 'patriarchy' can be misleading. As much feminist criticism has shown, there are many different forms of patriarchy, each with its own specific effect: Indeed, this latter point is particularly important in postcolonial feminist criticism, so feminism and postcolonialism share the mutual goal of challenging forms of oppression.[116]

Nationalist discourses are largely male-centric and control women by capturing them in traditional stereotypes. National discourses by and large diminish the contributions and participation of women in the procedures of resistance. As a result, women in many historical documents are made invisible unlike men who are claimed to free the country from colonialism. In this vein, many feminist critics have discernible upon themselves the responsibility to exhibit women's courageous resistance ofcolonialism. As cited by Ritu Tyagi that Ketu Katrak argues, in his article entitled "Indian Nationalism, Gandhian 'Satyagraha,' and the Engendering of National Narratives" that Mahatma Gandhi's peaceful resistance to British colonial occupation

[115] John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester and New York press 2000), p.173.

[116]Ibid., p. 174.

was accomplished on the expense women whose social status did not change in India society. India resistance to British rule did not contribute to free women from the patriarchal subordination but rather women's image was appropriated to promote a passive resistance. She states:

> Gandhi's specific representations of women and female sexuality, and his symbolizing from Hindu mythology of selected female figures who embodied a nationalist spirit promoted […] a 'traditional' ideology wherein female sexuality was legitimately embodied only in marriage, wifehood, domesticity- all forms of controlling women's bodies.[117]

Indian national resistance exploited Indian woman by appropriating their so called pasivity to achieve independence and by so doing it imprisoned her in the traditional stereotypes. likeKetu Katrak and other postcolonial feminists, they use their literary fiction in order to make a counter-discourse to the exclusion of women from national liberation movement. To cite some examples, Malk Aloula's *The Colonial Harem*(1986)andLeila Abouzid's *Year of the Elephant* (2009)respectively dealt with this issue. Malek Alloula in his analysis of the postcards of Algerian women which were produced by Pierre Bourdien, shows how the French colonizer attempted to unveil Algerian women because the veil was an effective tool of national resistance. Women, unlike many historical and national documents allege, were active participants in freeing their countries from colonial exploitation. That is, in the period of French colonialism women's Hijab and cosmetics presented a challenge for the

[117]Ibid., p. 46.

gaze of the colonizer and at the main time allowed Algerian women to invade the French section without being recognized. This allowed them an important role in the nation revolution through hiding within their cloths weapons and explosive tools. According to Frantz Fanon's *A Dying Colonialism* in his study of the Algerian revolution "A Historical Dynamism of the Veil" he maintains:

> In the beginning, the veil was a mechanism of resistance, but its value for the social group remained very strong .The veil was worn because tradition demanded a rigid separation of the sexes, but also because the occupier was bent on unveiling Algeria. In a second phase, the mutation occurred in connection with the revolution and under special circumstances. The veil was abandoned in the course of revolutionary action. What had been used to block the psychological or political offensives became a means, an instrument. The veil helped the Algerian woman to meet the new problems created by the struggle.[118]

In this same respect, the Moroccan author and journalist Leila Abouzeid wrote an interesting account on the lives of Moroccan women during and after the French protection. In *Year of the Elephant* (2009) she recounts the story of Zahra. The later had an arranged marriage, without her consent. After a year of being unable to get pregnant, Zahra and her husband Mohammed moved to Casablanca. There, the couple became involved in the movement for Moroccan independence from France. She used to smuggle guns, information, and had been active agent in the Moroccan notional resistance against colonialism. Besides, In Casablanca, Zahra helped to organize a

[118] Frantz Fanon, *A Daying Colonialism* (New York: Grove Press, 1965), p. 63.

women's literacy group and donation drive, with Faqih's wife Roukia and another woman named Safia. However, after independence was achieved, Zahra's life turned upside down particularly when her husband Mohammed was given a prestigious government appointment, and given a large mansion and estate. He divorced her to marry a younger new wife who would suit his new life.

On the other hand, postcolonial feminist theory has always been concerned with the relationship between White feminists and their indigenous counter-part. In their eagerness to voice the concern of the colonized women, White feminists have overlooked racial, cultural and historical specificities that mark the condition of these women. In so doing, they have imposed White feminist models on colonized women, and thereby, worked as another oppressor.[119] In fact, western feminist's discourse is seen as another oppressor that tends to judge, treat and evaluate the lives, experiences, and circumstances of women of postcolonial settings as homogenizes. Many feminist critic of the third world argue that western feminism contributes to the oppression of women of the third world. In this regard, I would like to bring to the front Chandra Talpade Mohanty 's authoritative article: *Under the Western Eyes*, where she criticizes the homogeneous perspectives and many Western feminist texts that focus on women in the third world. Mohanty's endeavor is "to analyze is specifically the production of the "Third World woman" as a singular, monolithic subject in some (western) feminist texts."[120] She argues further that:

[119]Ritu Tyagi, "Understanding Postcolonial Feminism in relation with Postcolonial and Feminist Theory," p. 47.

[120] Chandra Talpad Mohanty,″ Under Western Eyes*, ″* in *Feminism Without Broders: Decolonising Theory, Practicing Solidarity,* ed. Chandra Talpad Mohanty (United States of America: Duke University Press, 2003.), p. 14.

> The definition of colonization, I wish to evoke here is a predominantly discursive one, focusing on a certain mode of appropriation and codification of scholarship and knowledge about women in Third World through the use of particular analytic categories employed in specific writings on the subject that take as their reference feminist interests as they have been articulated in the United States and western Europe.[121]

Specifically, "the author anchors her accounts of Western feminism in a select group of texts produced by Fran Hosken, Maria Cutrufelli, Juliette Minces, Beverly Lindsay, and Patricia Jeffery published by Zed Press in what is entitled the *Third World Series".* According to Mohanty, some western feminist texts tend to normalize the clichés that third world women are homogenous category and a collective other. She argues that the universal categorization of a large group of women in non-Western countries is mostly done through constructed monolithic terms and classifications. Women in the non-western world were labeled as primitive, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, and oppressed by men, overlooking the complexity, diversity, and multiplicity those women. The author aims to challenges the notions that over-categorize non-Western women without considering the class, ethnic, and racial contexts to which they belong. It is worthy to mention that, although Mohanty's analysis is mostly focused on the specific works by the aforementioned writers, feminist writers in non-Western world, too, can benefit from her criticisms when aiming to write or theorize the lives of women in rural and impoverished regions.

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[121]Ibid., p. 14.

Gayatri Spivak, similarly, addressed a harsh criticism to Gilbert and Gubar's essay "The Madwoman in the Attic" that celebrates Jane Eyer success to affirm her selfhood and agency a proto-feminist heroine, of course, on the expense of Bertha Mason life. The soci-economic change that Jane could achieve could not take place without the oppression of non-western women typically Bertha and Creole wife from Jamaica. In fact, Jane Eyer is celebrated anglo-american feminists while Bertha is made invisible. According to Spivak, Jane's process of movement from the position of misbegotten orphan to one of legitimacy is a consequence of Bertha's act of suicide by jumping into fire. Bertha is always connected to Jane as the other; she never achieves any self of her own. Jane's journey to self-fulfillment and her happy marriage are achieved at the cost of Bertha's human selfhood and ultimately her life, as cited by Shahd Alshammari that Gayatry Spivak states, "Bertha must play out her role, act out the transformation of her 'self' into that fictive Other, set fire to the house and kill herself, so that Jane Eyre can become the feminist individualist heroine of British fiction"[122] By reading Bertha Masson metaphorically as the repressed side of Jane's psyche, at most an expression of the "secret self" of the main character, Gilbert and Gubar stand accused of not taking colonialism into account and reproducing the axioms of imperialism.Spivak's reading of the novel aims at returning it to its colonial context.

In the United States of America, Black feminism emerged 1980 as a response to and as a result of the marginalization and exclusion of black women primarily by white feminists. The strand came to elevate black feminists with whites and erase the differences and inequalities between black and whites. Black feminists by and large

[122]Shahd Alshammari, *Literary Madness in British, Postcolonial, and Bedouin Women's Writing* (Britain: Cambridge Scholars, 2016), p. 30.

oppose assumptions of a common sisterhood among women and do not define men as the oppressor. They point out the core struggle of black men and women to stand against racism. Black female feminists consciousness, on the one hand, revolves around white feminist domination of the field of women liberation as Bell Hooks note in her book *Ain't I a Woman?: Black women and feminism* (1982) that:

> Most women involve in the recent move toward a feminist revolution assume that white women have initiated all feminist resistance to male chauvinism in American society, and further assume that black women are not interested in women's liberation. While it is true that white women have led every movement toward feminist revolution in American society, their dominance is less a sign of black female disinterest in feminist struggle than an indication that the politics of colonization and racial imperialism have made it historically impossible for black women in the United States to lead a women' movement. [123]

She relates the late emergence of black feminism to white feminist dominance and also to the racism black women used to face in American society. Obviously, Black women's experiences of racial and gender oppression led to a desire to free themselves from racial discrimination and gain equality both as women and as African-Americans. Black feminist like third world feminist criticize the domination of white feminist in the sense that western white feminist discourse tend to homogenize non-western women.

[123]Bell Hooks, *Ain't I a Woman?: Black women and feminism* (London: South End Press, 1982), p. 161.

Helen Carby explores these issues in her influential essay "White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood" In identifying and discussing the condition of "Western feminism" in the 1970s, Carby explains that Black and Asian women are barely made visible within its discourses. And when they are addressed, their representation remains highly problematic. Western feminism is criticized for the Orientalist way in which it represents the social practices of other races as backward and barbarous, from which Black and Asian women need rescuing. In Carby's view, Western feminism frequently suffers from an ethnocentric bias in presuming that the solutions which White Western women have advocated in combating their oppression are equally applicable to all. As a result, issues of race have been neglected which has hindered feminists from thinking about the ways in which racism and patriarchy interact. [124]

After exploring the major challenges and struggles facing postcolonial feminism, we came to the conclusion that postcolonial feminism represents a resonating voice of female resistance. This voice deals with the misrepresentation, jeopardy, and exclusion of third world women from the nationalist discourses. It tends also to question the alliance and affinity of western colonial thought, the western feminist discourse and the institution of patriarchy in the oppression of third world women. Principally, postcolonial feminist theory continuo to challenge predominant stereotypes and marginalization of women locally and on a transnational level.

[124] Helen, Carby. "White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood" in *Black British Cultural Studies*, eds. Houston A. Baker, et al (London : the University of Chicago Press 1996) p. 64

Postcolonial feminism attends to rewrite third women's history to try to find satisfactory answer to the closely related issue of the 'double colonization' of third world women by both western colonial discourses and western feminist's oppression of other women belonging to the once colonized location. To conclude, the different discourses, theories and approaches that aim to put an end to cultural, racial, and sexist prejudices about third world women in general and Arab women in specific have reached satisfactory results. However, Arab women in particular are not done yet with racism and sexism which they face in the diasporic world. Arab women Diasporas and immigrants have still to face such inequalities and need more efforts for their emancipation and equality to be achieved. Therefore, it is important to trace the historical development of Arab Diaspora and underscore the way they handle the marginality they face due to their race and gender.

C- Resistance in Cultural and Literary Theory

The last section was closed by a reference to imagination and the female literary fiction as the most meaningful mechanism of resistance for the diasporic transnational authors. The so called counter-discourse becomes particularly significant for most of the postcolonial writers for the way in which it disrupts the notions of historical, classical realism and imperial representation in general. Postcolonial literature and diasporic creative allegories in particular open multiple venues to stand against and escape the politics of exclusion and the oversimplified binaries of self/other, black white, and so forth that were used to create norms of identification whether in term of race, gender and sexuality. This serves in obliterating and marginalizes increasing number of people. Initially, the enactment of resistance conducted in term of or

institutions appropriated from the colonizing culture itself reminds us time and again of the possibility to speak of a global culture not of homogeneity, hegemony and monolithicism but of interactive cultural diversity where physical, psychological and mental belonging is no longer hostile. Yet throughout the diasporic transnational position, it can be still conceivable to identify an act of resistance that is common to the majority of transnational authors. It has been argued throughout this study that the endless quest for home and an identity embody many scopes of resistance to the epistemological violence that is exercised through various discourses of knowledge. For the time being, attention will be centered on reviewing the common dialectical positions involved apropos of the discussion of resistance. The aim is to clearly situate the resistance pronounced from the postcolonial diasporic transnational stance.

Resistance is one of the concepts that have been recourse throughout this study since this concept is pervasive in cultural studies and theories of counter-discourse even though it remains cloudy. Moreover, in the recent years, the question of de-colonialism is garnering attention in educational research and culture studies that tend to examine issues related to the intersections between colonial relations and knowledge production, representation, and indigenous struggle. However, the theorization of resistance remains scarce in postcolonial and anti-colonial discourses within the field of education. Both these latter schools of thought critically examine the multiple faces of colonialism in the past and present context, and encapsulate the intransience of colonizing practices (with different emphases) at the discursive, material, and cultural arenas in the academy and beyond. To critically examine the concepts of resistance in post/anti-colonial phase, perhaps one has to ask questions like

How does postcolonial theory address the question of resistance? And how does the idea of indigently fit into postcolonial theorizing?

Cultural resistance, in postcolonial theory, has been always a slippery and a flexible concept. In simple terms, the concept denotes any rebellious act, thought or struggle against the dominant hegemony. Buncombe's definition of resistance at first observation makes of the concept easy captured. He defines resistance as simply "to act against".[125] Yet "resistance" encompasses its complexity from the different view point, the context, and the field in which it is used. For Raby Rebecca she holds a different stance apropos the concept of resistance as she asserts in her article "What is Resistance?" that limiting the scopes of resistance entail more than defining it. Resistance for her "is an integral part of power relationships, of domination, subjugation and as such may be viewed from different ideological viewpoints.[126] Resistance, in this regards, embody a fundamental pillar of postcolonial schema and tasks in the sense that it emanate from the desire to create a space and develop tools to change the dominant political, economic, social structure. David Jefferess notes:

> "Resistance" is primary framework for the critical project of postcolonialims; in many ways, the subject of postcolonial criticism is "resistance" and postcolonialsim is a project of "resistance itself. Yet, while the concept of resistance has received some critical treatment, particularly in the late 1980s, and more recently in the work of Bill Ashcroft and Benita Parry, apart from sporadic discussions of it in introductions to the field, it has functioned as an

[125] Dejan Kršić, "Review Essay: 'Cultural resistance': Can such practices ever have a meaningful political impact?" *Critical Social Thinking: Policy and Practice*, Vol. 3 (2011), p. 113.
[126] Rebecca Raby, "What is Resistance?," p. 113.

amorphous concept identifying any kind of struggle, regardless of modes or aims.[127]

If we want to approach and deal with changing conceptions of resistance as well as its further implications and meaningfulness as a transformative cultural and literary apparatus, we need than to bring to light the different position taken in conceptualizing the term. To start with the first position, Frantz Fanon‘s conception of colonialism and alienation helps to further understand the concept of resistance and decolonization. In his accounts of *Black skin white masks* (1952), he assesses critically what he called the colonization of the consciousness and according to him; the colonized subject has two measurements which are the self world and the world of the colonizer whereby the colonizer’s world and culture are standard, superior and prevalent. For Fanon, the consciousness of the colonized is surrounded inside a hierarchical view of the world. Within this view, the colonized culture and lifestyle are ranked in lower level compared to the colonizer’s culture and lifestyle and thus the colonized is constructed as an inadequate subject who can only achieves their subjectivity through adapting the European culture. Frantz Fanon explains as cited by Mumia Abu-Jamal in her book, *Death Blossoms: Reflections from a Prisoner of Conscience* (1996)that,“Imperialism leaves behind germs of rot which we must clinically detect and remove from our land but from our minds as well.”[128]

[127]David Jefferess, *Postcolonial Resistance: Culture, Liberation, and Transformation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, McMaster University, 2008). p. 29.

[128] Rasiaj Sugirtharajah, *Asian Biblical Hermeneutics and Postcolonialim: Contesting the Interpretations* (UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), p. xviii.

In this connected, Frantz Fanon does not perceive resistance in "the desire to attach oneself to tradition or bring abandoned tradition to life."[129] The return to cultural traditions does not lead to material resistance against the colonizer as the culturalist preoccupations the native writers shows has "no common yardstick to measure the real situation which the men and the women of his country know.[130] To bring about a dramatic change in the power relation between the colonized and the colonizer, Frantz Fanon believes that resistance should take a violent rebellion face as a means to reconstruct the self, he notes in his *The Wretched of the Earth* that,

> It is clear that in the colonial countries the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The starving peasant, outside the class system is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. For him there is no compromise, no possible coming to terms; colonization and decolonization is simply a question of relative strength.[131]

Frantz Fanon advocates violence as a means of empowering the oppressed, he thinks that if you treat people badly and systematically it is inevitable for them, to assert their humanity, act back. So if you continue to harm the very essence of what a person is, to take their language, their religion, their food and force them to wear the mask of the colonizer inevitably they either die or they will rebel. For Frantz Fanon the violent rebellion constitutes the person as a full human being because they know more that they are defined from the outside and now they begin the process of defining themselves.

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[129] Frantz Fanon, Black Skin White Masks (New York, Grove Press, 1952), p. 180.
[130]Ibid., p. 221.
[131]Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (United Staes of America : Grove Press, 1961), p. 84

Justin G. McCollum notes, in his review of Fanon's *The wretched of the Earth* that Fanon arrives at this conclusion by defining colonial society as a Manichaean, or compartmentalized, society-a world divided in two. The good is pitted against the bad; the white against the dark; the rich against the poor; the indigenous against the foreigner; the ruling class against the others; evil "niggers" and "towel-heads" against humane whites. This lurking division of the population creates a tension that cannot be ignored. True decolonization, therefore, will eradicate this devilish dichotomy and create a society where "the last shall be first" (2-5). However, because colonialism is only made possible through extreme violence and intimidation, Fanon reasons that violence is the only language that a colonialist society understands.[132]

Notwithstanding, many critics show their skepticism of Fanon's perception of nation movement of decolonization leading to independent and consider it to be incompatible with the rhetoric of resistance which is more about the possibility of rearticulating resistance in post-independence era. Resistance can take different shapes and forms in the sense that resistance from without is not viable both at the textual and practical levels. Fanon, for example, could not be able to speculate on the theory of resistance without his actual contact with the colonizer's culture and his direct involvement with liberationist movement in Algeria. However, many theorists dispute the belief that imperialism can be eradicated solely through material resistance but rather the textual resistance and the act of writing and reading proved to be an effective mechanism of resistance. For instance, Needham illustrates how C.L.R James emphasized the role played by his work The Black Jacobins in actuating the movement

[132] Justin McCollum, *Frantz Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: GROVE PRESS, 2004), p. 251.

of decolonization in Africa. He also points out how Ama Ata Aido chased her rebellious project from her position as the minister of education and indirectly through writings.

The initial perception of this form of resistance is clearly manifested by the way the diaspora imaginings and allegories operate from within and from without. The experience of diaspora and hybridity generate a difference and syncretism that destabilize the hegemonic structure it lives in. The awareness of migrants belonging and un-belonging, identification and disidentification involves fashioning a form of resistance which can trespass the geographic and social outskirt to dismantle the concealed part of the hegemonic institutions, discourses, and cultural forces that are still enact even after the political autonomy was accomplished. Resistance, in this regard, isn't spatial or exclusive to certain specific circumstance or subjects and maybe Michel Foucault definition of resistance in extremely valuable in this respect given that he associates the sanctioning of resistance with presence of power and resistance to knowledge production.

Jana Sawicki notes in her critical reading of Foucault that the later argues against the centralization of power to a particular institution leads to the obliterating of other source of power. She advocates her stance with Marxists who mainly locate power in class struggles that obscure an entire network of power. She further argues that Foucault's understanding of the origin of power is not up-down but rather bottom-up. In his analysis of discourse of power Foucault notes that power relations emanate at the micro-level of society "which make possible certain global effects of domination

such as class power and patriarchy."[133] This reflects Foucault's rejection of the use of a universal modal of power but instead any analysis of power ought to consider difference in history, trajectory and see how these mechanisms of power have been utilized. Talking about power and resistance, Jana Sawicki notes that Foucault connects power to resistance in the sense that resistance is dependent on and spring from power as Foucault explains:

> Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. I'm not positing a substance of power, I'm simply saying, as soon there's a relation of power, there's a possibility of resistance. [134]

Michael Foucault's claim as Jana Sawicki tries to show is not to posit a grounded substance of an absolute power that is not subjected to any form of resistance but simply power can always be modified, adjusted and transformed. The second claim inferred in Foucault's portrayal of power is the most grounded assertion that wherever there is a relation of power it is conceivable to adjust its hold. He states: control is practiced just finished free subjects and just seeing that they are free. Free subjects will be subjects who confront a field of potential outcomes. Their activity is organized however not constrained. In this manner, Foucault does not characterize control as the overcoming of resistance. [135] In this respect, the main question and argument around which this thesis revolves in the way Arab diaspora writers execute

[133] Jana Sawicki, *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, power, and the body* (New York: Routledge , 1991), p. 32.

[134] Ibid., pp. 24,25

[135] Ibid.,

an immediate battle against the annihilation of power. The diasporic authors open up subjectivities that transgress the socio-political boundaries in their quest for a home and an identity of common understanding and acceptance within the home of settlement. The diasporic narratives consequently represent an intellectual form of resistance that has come to begin without a final arrive. "writing becomes an act of resistance through what it records and what it challenges, but reading can also be a critical process. The key concept of resistance underlies the possibilities of invention and agency that can be channeled through negotiation" [136] discussing and conceptualization the intellectual form of resistance articulated from the migratory experience of Arab diasporas, Edward Said's and Homy Bhabha's modes of resistance are very relevant as they proposes a non-coercive model of resistance in which they unequivocally veers far from the oppositional measurement of resistance yet evaluate resistance to be effectively performed from inside culture by successfully making counter-discourse by the intellectual.

Faysa Ahmad made an appealing comparesion between said conception of intellectual resistance and that of Foucault's. She believes that Said's conception of the Western discourse which was created for "dominating, restructuring, having authority over the Orient"[137] enables him to take a different rang on discourse from that of Foucault, whose well known decree "power is everywhere" is, for Said, totally passivist and eliminates the " the centraldialectic of opposed forces that still underlies

[136]Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[137]Faysa Yasif Ahmad, "Edward Said's Conception of the Intellectual Resistance," *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 1:4 (2013), p. 237.

modernsociety".[138] The author notes that Said takes no insight of "the role of classes, the role of economics, the role ofinsurgency and rebellion in the society he discusses" [139]As Said uncovers in *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives, with photographs by JeanMohr*– one of his most personal books, his conception of discourse was spurred by a persistent feeling of misfortune he caused through the loss of his homeland to Israel and a commitment to writing-as-action[140]. That one can write inside the rambling parameter of the west and make a space for balancing position was additionally genuinely thought by him in *Beginnings* the book he wrote three years before Orientalism.

On the other hand, Homi Bhabha's perspective focuses on "cultural difference" [141] rather than "cultural diversity" which is very useful to understand the diasporic sense of resistance. His analysis of colonial discourse, as complex and ambivalent, stands against the outsider's antagonistic assumption about the Manichean imaginary between the self and the other. In the state of ambivalence, the stability of power is

[138] Ibid.
[139]Ibid.p. 244.
[140] Ibid.

[141] Cultural diversity/Cultural Difference: cultural difference is the process of the *enunciation* of culture as "knowledg*eable*," authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification. If cultural diversity is a category of comparative ethics, aesthetics, or ethnology, cultural difference is a process of signification through which statements *of* culture or *on* culture differentiate, discriminate, and authorize the production of fields of force, reference, applicability, and capacity. Cultural diversity is the recognition of pregiven cultural "contents" and customs, held in a time frame of relativism. Cultural diversity is also the representation of a radical rhetoric of the separation of totalized cultures that live unsullied by the intertextuality of their historical locations, safe in the utopianism of a mythic memory of a unique collective identity. Cultural diversity may even emerge as a system of the articulation and exchange of cultural signs in certain … imperialist accounts of anthropology. (Homi K. Bhabha, Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences)

unsettled. The diasporas are given chances to turn their linguistic mimicry into tool to challenge of colonial power. Their resistance embodied in creating transformed stories and different subjectivities do not conform to the norms of colonial discourse constitutes a form of resistancein what he calls the Third Space" for Bhabha, this space is in between cultures that are often thought of as diametrically opposed. This space is a site where cultural differences can be articulated and postcolonial people have the possibility to renegotiate their own identities outside of externally-imposed binaries.

In sum, the significance of "resistance" as varies according to the field in which it is used. It becomes increasingly fashionable in the playing field of postcolonial studies, which focus principally on analysis of texts written by Subalterns in which they articulate their resistance to the social, cultural as well as political oppression and suppression. This brief exploration of the concept of resistance exhibits that for the most part of the twentieth century it was predominantly used in anthropology, sociology and history, and more specifically literary scholarship and criticism. Resistance remains a basic characteristic of most Arab women diasporic writings whichactively critiques and interrogates oppressive institutions and ideologies. Arab women diasporic allegories, within the postcolonial era, is mostly lablled as resistant literature which is an act of "'Writing Back', speaking either of the oppression and the racism of the colonizers or the inherent cultural "better-ness" of the indigenous people."[142] Writings, for Arab female diasporas become as a survival mechanism, consciousness raising tool and a form of activism. These female writers

[142]Nawel Meriem Ouahiba, *Resistance and Transcultural Dialogue in the Fiction of Anglophone Arab Women Writers,* p. 59.

affirm their hybrid identities; champion their difference and endeavor to bridge the divide and build common ground of communication for the East and the west.

VI- Arab Women Diaspora Writers' Resistance of the Double Discourse

A- **Antagonizing and radicalizing Arab Muslim Women**

In the last decades of the twentieth century, the need for the emergence of an alternative and oppositional literature for self-representation of Arab Muslim women becomes a necessity. The appearance of such literary genre redraws attention on the questions of femininity and feminine subjectivity at the same time challenges mainstream public and official discourses. Historically, Arab and many ethnic marginal minorities are thought to be as one ethnic group, forgetting that not all Arabs are Muslims and fail to understand the diversity among Middle Eastern and the diversity among Middle Eastern women in particular. The images of Arab women in most of the western public discourse emulate the universal fixities of colonialist epistemology and the misconception Americans in specific retain vis-à-vis Arab women given that they are equated with stereotypes and regarded as a homogeneous category. Western discourses tend turning a blind eye on the heterogeneity of Arab Muslim women in terms of history, culture, religion and socio-economic and political associations and belongings.

Being one of the most marginalized liminal selves, as this chapter intends to show, Arab women diasporic writers voice their ethnic, religious and gender alterity and unveiling the boredom of immigration that is considered as of one most precursor of

deterriteriolization. It has becomes a liability for many Arab Anglophone women writers to voice many silenced female immigrants who undergo an experience diasporisation in which they have been exposed to multifaceted forms of binaries, racial discrimination and negritude (chapter 4, section 2). Furthermore, Through varied acts of writing, Arab women diasporic writers endeavored to explore the in-betweeness they face as women and the way they are liminalzed in the Diaspora while in their quest for an identity. Through their writing, as it is asserted in the third section of this chapter, Arab women diasporic literature Articulate the hybrid identity of its authors which represents the contact zone between their Arab origin and western belonging to affirm themselves as part and parcel of the transnational diasporic tissue. This section, therefore, does not diverge away from the aforementioned framework of this chapter given that its purpose is threefold. First, this section aims to investigate the image of Arab women in the western thought and of the western image-makers and the consistency between the image and the attitude they have towards Arab Muslim women. Second, it aims also to explore the Western imperial discourse behind which these images were fabricated and the political interests that the Arab women representation serves.

Prior to the exploration of the misrepresentation of Arab Muslim women in western various forms of knowledge, it is of much important to provide an overview on the concept of "Representation" as it is fundamental key concept to the investigation of Arab women's Image in western discourses. By definition, Representation[5] refers to the use of signs that stand for and take the place of something

[5]Representationisthe production of meaning through language. The Shorter English Dictionary suggests tow relevant definitions for the word.

else. It is through representation that people organize the world and reality through the act of naming its elements. Representation has been associated with aesthetics (art) and semiotics (signs). Since ancient times representation has played a central role in understanding literature, aesthetics and semiotics. Plato and Aristotle are key figures in early literary theory who considered literature as simply one form of representation. Aristotle for instance, considered each mode of representation, verbal, visual or musical, as being natural to human beings. Aristotle deemed mimesis as natural to man, and, therefore considered representation as necessary for people's learning and being in the world. Plato, in contrast, looked upon representation with more caution. He recognized that literature is a representation of life, yet also believed that representations create worlds of illusion leading one away from the "real things"

On the other hand, Stuart Hall in his book*Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* defines representation as "using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent the world meaningfully"[7]meaning that representation is a process whereby meaning is constructed about the concept represented. Stuart Hall, exploration, tends to delaminate and trace the ways in which the concept of representation connect meaning and language to culture distinguishing three theories that account for the accurate meaning and usages of representation.

- To represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or imagination for example; in the sentence, this picture represents the murder of Abel by Cain.
- To represent also means to symbolize, stand for, to be a specimen of, or to substitute for;as in the sentence, In Christianity;the Cross represents the suffering and crucifixion of Christ.

[7] Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* (Lodnon: Sage Publications, 1997), p. 15.

The first theory concerned with the concept of representation is called the Reflective approach. This approach identifies "Representation"as a mantel production of meaning of the concept in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the real world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fiction objects people and events. This theory entails two fundamental processes of meanings or systems of representation; the first system of representation enables us to give meaning to the world by constructing a set of correspondences or a chain of equivalences between things- people, objects, abstract idea, etc. the second system depends on constructing a set of correspondences between our conceptual map and set of sign, arranged or organized into various languages which stand for or represent those concepts.

The second approach to meaning in representation argues an opposite stance. It holds that it is the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. This is the intentional approach.[8] Particularly, this approach unlike the reflective approach, insist on the idea that the production of meaning through language does not depend solely on a transparent reflection of concepts in the real world but it is subject to premeditation of the producer and the message in tended to convey.

The third approach takes us into the public, social character of language. It acknowledges that neither things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix meaning in language. According to this approach, the thing in itself does not mean but rather the constructors structures meaning using representational system.

[8] Ibid.

Hence, it iscalled the constructivist or the Constructionist approach. Stuart Hall maintains that, "Constructionists do not deny the existence of the material world. However, it is not the material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts."[9]That is, every subject, object or idea does not mean anything or steam from anything nor it comes from emptiness, but it is the production of and the synthesis of different modes of representation. The definitions of representation and its different approaches namely the constructionist approach acquaint us with the way representation is used to construct meaning and nuance on Middle Eastern people and Muslim women in particular.

That is, the Western representation of Muslims and Arabs is not a recent fabrication but it rather had been operational and deep-rooted in the West conceptualization ever since the first contacts with Arabs and Muslims. The Middle East has long been ubiquitous in American cultural rhetoric; topics featuring Arabs and Muslims appear in various American media including discussions, news coverage and, most accessibly and influentially, in films and television entertainment programs. In fact, one of the powerful agent that targets the portrayal of Arabs and Middle Easterners in exotic ethnic terms is American film industry productions. The later creates a stereotypical image of the dangerous 'Arab other' which consequently influences and to great extent affects the lives of Arabs immigrates. To study Arab women's image in the American media and film industry, the anti-racist and media educator Jacque Shaheen made an outrageous and insightful analysis of the history of Arab vilification in Western Media.

[9]Ibid., p. 26.

In his book and documentary film respectively *Reel Bad Arab: How Hollywood Vilifies People* (2006), Jack Shaheen devoted himself to the analysis of Arab prejudices that are reflected and recycled in more than 900 Hollywood films. Shaheen scrutinized the mechanics by which Arab lives and history were fabricated and presented to mass audiences. He returns back to the cinema's earliest days up to the year 2001 and concluded that Hollywood rendered the Middle East in exotic terms that generate ill feeling, distrust and loathing. Shaheen emphasizes that Hollywood's presentation of Arabs as a pestilential threat was wildly alienating, he writes, the Muslim Arabs continue to surface as the threatening culture 'Others'' He believed that this depiction has been changed and fluctuates according to the evolution of world politics. The consistent movie representations of Middle Easterners that he has documented include:

> Bearded Mullahs, billionaire sheiks, terrorist bombers, black Bedouins, and noisy bargainers. Woman surface either as gun totters or bumbling subservient, or as belly dancers bouncing voluptuously in palaces and erotically oscillating in slave markets. More recently, image-makers are offering other caricatures of Muslim women: covered in black from head toe, they appear as uneducated, unattractive and enslaved beings, slowly attending man, they follow several paces behind abusive sheiks.[143]

Jacque Shaheen's argument is that American media particularly news; and Hollywood products are used discursively against Arabs and Muslims. He says, "I looked at more than thousand films- films ranging from the earliest most obscure days

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[143]Jack G. Shaheen. *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*. (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2001), p.67.

of Hollywood to today's biggest blockbusters. And what I tried to do is to make visible what too many of us seem not to see: a dangerously consistent pattern of hateful Arab stereotypes. Stereotypes that rob an entire people from their humanity."[144] That is, Hollywood is considered a powerful discourse which recycle the same clichés and stereotypical images about Arabs and Muslims and which enhance the western colonial policies. In other words, "politics and Hollywood are liked, they enforce one another, policy reinforce mythical images and mythical images help enforce policy".[145] The Middle East has long been omnipresent in American cultural rhetoric topics featuring Arabs and Muslims as other. They are othered in most American media, discussions, news coverage and, most accessible and influential television entertainment programs. The western media has often projected individuals of Arabs descent in a negative manner. Currently, Arabs are seen as terrorists and murderers due to how media project them. Moreover, newspapers use key words to describe Arabs. In the same vein,Driss Ridouani quotes Rayan El-Amine who arguesin her article entitled "The Making of the Arab Menace" that, "Hollywood films have played an important role in perpetuating and amplifying these racist caricatures. Arabs in films are portrayed as being terrorists, fanatics, dirty, irrational, violent and above all disposable."[146] She, further, concludes that, "The backward and seemingly static image of the Arab that Oliphant, Hollywood and the Bush administration have projected, comes from classic colonial notions of Western superiority", relating and at the same time stressing the continuity of the old stereotypes of the West.[147] These

[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.
[146]Driss Ridouani, "The Representation of Arabs and Muslims in Western Media," *RUTA* Nº 03 (2011), p.10.
[147] Ibid.,

distortions of Arab people have created a general mistrust and dislikes for Arabs among Americans in particular.

The images of Middle Easterners spawned a renewal of Orientalist depictions of Muslim societies and, in particular, women maps out the link between colonialism and representation. Arab Muslim women's image in the Western official discourses was always prone to transformations in correspondence with political interests of the west. Their depictions at first revolve around female sexuality. In his Article "The Representation of Arabs and Muslims in Western Media" Driss Ridouani, notes that the Western media allocate Arab Muslim in the "three Bs: Billionaire, bomber, and Belly dancer" [148]which regenerate the old stereotypical clichés about Arab Muslim women in the sense that it represents them as erotic characters and sexualized object meant to gratify male voyeuristic desires. Women are also framed as passive, ignorant, and obedient in harem governed by patriarchal rules. In fact, gender is a fundamental cultural mechanism of Disney animated film. Approaching Aladdin (1993) representation of Arab women in animated films from a postcolonial and culturalist perspective would reveal that the production of such representations steams from colonial principles and serve imperialist intentions. Part of the concerns of this work is to provide a scrutiny of how Disney as a culture machine represents the Arab world in general but focuses mainly on the image of Arab women in one of the most popular Disney animated films which are generally labeled as innocent, fun and entertaining.

Following the Western discourse about Eastern women, Disney perpetuates negative views of Arab women. Throughout *Aladdin*, Disney recycles and regenerates

[148] Ibid.

the deeply rooted mistaken belief about Middle Eastern women as being merely sex objects that are meant to satisfy men sexual desires. Laura Mulvey tells us about the use of female body in a scopophilic mode for the pleasure of looking at the female character. Laura acknowledges that, "in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly."[149] Thus, Arab women's identity has always been associated with nakedness, nudity, and dancing as the female character becomes subject to different voyeuristic fantasies. Woman, in Disney films, are not only the object of the audience's gaze, but she also becomes subjected to the gaze of her fellow cartoon/movie characters. In *Aladdin,* the male spectator joins the male character to act like secret agents spying on the female bodies. This is primarily showed in sequences which include the belly dancers. Scopophilia, to use Mulvey"s words, is another Face of women's degradation in Disney"s animated films and Aladdin is an example of the patriarchal discourse that the company adapts vis-à-vis women in general.

In her *Beauty and the (B) East: A Postcolonial Reading of Disney"s Arab Woman (2016)* Hajar Eddarif explains that throughout the movie these Arab women are objectified, silenced and presented satisfied with their status and happy with their fate. "Roughly speaking, for Disney"s spectatorship - and especially children – Arab women are synonymous with backwardness and passivity. Also their voicelessness and lack of agency alludes to dictatorship and the lack of democracy of the Arab world as it has been argued by Edward Said: There has been so massive and calculatedly aggressive an attack on the contemporary societies of the Arab and Muslim for their

[149] Laura Mulvey, "Visua Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" *Screen,* 16: 3 (1975), p. 11.

backwardness, lack of democracy, and abrogation of women's rights that we simply forget that such notions as modernity, enlightenment and democracy are by no means simple and agreed-upon concepts that one either does or does not find, like Easter eggs in the living-room." [150]

In this respect, condemning Arabs of lack of democracy and abrogation of women's rights, the West gives itself the right to occupy Arab land under the pretext of bringing democracy and rescuing Arab women from the injustice of Arab governess. The Islamic rules and principles could not escape the Western misjudgment and criticism since it related to bloodshed and violence. This appears clearly via the merchant who tries to cut Jasmine's hand when she gives an apple to a hungry child. This scene implies that Arab laws revolves around cutting hands, killing people and bloodshed in general; whereas the fact is that this law is exercised restrictively in some Arab Islamic governments. The generalization and unfounded assumptions that the company adapts vis-à-vis Arabs facilitates the implementation of stereotypes in the audience‟ s minds, especially children who discover the world and learn about different cultures and peoples via animated films. Disney implements that even noble acts such as feeding the poor are to be punished in Islam. Indeed, Jasmine's scene in the market is both a misrepresentation of Islam and Arab women, since Jasmine is introduced as powerless and weak and should be punished by a man and in the name of religion.

In the recent years, however, these images dramatically changed. The Arab woman is now projected as bomber and terrorist as the claimed to hide behind their scarf and

[150] Hajar Eddarif, " Beauty and the (B) East: A Postcolonial Reading of Disney‟s Arab" *Woman International Journal of New Technology and Research*, 2:6 (2016), p. 63.

veil; Muslim terrorist and evil doers. Some claim that putting a veil has nothing to do with religious principle, but it is similarly a method to cover their "ugly faces". On the other hand, it is claimed that bearded Muslim men are usually equated to pre-historical and barbaric persons who are more likely to perform terrorist attacks.

The western media has often projected individuals of Arabs descent in a negative manner. Currently, Arabs are seen as terrorists and murderers due to how media project them. Moreover, newspapers use key words to describe Arabs. According to Shaheen (1984), "the present day Arab stereotypes parallels the image of Jews in pre-Nazi Germany, where Jews were painted as a dark shifty-eyed, venal and threateningly different people. These distortions of Arab people have created a general mistrust and dislikes for Arabs among Americans in particular. American media as well as the European coverage are similar to a great extent in constructing Arabs and Islam as a threat. In this connection, the West has the right to defend itself against such a 'menace' and thus it mobilizes all sorts of materials: military, economic, and media. Consequently, "politics and Hollywood are liked, they enforce one another, policy reinforce mythical images and mythical images help enforce policy".[151]

From June 2009 to 2010, France saw a renewed intensification of debate around the question of the Muslim veil. A debate that many had thought closed with the validation of the 'law on the headscarf' in 2004. As some politicians in France attempted, with some success, to pass yet another law on the veil – banning the so-called 'full or integral veil [voile int ´ egral]' from public services and public spaces – the need to revisit the sources of this debate and the passage of the 2004 French law has become evident.

[151] Jacque Shaheen, *Reel Bad Arabs*, p. -70

France passed the law that banned wearing what were termed ‘conspicuous [ostensible]’ religious signs in public schools in March 2004. Though seeming to include all religious signs, both the debate leading up to the passage of the law and the majority of cases to which the law was applied concerned girls wearing the Muslim headscarf [le foulard islamique], or ‘veil [le voile]’, in schools.2 This

Moreover, such representations of the Muslim veil are neither new to the French context, as the colonial project to unveil Algerian women attests, nor are they restricted to France.5 Western representations of veiled Muslim women have multiplied in recent memory. In 2001, alleged moral arguments for the United States’ war on Afghanistan were formulated through an appeal to the liberation of Afghan women. The image of the burqa-covered body of the Afghan woman became the symbol for the oppression of women under Taliban rule. This representation conflated various historical factors that had contributed to women’s situation in Afghanistan, attributing that situation to a unitary source, an ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ immediately identifiable with the burqa.

The western discursive portrayal of veiled Arab Muslim women very often influences the life experiences of Arab female residing in the diaspora in many different ways. My intention, in this section, is to question the mechanisms that sustain these representations in the ‘western’ imaginary. My stance is that western representations of veiled Muslim women are not simply about Muslim women themselves. Rather than representing Muslim women, these images fulfill a different function: they provide the foil or negative mirror in which Western constructions of identity and gender can be positively reflected. It is by means of the projection of

gender oppression in relation to Islam, specifically onto the bodies of veiled women, that such mirroring takes place.

B- Arab Women Diaspora Writings: Unthinking Oriental and Western Discourses

This section brings together key terms that have come to domination how, Arab women intellectuals, in a postcolonial era, describe themselves and re-inscribe their identities, especially in relation to the dominant discourses of orientalism and patriarchy. This tension still surrounds the intellectual as well as the institutional meaning of Arab women communities in the diaspora. As many have noted, Arab women diasporic writers' unique history of immigration, expatriation, and exile are translated into strategic and productive ways of resistance. They attempt to build their differences and identities that sometimes resist and other times negotiate the discursive configuration of their lives and identities from an orientalist and traditionalist lens. Anglophone Arab female authors show preference in directly didactic literary works that convey a particular message which contributes to the redefinition and reconceptualisation of Arab women's status in both the sides of the Atlantic. The exploration of some innovative contemporary novels written by Anglophone Arab female authors yield the fact that these author's primary focus is to provide a different representation that reflects the heterogeneity and diversity among Arab women.The fictional narratives of these set of Arab diasporic authors employ Khatib's theory of double critique to challenge the subordination Arab women face socially, culturally, politically and psychologically as postcolonial third world women. This section is an

exploration of the way Anglophone Arab women writers utilize their creativity as a mechanism of resistance against the obedience, invisibility, and voicelessness connotations coupled with them in the Western and Eastern hemispheres.

Having been influenced by the social, cultural, and political failures to account for women's rights in the Arab world on one hand, and the migratory experience on the other brought to the fore the issue of resistance with striking intensity. Historically, for the first generation of Arab immigrants, the home-country had been idealized as the only real home due to the discriminatory treatment they had encountered in land of migration. The homeland has been perceived as idealistic source of comfort where one is imaginatively welcomed. Avtar, Brah, states that "home is a mythic place of desire in the diaspora imagination."[152]In this perception, the mythic place 'home' remains a place of identical culture, race and language. One can observe the strong connection of the first wave of Arab immigrants to their home-country that they reflect in literary works. Most of their writings revolve around memory and nostalgia in an attempt to imaginatively keep in touch with the sweetness of a remote past. In his paper *Reinventing Caste: Indian Diaspora in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies (1996)*, Omendra Kumar Singh explicates that displaced authors recreate their homeland through the act of writing and that the experiences of exile and expatriation energies them to mentally revisit their home of origin. Singh quoted `Salman Rushdie's views on the condition of immigrants:

> Exiles or emigrants or expatriates are humbled by some sense of loss, some way to reclaim, to look back even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of

[152]Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 187.

> salt . . . if we look back we must also do in the knowledge which gives rise to profound uncertainties that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the things that loss. ,,[153]

The concern that occupied diasporic author according to Omendra Kumar is the longing for a distant past and a search for withdrawn home in the sense that the feeling of remorse and the hardships of integration in the new land push these diasporas to look back in anger and despair. She maintains that, `Salman Rushdie's stance on the condition of immigrants that "Needless to say, the memory of loss instantiates and compels the Indian diaspora to look back nostalgically to their lost homeland".[154]For Mcleod home is a mental construction that draws on the faculty of remembering. Home is "built from the incomplete odds and ends of memory that survives from the past. It exists in fracture, discontinuous relationship with the present"[155] this mean that memory and nostalgia inform the meaning of home that first generation of Arab immigrants had in mind. The place of home they articulate is built on past imaginative terms rather than material reality. However, the notion of home has been destabilized mainly for postcolonial displaced writers whose belonging to a certain home becomes relative given that they do not feel homesickness but rather sick from home in which they were exposed to different forms of oppression due to the aftermath of colonialism and the oppressive patriarchal regime. The nostalgic feeling of the postcolonial subjects has been reversed from longing for the past to a longing for the future and the

[153] Omendra Kumar Singh, "Reinventing Caste: Indian Diaspora in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies," *ASIATIC*, 6:1 (2012), p. 56.

[154]Ibid., p. 59.

[155]John, McLeod. *Beginning Postcolonialism,* p. 211.

yet to come. That is, the fictional return to imaginary homelands in postcolonial period is motivated by resistance tendencies to establish control over a dispossessed past.

In this regards, Ellele Boehmer proposes that "mythic images of African homecoming often figure a desire to reconnect with past after a long history of disposition."[156] The return to an imaginary homeland or the impossibility to *retour aux sources* reminds us of the Moroccan sociologist Abdelkebir Khatibi 's insistence on the idea that "it is impossible to return to an original state of civilization, devoid of outside influence. Because, in effect, just where is such a site? To what spatial and temporal zone must one travel to reach it" [157] Abdelkebir Khatibi develops effective inter-related concept of, *double critique*, to disrupt all sorts of binary opposition of self and other East and West, and calling for a *pensée-autre* (rethinking difference) and established unique path of decolonization and deconstruction that has not been taken before.

The concepts developed by Khatibi (double critique and *Pensée-autre* rethinking difference) are of high relevance for the reading of Anglophone literature as they inform the process whereby the metaphysics of Orietalism and Arab tradition and theology are interrogated. Anglophone literature, in fact, critic the double colonization preyed upon them. Ruth Louise Gaertner maintains that "Khatibi's double critique, is a double subversion of the Western and Eastern traditions in Morocco. Khatibi suggests that this is the means by which formerly colonized nations can decolonize themselves and in so doing, signal the death of the dominance of Western imperialism and

[156] Elleke Boehmer, *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*, p. 192.
[157] Ruth Louise Gaertner, Prelude to a Text : the autobiography of Abdelkebir Khatibi (Unpublished Phd Dissertation: Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2002), p. 165.

metaphysics." [158] This implies that Khatibi's philosophy is oriented towards questioning different thoughts and rethinking differences apropos Arabs and the west without reinvent binarisms. In his readings of Abdelkebir Khatibi's autobiography Ruth Louise Gaertner provide a significant interpretation of Khatib's critique of colonization and strategies of decolonization. Based on his work entitled *Prelude to a Text: The Autobiography of Abdelkebir Khatibi* (2002) he explains that what Khatibi meant by '*double critique'* isa course of re-thinking the supremacy of the West and the inferiority of the Orient in view to question the binaries that render the west/ East, self and other relationship rivalry. The double critique also entails the re-thinking of the home country with all its diversity. Ruth Louise observes that there is significant similarity between Khatibi's conception of decolonization and Jack Derrida's approach of deconstruction given that both approaches constitute compelling tool for analysis. Ruth Louise maintains:

> The decolonization or deconstruction of sociology (or vice-versa), according to Khatibi, necessitates the use of the *double critique*, which he re-states as a double task: Or, comme toute sociologie de la décolonisation (mais qu'est se décoloniser?), celle du monde arabe consiste à mener une double tâche: a) une déconstruction du logocentrisme et de l'ethnocentrisme, cette parole de l'autosuffisance par excellence que l'Occident, en se développant, a développé sur le monde. . . . b) Cela suppose aussi, exige, tout autant, une critique du savoir et des discours élaborés par les différentes sociétés du monde arabe sur elles-mêmes.[159]

[158]Ibid., p. 180.

[159]Ibid., pp. 170-171.

Khtibi's line of analysis is of opposition with Frantz Fanon's understanding of decolonization, many critics observe that Fanon reinvents the binaries. "Fanon runs the risk of homogenizing the multifold West into one single entity."[160]Unlike Fanon, Khatibi calls for the interpretation of difference the way they are without falling into essentialism or homogenizations. Reading the intention behind developing the concepts of *pensée-autre* (re-thinking difference) or a thought of difference, Khalid Amine reveals that Khatibi's call for a thought of difference is veritably alternative avenuetoward decolonization. "This *pensée-autre* is a way of re-thinking difference and identity without recourse to essentialist absolutes and 'isms'".[161]It is a twoforld subversion that requires radical rupture to "escape its own theological and theocratic foundations which characterize the ideology of Islam and of all monotheism." Meanwhile, it claims to stand on a different ground than the West; "for we want to uproot Western knowledge from its central place within ourselves, to de-center ourselves with respect to this center, to this origin claimed by the West." The transgressive effects of such a critique as a subaltern form of deconstruction are already apparent in its transformation rather than passive borrowing from the radical West "The Occident is part of me, a part that I can only deny insofar as I resist all the Occident's and all the Orients that oppress and disillusion me."[162]

[160] Khalid, Amine (2013), "Double Critique: Disrupting Monolithic Thrusts" retrieved on (Jun, 20, 2019), from http://www.textures-platform.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/Amine_Double-Critique.pdf

[161] Ibid.,

[162]Ibid., p.3.

Dealing with the Occident's and orient's disillusionments or rather "the double Jeopardy"[163] of the subalternized group of Arab Muslim women, Miriam Cooke, posits numerous questions regarding Muslim women's abilities to critique the global system, their political regimes, and religious and family contexts and the patriarchal regime. Cooke believes that Muslim women are out to adopt a *multiple critique* a term that she coined to describe Islamic feminist critical rhetorical strategies. In her essay on "Multiple Critique: Islamic Feminist Rhetorical Strategies",Miriam Cooke maintains that:

> I have come to believe that the effectiveness of Islamic feminists' critique is connected with Arab women's multiple representations as "victims" of transnational systems. First, and like women elsewhere, they are victims of gender relations which benefit men. Second, and like their male counterparts, they are struggling with the problems and challenges left behind by colonial rule. The European colonizers may have left Arab soil, but they also left behind

- "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology," King (1995, 299) describes the "multiple jeopardy" of black women who have become invisible in contemporary American oppositional politics. They are "marginal to both the movements for women's liberation and black liberation irrespective of our victimization under the dual discrimination of racism and sexism." She concludes with the assertion that black women who have been characterized as victims are in fact challenging the various systems that oppress and exclude them. She does not, however, describe how such an oppositional praxis might work. In view of the similarities between black American. P 101

a burden of colonial legacies that link different Arab nations vis-à-vis a global system that may or may not include them in its purview.[164]

Like Khatibi's critical thinking embodied in his approach of *double critique* many feminist and Muslim feminist alike developed energizing multilayered theoretical advances to engage with and criticize the various individuals, institutions, and systems that limit and subjugate subalterns while making sure that they are not caught in their own rhetoric. The term *multiple critique* is a derivation of Khatibi's concept of double critique and the African American sociologist Deborah K. King's 'multiple consciousnesses. And all of which work toward more or less the same objective of decolonizing the colonized subject and erase the aftermath colonial legacies whose primary victim are third world and Muslim women.

In this vein, Anglophone Arab literature goes a long way toward employing these strategies of double critique and rethinking difference to double subversion the phantasmtic description and portrayal of Arab women in both the Western and Eastern epistemologies. From a marginal position and in the last decades of the twentieth century women's novel become more focused on women's experiences of sexism, dislocation and racism. If one reads some authoritative novels written by Arab women living in the diaspora, one can recognize the efforts done by these feminist writers to expound on the need for women's voice to be told and heard. Randa albdelfettah and Mohja Kahf in their novel, *Does my head look Big in This* (2005) *and " The Girl in Tangerine Scarf"* (2009)respectivelyreflect on the prejudices Said identifies a fundamental characteristics of Orientalism. In these two works both the authors stand

[164]MiriamCooke, *Multiple Critique: Islamic Feminism Rhetorical Strategies* (USA: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 100.

against the assumptions of Muslim women's oppression, and the reduction of Muslim veiled women to an object or victims in need of salvation from patriarchy. Many critics noted that the rhetoric of the oppressed Muslim veiled woman was the most powerful discourse perpetuated after 9/11 that helped in labeling Arab nations in barbaric and primitive terms. Mohja Kahf write in this regards that, "the veil did not come to have such meaning until the Romantic period, when it 'inaugurate[d] a portrayal of the Muslim woman in which these new clusters of elements are key: irredeemable difference and exoticism; intense sexuality, excessive ornamentation and association with fetish objects; and finally, powerlessness in the form of imprisonment, enslavement, seclusion, silence, or invisibility."[165] Similarly, Randa Abdel-Fattah's *Does my head look Big in This*, defy all the stereotypical assumptions covering the veil in Western discourses. Through the portrayal of a strong female protagonist , Abdel-fattah gives us example of a character who chooses to stick to wearing the veil full-time despite the agonistic attitude she is to face in an American context which is so sensitive towards the head scarf. By so doing, Randa Abdel-Fattah intends, behind her portrayal of a veiled Muslim woman, to confront the Orientalist gaze through which the veil symbolizes foreignness, backwardness and submissiveness, she also endeavors to subvert Western imaginings of Muslim women and even correct the eroticized images of the veil.

Similarly, the Arab American poet and feminist Mohja Kahf positioned herself in the margins of both the Western metaphysics and Islamic theology to doubly

[165] Allison Mader, *The Importance of Reading Said: Orientalism, Women, and Postcolonial Literature After 9/11*, (Unpublished Ph.d University OF CALGARY, 2017), pp. 54-55.

critique the representations and the 'othering' of Arab and veiled Muslim women in particular and the static configuration of the veil in the Arab culture. Her novel *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*, Kahf discusses the symbol of the veil in attempt to correct the fallacy that the veil is sign of oppression as most of the Americans allege at the same time she insists on the multiple meanings the veil signifies. Like Amal in Randa's novel, Khadra Shamy chooses to veil and even she makes use of her veil to rebel against the misconception of the veil in both the west and east. Dr. Areen Khalifeh notes that the veil "does not stand only for heritage and Islamic identity, but also it is a feminist, political, idealistic, and a revolutionary symbol as well as a symbol of love. The veil's symbolic meaning varies according to the protagonist's geographical and psychological experience."[166]In both novels, the various scenes of encounters between Islam and the West and the experiences of physical and cultural alienation play a pivotal role in the identity formation of both the characters of Amal and Khadra Shamy whose Islamic backgrounds presented a real challenge of integration. Both protagonists go through a long process of personal reinvention, crossing geographical and cultural boundaries.

> Arab-American and Islamic feminists have worked towards constructing a counter-hegemonic discourse that brings activists together from the mainstream and the margins to build solidarities amongst them. Resist subordination, and ring about social transformation Arab-American and Chicana activists and feminist have separately resisted the hegemonic image of U.S. third world women created by hegemonic discourses that have been imposed through cultural and intellectual dominance and clonisation and language of power.

[166]Areen Khalifeh,"The Symbol of the Veil in Mohja Kahf's the Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*," International Journal of Humanities and Social Science,* 6:1 (2016) p.155.

These types of feminisms have continuously strived to resist and subvert the hegemonic and patriarchal dominance over women"

Evidently, the Islamic thought and Arab female consciousness embodied the notion of resistance from within the overlapping monolithic discourses. The embodiment of resistance challenge distrusted all that come from the west is and the return to traditional Islamic principles is deemed as the remedy against all the social ills and economic plights faced by Arab female migrants. The most remarkable feature of diasporic Arab women writings is their significant roles in enacting difference and ensuring that their images as Muslim women are not distorted in the home of residence and back home. By the way of concluding this section, the endeavor to construct one's sense of identity in some fixed binaries or some fanatic currents advocating authenticity is life threatening. The rout that Arab women migrants took in search for an identity proves the insecurity of host homes built upon pre-given entities. However, the difference is that such an identity is intended to disrupt the rigidity of hegemonic discourses. Rather than pandering to their harmony. The diasporic migrants show obstinacy to all kind of authority. The largest part of diasporic Arab women writers committed themselves to reflect a genuine representation of women's lives and experiences beyond the andocentric and colonial models. What is special about their works is the fact that they are written from the very contact zone of many cultures yet choose to privilege their Muslim identity through transforming their marginal position into a space of intellectual battle and strategically reflect their multiple consciousness of the social, economic, and political and cultural biases.

C-Arab Women Diaspora writer's Articulation of Arab Identity

One of the principle issues that recur throughout this chapter is the discourse of double oppression and marginalization faced by Arab women immigrants in the diaspora as well as in the homeland. These experiences of social, political, and geographical marginality shape Arab Women's diaspora fiction in an attempt to produce an act of rein scribing, of revising and destabilizing discourse of hierarchies and cultural binaries (either/ or, self/other, black/white and so forth). This binarism in Roger Bromley words "has been instrumental in establishing those essentialising norms of identity which, whether in terms of sexuality, class, gender or race, have marginalized and oppressed increasing number of people".[167] However, the marginalized position Arab women diasporas occupy is particularly crucial since it opened the possibility to act from where they are, and to create a liminal space that would help in the construction of a diasporic, hybrid, international identity which bears the makeup of the West as well as that of the East. Constructing an identity, to great extent, is compared to building up a home which insures stability, security and belonging in a post-colonial world that divulges the fallacies of racial stereotypes and nurtures a space of revolution and counter-discoursivity. Bhabha portrays this space as:

> The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that allows, prevents identity at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This

[167] Roger Bromley, *Narratives for New Belonging: Diaspora Cuktural Fiction* (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 15.

> interstitial passage between identification opens up the possibility of cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.[168]

The "Third Space" for Homi Bhabha is a contact zone where trans-cultural dialogue takes place, ones' subjectivity and selfhood can be more elaborated freely beyond the dominant discourses and cultural prejudices. Dwelling in 'in-between space', opens the possibility for Arab women immigrants to occupy a hybrid position where their identities engage in process of transformation that accentuate the uniqueness of the individual and the complexity of identity. Identity, in particular has been always one of the burning issues in different disciplines. Its pertinence to the subject matter of this study emanates from the fact that, the diasporic authors, Arab women writers in particular, attempt to envision the future through their memoirs and fictions. Their literature projects various inconsistent realities with no decisive conclusions. They openly intend to defy the common certainties of it means to be a women in their homeland and the certitude of the western discourse of realism. This section, therefore, will engage conceptually with several interconnected issues related to negotiation and articulation of Arab women identity in their diasporic narratives. It addresses theoretical questions to the processes of identity construction; the strategies of identity (re)construction, the relationship of identity with center/periphery dynamics in postcolonial and globalized societies. For the time being, attention will be centered in

[168]Linda Walbridge, "Muslim Families in North America**,"** ***American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*****,** 113: 2 (1993), p35

brief on reviewing the common dialectical position involved apropos of the discussion of Identity.

Identity is multidimensional concept that scholars and researchers have been grappling with for decades. It is an umbrella term used to describe individuality, personal, social, gender, racial and cultural identity from multiple disciplines. It has strong roots in the daily speech. However, Identity cannot be penned down to one unique definition,particularly in this very post-modern era. Obviously, any attempt to disclose or determine an accurate meaning of identity is hampered by the fluidity and instability of the concept given that one may have different identities at different periods and contexts.

The literature on the notion of identity is extremely diverse to the extent that this term paper cannot comprehensively enclose. That is, the focus here will reveal the different ways in which identity has been used in the modern and the post-modern debates. In the modern movement, the concept "identity" was seen as a stable and fixed state of being. Identity is, as Douglass Kellener contends"conceived of as something essential, substantial, unitary, fixed and fundamentally unchanging"[169]Douglass Kellener, in this view, speculates about the collective identity that provides group of people with a sense of belonging and inclusion as it the case with national or ethnic identity where one belongs or does not belong.

Conversely, other claims go to argue that identity is an attribute that is defined by others. An individual's identity is reliant on the interaction with the other's

[169]Douglass Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics Between the Modern and the Postmodern,* (London: Routledge. 1995), p. 232.

recognition. In the Hegelian tradition, the dialectic relationship between the self and the other is shaped by the exchange of recognition. This idea is reinforced and criticised by the feminist philosopher Judith Butler when she state that “one may feel the need of being recognized in order to live, but that at the same time, the conditions to be recognized make life "unliveable".[170]The writer establishes an interrogation of such condition so that people who resist them may have less possibility to decently live. The self and the other recognize themselves and realize their existence through mutual recognition and for this reason we identify with the other seeking their recognition as a social constituent. Consequently, identity is used to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others.

In this view, the modernist thought conceived the notion of identity as a characteristic that is given and attributed from a second-hand. One knows one’s identity from the point of view of the other. This view has its allure and its legitimacy, but it also meses to account for the way identity is influenced by the person’s choice, passion, feeling, and desires. These fundamental elements of the person’s identity are basically accounted for in the post-modern discourse. This critical movement by and large refuted the promises postulated by modern thought about the notion of identity. It is more devoted to spell out the mechanisms by which identity, particularly diasporic identity, is constituted.

The concept of Arab women identity and the way it is articulated by Arab women diasporic writers has enabled us to go beyond the rather tired formulations of Arab Muslim women’s agency and to readdress the way Arab women diaspora writers

[170] Judith Butler, Undoing Gender (New York: Routledge 2004), p.4.

forge new discourse that oppose the Western metaphysics and the orientalist configuration of women identity. In the wake of multiculturalism and the flourish of revolutionary schools like feminism, postcolonial criticism, contemporary Arab writers particularly women found it easier to articulate their conception of women's diasporic / transnational identity from a female stand point. Stuart Hall reminds us that "instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think instead, of identity as a production, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside representation"[171] Women's diasporic literature emerged as new hybrid genre to affirm the existence of Arab community in the diaspora drawing on the hegemonic Western mainstream representation of Arab and Arab traditional clichés vis-a-vis Arab women. This section dwells, therefore, on the post-colonial literary facets of resistance and identity articulation in contemporary Arab women diasporic writers. This section aims to posit the complexity of belonging and identity articulation, the shifting and cross-cutting cultural experiences. While in the diaspora, Arab women writers share their stories of pain and agony that is basically build by the exclusion and negligence of their existence as individual, full-fledged citizens in their Western home.

Important works produced by Arab women diaspora sought to bridge the divided between their homeland and their new homes that they aspire to construct. By so doing, their writings engage with negotiating their identity within way within it perceived by both the West and the east ion an attempt to fashion a disaporic identity which and stand against the racial thinking and the representations that long ago

[171]Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" in *Identity: Community, Culture and Difference,* ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrance and Wishart, 1990), p.222.

portrayed women as silent, other and oppressed subjects. Arab diaspora writers especially women negotiated their hybridised identities from multiple perspectives; they attempted to open multiple venues to escape the politics of exclusion as well as oppression prayed on them in the homeland. On other words Arab women diaspora writers find in the western colonial language a space to invest their subversion and to express their fluid allegiances and rejection of subservience.

The diasporic experience raises the awareness of the subject into numerous identities that are reflected in many Arab women's novels. In some general sense, most of the characters depicted in the diasporic narratives have a life whose basic feature is looking for home outside of their homeland since looking for home is a basic facet of looking for an identity. This reminds us of the possibility of bringing together Arab as well as western identities in amalgam without priorities one over the other. Recently, the burgeoning of the productive body of Anglophone Arab women's fiction engages with projecting various conflicting realities with no determined conclusions. The diasporic authors go beyond the past and the present and invasion the future and the yet to come. They try to traverse the intersection of stereotypes, racial and certitude of western discourse of realism and defythe orientalist discourse making their writings an instrument of resistance. From a diasporic transnational milieu, it is possible to accentuate a strategy of resistance that is common to the majority of Arab women diasporas. The later sought to embody an act of resistance to all kinds of hegemonic knowledge. In fact, Arab women in the diaspora bear further burden preyed upon them by the traditional gendered society that imposes certain gender nromsthat they should maintain. In "Diasporas Old and New" Gayatri Spivak, for instance, maintains that:

> Women in transnational World", states that women are participants in a type of "diasporic subclass." According to the author, women in diaspora become "the super- dominated, the super-exploited, but not in the same way" (249), meaning that patterns of oppression found in the homeland endure in diaspora and are, in fact, intensified and transformed. Such circumstances force women to remake their surviving strategies within and without their diasporic community.[172]

The assertion here is that despite living in the diaspora, Arab women could not escape subjugation and the oppression they once experienced in the homeland. Arab women writings, as a response, try to exhibit and bring to the front these stereotypes fostering a new representative system to subvert the construction of helpless and victimized Arab women.

In their writings, Arab women diaspora writers reproduce their cultural heritage as a mood of deconstruction and construction of their diasporic identity in roughly different way and attempt to build up a culture of shared understanding. In the European Journal of social sciences Ruzy. S. H and Nor. F. A. M explore the way two bestselling works of Arab Muslim women negotiate the status of being ambivalent and how they reintroduce their tradition to subvert it. They scrutinize the works of Azar Nafisi *Reading Lolita in Tahran* and Mohja Kahf's *The Girl In Tagerine Sacarf* who highlighted issues related to Islam, gender and Arab women's identity.

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[172]Gláucia, Renate Gonçalve. "A Thousand and one Voices: Re-reading Scheherazade in Contemporary Arab-American Fiction" retrieved on (Jun,12 2019), fromhttp://www.redalyc.org/html/4783/478347656007/index.html

In *Reading Lolita in Tahran* (2003), Nafisi reveals the coercion of fundamentalist Islam as is practiced in Iran; she perceived it 'dictatorial minds' that shape the lives of men and women demonstrating the conditions of Iranian women under the new regime that constructed the Iranian women's identity which is marked by subjugation and powerlessness. Nafisi sheds light on the characteristics, behaviours, thought and dictatorial beliefs and action of ruling party in Iran. She reintroduces old concerns of gender and Islam focussing the issue of veiling, polygamy, and marriage that have been extensively discussed by feminist arguing that the interpretation of Islam by fundamentalist favour men over women, while women's freedom is restricted to because of the requirement of veiling. Veiling brings back ill-omened memories for Nafisi herself since it negates her existence and made her invisible in homeland. She elaborates this dilemma saying:

> My constant obsession with the veil had made me buy a very wide black robe that covered me down to my ankles, with kimonolike sleeves, wide and long. I had gotten into the habit of withdrawing my hands into the sleeves and pretending that I had no hands, Gradually, I pretended that when I wore the robe, my whole body disappeared: my arms, breasts, stomach and legs melted and disappeared and what was left was a piece of cloth the shape of my body that moved here and there, guided by some invisible force.[173]

Nafisi 's *Reading Lolita in Tahran* (2003) provocatively tells the world outside Iran what it means to be an Iranian women plain reflections of the cultural and Islamist boundaries that confine Iranian women subjectivity as a woman. Her use of words

[173]Azar Nafisi, *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (New York: Randon House, 2003), p.169.

such as withdrawing, invisible, disappear project her feeling of alienation and marginalisation women like her confront in their homeland on the one hand and the negation of her identity on the other. Like Nafisi, a great number of Arab women Diaspora writers go back to an original space, conditions and cultures through their narratives to reintroduce their cultural heritage as a way of resistance, and a way to negotiate their diasporic identity. Majaj argues that:

> By situating the practice of Arab women within the complexities of modernity, globalization, diasporic experience, texts written by Arab women have helped to dispel the persistent Orientalist fascination with Arab women that reduced their live to gender and sexual oppression under the purportedly unchanging, backward of Arab society.[174]

It is clearly stated from Majaj argument that Arab diaspora writings constitute a bridge and a conciliator that aims to a find a common ground of their identity positions where the persistent orientalist clichés melts away. On the other hand, to the majority of the west, images of Arab and Muslim women in global popular culture convey ideas of restriction and oppression in the sense that those covered Arab women appear to be silenced victims who are unable to express themselves. Arab women diaspora writers, in response, aimed at challenging all the Orientalist mindset implied by such assumptions and offered alternative reading of living behind the veil. The textual representation of identity and self-image expressed in literary discourse in relation to cultural and ethnic stereotypes is evident in post 9/11 Arab women narratives. Arab

[174]Suhair Majaj, Lisa, et al., eds. *Intersections: Gender, Nation, and Community in Arab Women's novels* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002).p.12.

women diaspora writings in general allude to the ethnic profiling of Arabs explaining various facets of Arab experience in the diaspora, including displacement, ethnic profiling and stereotypes. Randa Abdlfettah, a contemporary Arab writer examines her own culture in her novel “does my head look bigger in this” she produces an artistic work to address issues of veiling, representation and Muslim women’s identity. In her work, the author discusses the part of her identity (austoranina and Muslim identity) offering different understanding of the veil that connotes for her a sign of progress rather than backwardness, strength rather than weakness and a symbol of purity.

The various narrative strategies employed by Arab women diaspora writers to face challenges of antagonism and hostility of their host societies empowers them to relocate themselves in an ambivalent hybrid space; a space of the disruption and displacement of hegemonic colonial narratives of cultural structures. The third space is a mode of articulation, a way of describing a productive, and not merely reflective, space that engenders new possibilities. It is an interruptive, interrogative, and denunciative space of new forms of cultural meaning and production blurring the limitations of existing boundaries. According to Bhabha, this hybrid space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no primordial unity or fixity. Arab women diaspora writers occupy an ambivalent position, so to speak, to tell their stories that connect them to their Arabness as well as their community in the diaspora which serves in reshaping of their cultural identity. The ‘third space’ that reference has been made to is considered a privilege state that allows Arabs and women in particular to articulate new forms of cultural identification and escape the monolithic categorizations that separate Arab women diasporas from their claimed hybrid identity.

To conclude, the 'recognition' and 'visibility' of Arab after the terrorist attacks on the Twine tower of the U.S, place heavy burden on Arab writers whose responsibility becomes not only to reflect on their homeland and extend the dream of return but rather struggle to portray a positive picture about Arabs to mainstream Western audiences who desired to know who these Arabs are. Fluctuating between two worlds, Arab diaspora writers find themselves trapped between two cultures and often speaking two or more languages. They accommodate a unique literary range. The feeling of the in-between and double consciousness is always reflected in their writings since they become much more preoccupied with issue pertaining to binary oppositions, ethnic profiling, bigotry and to their experiences of hybridity and identity construction. However, the current events of September 9/11 and the war on terror shed more light on Arab women's lives in Arab-Islamic world. Arab women became the topic of debate for many Western scholars who mistakenly perceive Arab women as the victims of their society, culture and religion. This situation gendered the need to relocate and create an in-between space of their own that enables Arab women diaspora writers to speak outside both the prevailing Western culture and the conventional Middle Easterner culture. As it has been mention earlier, Arab women diaspora narratives were instrumentalised to forge new attitude, belonging, and articulate new hybrid identities as a part of their transitional status that conciliate two or more cultures in one subject position. Many contemporary critics have examined how Arab women diaspora writers, through *ambivalence,* addressed and resist the prevailing negative western basic generalizations of Middle Easterner women that Arab women are oppressed by religion by virtue of enforcing the veil, that Arab women are exotic and erotic other and that Arab Muslim women are fanatic terrorist.

On the other hand, the need to affirm ones subjectivity as full-fledged necessitate the opposition of sexism, biased tradition Arab Muslim culture that long ago framed Arab women in an inferior, subjugated status.

PART TWO:

RESISTING ORIONTAL AND WESTERN DISCOURSES IN CONTEMPORARY ARAB WOMEN'S DIASPORA WRITINGS

I. Creating Narrative of Counter-Hegemony and resistance in *The Last Patriarch* and *Sold*

At the turn of the second half of the twentieth century, Arab women's socio-political and economic situation became the backboned of academic readings, discourses and debate in the sense that issue of injustice, sexuality gender differences and women's emancipation turned into insightful subjects of discussion. A great number of Arab feminist writers initiate forcefully their journey delineating the general statue of women in the Arab patriarchal society through their groundbreaking literary productions. Anastasia Valassopoulos illustrates that Arab women's writing "focus clearly on the patriarchal constrains emphasized and strengthened through discourses" namely Islam, Arab traditions and Arab cultural beliefs. However, as it has been explored in the first chapter while exploring historical beginning of Arab women's writing, writing in the Arab world particularly from women's part has been for a long constrained and banned as Nowal Saadwi illustrates. She states "Writing: such has been my crime ever since I was a small child. To this day writing remains my crime." [175] writing on politics and taboo issues in Egypt under Sadat regime and later Hosni Mubarak and in many Arab regions was chilled.

Thereupon, the second waves of Arab immigration (1950s-1960s) after World WarII, perhaps, present a relief for Arab women's intellectuals to flee the biases and exclusion they face on the basis of their gender. On the one hand, it can be said that emigration opened multiple venues for Arab women writers to develop a literary and intellectual tradition. On the other hand, the establishment of the *Pen league* and the late *Mahjar School* enabled Arab women Diaspora writers to assume other forms of resistance;

[175]Nawal El Saadawi, *Memoirs from the Women's Prison*(Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1983), 200.

even from distance, to the patriarchal, cultural and traditional condition that frame women in Arab Islamic world.

Through language, Najat El Hachimi and Zana Muhsen endeavor to articulate a fluid identity that refuses to dwell in one side of the hyphen. They express an outlook on women's situation, status and subordination in the Arab world as well as western world. Therefore, these two feminists writers articulate A feminist stand point vis-à-vis women's gender identity, oppression, enslavement, and the degree to which patriarchal regime have continued to impact Arab women's lives on different levels. The African Feminist Bell hooks once notes that "Patriarchy is the single most life-threatening social disease assaulting the male body and spirit in our nation. Yet most men do not use the word "patriarchy" in everyday life. Most men never think about patriarchy."[176]

Bell hooks' statement is an unmistakable update that male centered societies do not portray male actions of dominance, nevertheless some institutions and cultural narratives do. Patriarchy , as most types of persecution, has a method to persuade us that, in the expressions of the Crunk Women's activist Aggregate "things are how they are on account of they must be, that they have dependably been that route, that there are no options and that they will never show signs of change." [177]The upcoming sections, thus, tend to explore in depth the resistance of patriarchal mentality and the forging of a new path away from unjust power systems in the literary works of the Moroccan Spanish Najat El Hachimi and the British Yamani writer Zana Mohsen. The textual analysis and language investigation of their narratives will show how patriarchy and resistance are enacted, problemitized and

[176]Bell Hooks. (2015), "Understanding Patriarchy" retrieved on (April 16, 2017), from http://imaginenoborders.org/pdf/zines/UnderstandingPatriarchy.pdf

[177] Ibid.

negotiated so as to articulate an identity that contests essentialization, homogenization and champion openness and cultural diversity.

A- Subversion of Gender Roles and the Construction of Diasporic Identity in Najat El Hachimi's *The Last Patriarch*

The last Patriarch, published in 2008, is the title of a groundbreaking novel written by Najat El Hacimi; a Moroccan Spanish author, who was awardedthe most prestigious Catalan literary prize, and the Ramon Llull prize Najat El Hachmi. *The Last Patriarch* is a narrative about modern emigration, from Morocco to Catalonia, and the clashes of cultures, identity and feelings involved. The story spotlights on an immigrant Moroccan family that moves from a conservative traditional bound village in the north of Morocco (Nadour) to live in a different modern northern Spain. It is told from the perspective of the anonymous daughter of the patriarch of the novel, Mimoun. This novel is divided into two parts; the first of which is centered on recounting the story of Mimoun's childhood in a Moroccan Rif Village, where he fails the test to become another great patriarch who would carry on what his ancestors begun long ago. In the first part, Najat El Hachimi presents the last Patriarch as a character that breach all prospects of procrastination. El Hachimi documents Mimoun's upbringing among his three sisters and mother where he was allowed to do whatever he wants. While his mother and sisters lead enclosed, obedient lives, he is free to become a tyrant driven by his desires. Mimoun invents ridiculous stories to justify his behaviour and believes his fantasies. El Hachmi draws a conclusion that Mimoun is not typical of Moroccan man.

The second part of the novel revolves around the experience of emigration, alienation, deterritorialization and cultural encounter. Narrated from the perspective of Mimoun's daughter, the story recounts the way Mimoun's daughter is moved by the

culture, life style and language of her adopted land. She finds refuge in its literature and is obsessed with acquiring Catalan language. In the diaspora, the narrator (Mimoun's daughter) comes into conflict and fluctuation between two cultures and realizes how difficult it can be to seek liberation against a tyrannical father whose traditions and beliefs he grew up with are being ultimately eroded. Mimoun, as Najat El Hachimi intended to shows stands to be the last patriarch.

Before delving in the analysis of the way Najat El Hachimi depicts the patriarchal social and cultural boundaries that bound Moroccan women's live and relegate them to the status of inferiority, it of much importance to provide an overview on the Moroccan musculinist perception of women's identities, gender roles and attributes. In this regards, perhaps Fatima Sadiqi's contributions to this field is very relevant. In her article "Women, and the Violence of Stereotypes in Morocco" Sadiqi affirms that, "Moroccan culture is of a type that strongly constrains the behavior of men and women through a space-based patriarchy. The strength of this control comes from the fact that it is channeled through powerful social institutions".[178]Culture and Moroccan culture in particular is a leaned behaviour and a social heritage that is transmitted to each generation where the new born is taught to adhere to certain cultural norms and fit in different aspects of the dominant culture that expect from them to fulfil its standards as gendered being. The Moroccan social organisation is headed by the father and the male lineage which makes of it an agnatic and patriarchal where women roles are related to their reproductive function.

Fatima Sadiqi identifies the eight basic paradigms that make of the Moroccan culture a strong disciplining system and a primary factor of women's subjugation. Among the

[178]Fatima, Sadiqi (2011), "Women, and the Violence of Stereotypes in Morocco," retrieved on (Feb, 15, 2019), fromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/308674628p.3.

patriarchal paradigms identified by Fatima Sadiqi there are (i) historical heritage and tradition, (ii) orality, Islam (iv), (v) multilingualism, (vi) social organization, (vii) economic status, and (viii) political system. All these channels perpetuate the same stereotypical agenda and consequently make women's contributions to development, roles and status secondary when compared to their male counter-part. For instance, according to Saqidi the historical memoirs and achieves document and immortalize Moroccan women's subordination. These historical records are transmitted through generation and, in Sadiqi's words, "deepened the gap between the two sexes and its impact has been accentuated by the status of written history as a "venerated" institution in the Moroccan socio-cultural context."[179] Besides, as Sadiqi manifests, Moroccan culture is overwhelmed with gender stereotypes that constitutes permanent male-based group mindset. "Most of the stereotypes about women in Moroccan culture are negative. In general, female talk, attributes, actions, and habits are more negatively depicted in Moroccan languages than male talk, attributes, actions, and habits." [180]She adds that the female sex is socialization within the rigid system of kinship relations to believe that they are weak, emotion, patient and obedient. These stereotypes and cultural beliefs are commonly respected by all members of society and any approval or violation is following by sanction. These penalties and rewards for conduct concerning social norms are constructed by the traditional authority to discipline the members of a given society. They also help in insuring diffusion of culture and thus secure the authority of the dominant groups. Furthermore, Moha Ennaji advocates the same stance arguing that cultural hurdles and patriarchal traditions contributes extensively to women's invisibilityin most of the productive and influential positions because of the increasing rate of illiteracy among women (illiteracy is more widespread among women (60%) than among men 40%). Ennaji maintains that, "Illiteracy and lack of information prevent

[179]Ibid., p. 4.
[180]Ibid., p.15.

women from invoking their rights or reporting crimes against them, such as rape, child abuse, sexual exploitation and domestic violence"[181]

That is, within the Moroccan cultural system, Women's freedom, and equality according to many men present a real threat to the patriarchal social fabric and men's status quo. This fact conceal the heterogeneity, productivity of Moroccan women, at the same time lead, to different forms of cultural, institutional, physical and verbal violence against women. However, in the recent decades, things begun to change in Morocco as women's issues have recently become more public and political. Women's case is no longer private and perhaps Moha Ennaji seems to be optimistic since Moroccan women's emancipation becomes the subject matter of decision-makers, social organizations and NGOs that attempt to change the status quo and guarantee equal right for women. Moha Ennaji sums up that "As a consequence of the advocacy of women's groups, the Moroccan government has recently launched a campaign to fight against poverty and illiteracy among rural women, which had a great impact on poor women's welfare and people's attitudes toward women in general and toward their political participation."[182] Women's rights and equality in Morocco issues that imposes themselves not only in the political scene but rather most of Moroccan feministwriters take it a holly responsibility. In the case of the Moroccan Spanishwriter (Najat El Hachimi) she is aware of the fact that Moroccan women are still in need to be more integrated socially, politically, and economically in order to strengthen the democratization path of the country. That is, in her *The Last Patriarch,* she exhibits her stance and on Patriarchy as the most dominant and oppressive social network in Morocco and how this social structure has a far-reaching drawback on the lives to its inhabitant.

[181] Moha Ennaji, "Women, Gender, and Politics in Morocco," *Social Science*, 5:75 (2016), p.4.

[182]Ibid., p. 5.

1- Denunciation of Patriarchy: Mimoun: Dramatizing the Fall of Last Patriarch

The relevance of Najat El Hachimi's *The Last Patriarch* emanates from her pursuits to follow the trajectories of postcolonial feminists 'critique and their endeavor to interpret and analyze the status quo under which Arab women are left subordinated and marginalization. One has to argue that neither immigration nor the states of internationalism could definitely free Arab women from the constraints of patriarchy as Arab immigrants carry on with them all their cultural and historical loads that would keep them in touch with their motherland. However, one cannot deny the fact that diaspora with all its experiences of detetorirization, estrangement and luck belonging allow Arab women in particular to speak from a hybrid position about central issues of injustice, inequalities and partisanship face by women in Arab societies. Najat El Hachimi strives to posit her own position of the institution of patriarchy, and the patriarchal legacy performed in the diaspora aspiring to forge a counter representational discourse to resist the embodiments of oppression in North of Morocco. She interrogates the very mechanics of despotism and the marital lows that are transmitted through various symbiotic forms. El Hachimi follows on the footsteps of Chandra Mohanty philosophy of opposition against racism, sexism, colonialism and potential alliance and collaboration across divisionary boundaries. Mohanty notes that "the practice of solidarity foregrounds communities of people who have chosen to work and fight together. Reflective solidarity is crafted by an interaction involving three persons: 'I ask you to stand by me against a third."[183] Clearly, Mohanty's argument revolves around the Western orientlization and the exoticizing of third world

183Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (United States : Duke Uniersity Press, 2004), p. 7.

women but also it delineates the socio-cultural and political discourses of subordination that, according to her, will be mitigated and eradicated through collaborative international efforts.

The Moroccan regularity of oppression and inequalities are a legacy of both the existing cultural structures and colonial system of domination. As such, *The Last Patriarch* can be approached as a postcolonial text that handles issues of identity and immigration that are recently the backbone of academic debate. El Hachimi's novel, narrated from the perspective of Mimoun's daughter, recalls Mimouns birth, childhood and adolescent that are based on the privileges of patriarchal culture that strengthen men's power over women's. El Hachimi constructs two versions of patriarchy; one that is dominant and authoritative in his relations to his family and the second is the one El Hachimi constructs as the last patriarch who fails and decline all the archetypes and paradigms of masculinity. El Hachimi uses anironic language and goes beyond taboos while drawing an image of the character of Mimoun (the last patriarch). El Hachimi tries to build her story of Mimoun's life on actual events rather than imaginary context. She wants her story to be rooted in real social, daily and simple happening which concern the majority of Moroccan youth who were brought up to be patriarchs.

In this specific case, Najat El Hachimi recreates the history of the last patriarch of a Moroccan Berber-family, the subsequent emigration to Catalonian in search of promotion and social progress and the process of integration in the context of Spanish state all from a gender perspective. The story all the time alludes to Mimoun with great ironic charges as the 'the great patriarch' with a clear intention to a creation and a destruction of the prototypical character of fiction. In her attempt to describe Moroccan patriarchal coercion, El Hachimi chooses to address a number of specific issues. First, she discusses the

inequality in the status of women in Moroccan society, with a particular attention to the question of sequestration and sexuality. Second, she deals with contours of the family and the social structures and the bureaucratic paralysis, religious hypocrisy and government corruption. By so doing, the author predisposes the conditions under which Moroccan women live and in which patriarchy descends.

While paving the way for her destructive representation of patriarchy, the author puts us in a real life personalization of most Moroccan under fatherly-inherited decree. El Hachimi seems to sympathize with all the females in the story and with 'mother' Mimoun's wife in particular who leads a pathetic gloomy life and who have to endure the absurdity, disorder and brutality of her husband. In both the homeland and the diaspora, Mimoun's mother, as most women of the Rif village, were seen slaves rather than wives or mothers. "By now grandmother was quite used to hearing herself rebuked like this" [184] as if to say disgrace was part of village women's lives. Grandmother's life will be even worse with the birth of her first son since she will drop into an all-encompassing scenario of anxiety. While she was delivering him, her midwife prophesy the dilemma she is getting into; "a bad omen, daughter when children are born without pain. If they do not hurt when re born, they 'll hurt you the rest of your life." [185] To reflect her judgments towards Moroccan patriarchy, social and religious hypocrisy El Hachimi exhibits the way masculinist culture gives males many privileges that are sanctioned for female counterpart. By virtue of his masculinity, Mimoun applies these privileges instead of superficial words. For instance; Mimoun has total freedom to exercises his sexuality with women who offer themselves to him in the village, the city and in Spain while loses mind only to imagine that his sister wants to accompany a boy to the city.

[184] Najat EL Hachimi, *The Last Patriarch* (London: Serpent's Tail press, 2010), p.7.
[185] Ibid., p. 6.

> We'll go to the city, I'll cover you in jewels of gold, we'll go to the city, she didn't' see him standing himself to kick the living daylights out of her. He caught her by surprise and pushed he so hard that her face hit the ground and whenever she tried to get up he knocked her back down again. [186]

As the song indicates, the city is a zone of liberation that every girl in the village dreams to go to. However, in such a patriarchal culture, girls dream and potentials must not go beyond marriage and the household as dream of liberation threatens the family honor. In most traditional societies, men's and the family honor is related the chastity of their daughters and in the case of Mimoum, his honor will only be tarnished if one of family female relative lose face. While obsessed with the honor of his sister, and later his wife while allows himself to enjoy many sexual intercourses with women in the village. After his marriage was arranged and he get back from Spain, he return back to his mistress Fatima who he used to plant his seed in. He endeavored to know whether his fiancée is still loyal to him and that no gossip of her honor is resonates in the village. Asking Fatima while having sex with her she said,

> What the hell do I care about your blockier, Mimoun, don't you know that girl's more like slaves than wife? But I've not heard any scandal about her, although right now I'd love to be able to tell you I have, she continued as she let him lift her skirt up in that secluded corner. [187]

As far as domestic and gender based violence is concerned, El Hachimi describes Moroccan women's situation from a factual perspective through the character of "mother" and daughter. She gives these images of violence to delineate the fact of the tradition gendered structure that dominates most of Arab-Islamic societies. El Hachimi sketches

[186]Ibid., p. 45.
[187]Ibid., p. 45.

incidents of violence mainly domestic, Mimoun proved to be a typical tyrannical character against his wife. He starts biting her few days after their marriage preventing her from going out of his household. When mother happen to be out of her house, Mimoun becomes furious about, "what did I tell you? Doesn't' what I say count? And mother head was already on the croon" [188] the rate of physical, oral and psychological abuse increased dramatically when Mimoun's daughter was born, the result of which he suspects that his wife betrayed him with his uncle and he lose trust in her ever. When his family joined him in Catalonia violence reached it extreme scale as Mimoun deals with everything with violence " mother always says she can't remember what instrument he used or how he heat he"[189]

By providing these lively accounts of the lives of women under traditional beliefs, El Hachimi aspires to criticize the destructive rule of the patriarch ideology that dominate Arab region and even recycled and perpetuated in the diaspora. Perhaps she wants to answer Merniss's interrogation of "why dose patriarchy assumes the guise of legality in Arab countries, whereas in the developed countries it is acknowledged that its very structure is incompatible with the aspiration of democracy." [190] To El Hachimi, it is essential for women to mitigate the violence and victimization preyed upon them to channel heterogeneous modes of empowerment that trespass geographical territories to build a more tolerant and peaceful societies based on mutual respect. El Hachimi intention of recreating the antiquity of patriarchy is carried by two main characters; Mimoun whom she represents as a failure patriarch and his daughter as a revolutionary character who will put an end to her father's authority.

[188]Ibid., p. 96
[189]Ibid., p. 110.
[190]Zahia Smail Salh, *Gender and violence in Islamic Societies: Patriarchy, Islamism and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa* (Great Britain : CPI Antony Rowe, 2013), p. 61.

For the time being, the aim is to analyze the way Mimoun fails to be a prototypical father figure in the sense that the author limelight the deficiencies, the vulnerability and the proclivity of the character whose mouthpiece discloses his refusal of his ancestor's paradigms of masculinity. El Hachimi's familiarity with Moroccan culture and the rhetoric of representation in male centre literature enables her to forge a counter representational discourse to confront and defy all forms of oppression. Throughout her politics of representation, the author uses a deadpan sarcasm to dramatize the fall of the last patriarch. Mimoun is, first, introduced as "son of Driouach, son of Allal, son of Mohammed, son of Mohand, son of Bouziane who we shall simply call Mimoun,"[191] an indication of his disbelonging as well as disidentification .

This character conversely, does not resemble his ancestors neither in their attitudes of manhood nor in their beliefs in the cultural privilege given to men like himself. From his childhood up to his adolescent, Mimoun leads an unpleasant life and always in search for his destiny and identity. Perhaps, being abused by his father "his father warned his sister, his mother and finally reached the end of tether, threaten the little". [192] Mimoun's life was extremely influenced as his father kept trying to inculcate in him norms of responsibility as the epitome of patriarchal authority. Mimoun insisted on maintaining his own personal interpretation of masculinity. Mimoun who "was dark-skinned like so many baby boys who are born ugly" [193], a reference to the ugliness of patriarchy, fails the traditional standards of masculinity (emotional, weaker, more wicked, hard-working, patient, and obedient) First, out of envy, he killed his little brother because rival number one took all the attention of the sisters and mother. Later on, when Mimoun enters school, he quits quickly as he becomes irritated by having to get up early every morning, going and fro

[191]Ibid., p. vii .
[192]Ibid., p.7.
[193]Ibid., p.11.

from school and the teacher's biting. Despite his father's eagerness and insistence that " his first born son to devote himself to medicine as at least one of his children could abandon life in the fields and enter a profession as respectable as that of doctors"[194] Mimoun drops out of school leaving no choice to his father but to send him to work in house construction where he would fail again.

Grandfather sent Mimoun to work for Rahj Moussa, Mimoun fails to prove his abilities as a man as he could not endure the difficulties of the duty assigned to him. He fought with Rahj Moussa's children bringing lots of shame to his father who "must have felt embarrassed face to face with the man who'd trusted him and allowed his son to work with his two boys."[195] Extremely irritated and embarrassed, grandfather returns home for Mimoun, who locked himself in his room and refuses to come out for fear his father kills him. The grandfather broke into Mimoun's room to be surprised that Mimoun "brought a tightly clenched fist from behind his back and hit his father's nose as hard as he could." [196] a son hitting his father has been the most unspeakable deed that,"was to turn the natural order of things upside down"[197]

It should be noted that the discourse of masculinity has been demolished by the character of Mimoun as he is represented as a male who excels only in bringing disgrace and destruction to people around him. The protagonist deviation from the norms of masculinity is immeasurable since he could comply with gender role neither in his homeland nor in the receiving land Catalonia. To put it otherwise, when his mother, the primary gatekeeper of patriarchal in the family, arranged his marriage with a cousin who has been properly trained to be totally submissive to the manipulation and abuse of men,

[194]Ibid., p.20.
[195]Ibid., p. 34.
[196]Ibid., p.36.
[197]Ibid., p.36.

Mimoun decided to head toward Spain still looking for his destiny, himself and economic promotion. In Catalonia, he could not control his lasciviousness and started approaching his boss's wife "who started to show up in the final stages of the building of her new house" [198]. Mimoun whose knowledge of cultural differences is feeble imagined that his boos "probably couldn't satisfy her […] and he must have plotted to leave him alone with his wife"[199] . Mimoun thought of taking revenge from the exploitive boss who employs Mimoun for long hours. After the sexual encounter between the Western lady and the Moorish guy, Mimoun discovered that "in Spain they don't want people who spry petrol over the house who employed them" [200]the result of which Mimoun was expelled back to his provincial capital "empty-handed on the event of his wedding"[201]

The great patriarch of the novel cannot handle a single matter without the help of his family specifically his older sister Aunt who" say that when she saw him come in, Mimoun started crying like a child"[202]. She helped him to recover his health while his father has had "to sell some land […] to pay for the dowry".[203] The patriarch of the novel has always been an unbearable burden on his family, as he could not depend on himself. He could never accomplish a single task he was destined to do even when it comes to performing his marital duty as a real man. He felt extremely confused front of his inexperienced wife in their first marriage night. Highly embarrassed, "he opened the door and said come in; I don't know what's wrong with me. I can't do it sister, I can't" [204] he

[198]Ibid., p. 74.
[199]Ibid., p.74.
[200]Ibid., p. 79.
[201]Ibid., p.80.
[202]Ibid., p.82.
[203]Ibid., p.87.
[204]Ibid., p.91.

could not show everybody he was a real man and his wife was a woman you rarely found nowadays"[205] ".

It should be noted that Mimoun is met by different episodes of failure and spends his entire life looking for his destiny, selfhood and a shore of identity to settle in. this pursuit correspond to his great sense of insecurity in the family and in borderland. His family in general and father in particular could not accept him the way he is and attempted to inculcate in him the standards of masculinity and made of him another great patriarch. In the borderland, additionally, Mimoun meets humiliation and rejection, as he could not for the first to adapt to the new culture. Being torn between his father's wish, cultural prerogative and compulsion and his own interpretation of himself, Mimoun decided that his destiny is stay in Catalania definitively "people said Mimoun would never come back, that he 'd 'abandoned or ' abdicated his role as head of our family as well as a son, brother or father". [206] However, the young patriarch repeats the violent behavior oo his wife and daughter after they join him in Spain. After they marry, they migrate to Barcelona where the marriage goes sour due to Mimoun's excessive jealousy, which he alleviates with the use of increasing brutality. In Catalania, Mimoun begins to seek out a series of lovers while he forces his wife to remain in the house, a pattern that recalls the behavior of other patriarchs in previous migration narratives. It is safe to say that Najat El hachimi's sarcastic style and the ironic tone she used while portraying the life the last patriarch proved to be an effective mechanism of resistance.

By mapping out the general conditions of women's life under patriarchal rule and the way this system of oppression bound women's abilities and increases their marginalization, El Hachimi reflects her own feminist consciousness and deep

[205]Ibid., p. 92.
[206]Ibid., p. 138.

understanding of the cultural aspects that foster and encourage stereotypes on Moroccan women. It appears clear that El Hachim is more concerned with rise of feminist consciousness in Morocco. She has provided an analytical study of the Moroccan socio-cultural network which has allowed her to go beyond tracing origins to analyzing the play of power exercised by patriarchy and the active strategies to combat this power. El hachimi succeeded in constructing a character who refuses to be another patriarch and whose daughter celebrates her freedom from all the cultural chains of Arab Muslim society. The second part of the novel revolves around the process of emigration and Moroccan women's experience of relocation, adaptation to a foreign environments and pursuits of liberation. While dealing with Moroccan women's alienation, it seems that the author is fosters a radical way of destabilize patriarchal thinking and create an alternatives to change the patriarchal law, perception of women bodies and sexuality. In the following section, the focus is centered on the representation of women as agents of change whose obstinacy defy the patriarchal dominance that are maintained by male characters.

2- Subversion of Gender Roles and the Construction of Diasporic Identity in *The Last Patriarch*

Approaching Najat El Hachimi's novel from a postcolonial feminist perspective, it represents an apparatus of resistance against the archetypical male character who strives to preserve the patriarchal dominance. El Hachimi devoted the second part of her narrative to echo the way her female protagonist undertakes a brave campaign against the patriarchal system personified through the character of Mimoun. In order to resistance the patriarchal hegemonic pressure, the female character occupies multidimensional spaces blurring the boundaries between the self and the other to reflect a feminine agency and to answer back prevailing discourses. The author, in this respect, relocates her female protagonist in a liminal position from where responses to oppression multiply. In this section, I analyses the question of displacement and mobility that the protagonist maintains to flee coercion, the cultural and behavioral codes constituted for her by the patriarchal system and championing feminist values of equality, justices and co-existence. I analyses how assimilation, deterrotrialization and sexuality, intersect together in challenging the predominant conception of Moroccan women's identity.

The Last Patriarch stems from its author's personal experience and the observation of other Moroccan women lives. Her narrative is recreation of different experiences that Moroccan women go through when migrating to Spain. In the first part of the novel, El Hachimi maps the general condition of Moroccan women under patriarchal regime but in the second part, she sheds lights on the various faces of resistance employed by her revolutionary character (Mimoun's daughter) to topple down her father's authority. That is, the acts of rebellion against her father begin when Mimoun's family joined him in Spain where his daughter refuses to succumb to the predominant destinies employing various

mechanisms of resistance to defy her father patriarchal authority. That is, when his family joined him in Catalonia, Mimoun's wife continuous to face extreme brutality which corresponds with his extreme jealousy while his daughter take pleasure in a "margin of freedom women don't usually have and which quite unprecedented in the line of the patriarchy" [207]. Mimoun's daughter enjoyed the company of her father whose behavioral code contradict his patriarchal beliefs "It was fun going all over the place with father. When it was term time, we visited sites, visited customers and suppliers […] he even led me by the hand to a discotheque and everyone asked Manel; what are you doing bringing your daughter here?"[208]

Perhaps Mimoun was not aware of the fact that the margin of freedom he gave to his daughter is going to be used against him, as his daughter would make of her mobility an effective instrument of resistance and escapism. In the company of her father, the daughter was introduced to a different Western cultural and life style where women carry on in public, are able to make their own decisions and express their opinions freely. She also realized that the household chores, bearing and rearing children are the only matters women are destined to do as it is the case in her village. Thus, fascinated by the European life style, the protagonist start to develop a sense of criticism and could draw a divisionary line between the perception of women's identity in the East and the West. Additionally, because she can travel between two cultures, that of Spain and that of Morocco, the protagonist could see the differences of women's lives in her home community and her adopted one. These experiences of displacement nurtured with the protagonist feeling of ambivalence, for shecould not at first locate herself neither as Moroccan nor as a Spanish girl. When she bordered back to the Rif village, "the border made (her) feel strange, as did

[207]Najat El Hachimi, *The Last Patriarch*, p.162.
[208]Ibid., p.189.

the taste of the air which was so earthly. It was all strange yet familiar" [209]. The protagonist describes her feeling of estrangement when her father hypocritically "turned Muslim […] he wore a djallab over his rousers and said he'd grow a beard" [210]. Her feeling of hybriditywas further duplicated when her father ordered her dressing style he himself chose for her while in Spain.

Moreover, the protagonist's father as well as her aunts and mother start to negotiate to marry her off as it is the culture in Rif Village. She is for them a grown woman though she was still a child. All these events and the pre-determined gender roles she is supposed to abide by taught her how difficult it is to live a the patriarchal traditions and "decided I wanted to go home (Spain), that had to be the place I know best in the world" [211]. She was convinced that she does not want to lead a life of obedience, submission and weakness as most village girls do. Thus, at this stage, Mimoun's daughter initiates her battle against the two gatekeepers of patriarchy; her mother and father. She also decided that she wants to reconstruct her own identity which corresponds with her aspiration of freedom, agency and acceptance. To topple down the patriarchal authority, and transgress the social-cultural boundaries imposed by the patriarchal system, the protagonist utilized various mechanism of resistance to bypass her father authority and her mother's wish "to make a good wife and respectable lady"[212].

First, the protagonist used the tactic of "cutting across" suggested by De Certeau to cross through cultural boundaries and power relations. This strategy of mobility and avoidance enabled her to bypass her parent scrutiny. In other words, after enjoying some privileges and freedom in company of her father, the young protagonist realizes that her

[209]Ibid., p. 228.
[210]Ibid., p. 229.
[211]Ibid., p. 229.
[212]Ibid., p. 230.

father is no longer the same and he wants her to perform the gender roles pre-assigned to her sex. According to the traditional patriarchal standards of femininity, a woman must show modesty and chastity in her speech, dress and behaviors last she loses face. Her Father, in this respect, wants to maintain these paradigms of female identity and wants them to be embodied in his daughter. This actually reminds us of Judith Butler's conceptualization of the socio-cultural construction of gender identity. In her *Gender Trouble,* Judith Butler argues that, "being a woman is one cultural interpretation of being female"[213] and "to *become* a woman is a purposive and appropriative set of acts, the acquisition of a skill."[214]Butler differentiates between performance and performativity where performance refers to the conscious acts of presenting a play, a movie or other forms of entertainments while performativity denotes human's unconscious acts of a certain gender. For her, "gender ought not be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow, rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts"[215]. As a result, Mimoun wants to inculcate in his daughter norms of femininity and construct her identity as an obedient, passive housewife. He, consequently, becomes aggressive towards her banding from going out except for school and threaten to see her in public with a boy "I don't ever want to see you in the street with a boy"[216]. He even chooses clothes for her, "one day he came and said I've bought you a present. A skirt and blouse that I thought were for mother. I couldn't help laughing, where do you think I'm going dressed like that? I want you to dress decently for fuck sake" [217]. In addition, having lived in Morocco, the young

[213]Judith Butler, "Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's Second Sex," *Yale French Studies,* 72 (2011), p. 35.

[214] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, Chapman& Hall, Inc; London: Routledge, 1990), 36.

[215]Ibid., p. 144.

[216]Najat El Hachimi, *The Last Patriarch*, p. 232.

[217]Ibid., p. 233.

protagonist's mother is aware of the Moroccan customs and the social expectation of female gender roles. She wants her daughter to "spend hours and everyday preparing for that role rather than reading books or listing to Silvio Rodrigues"[218]. Despite her parent's wish, the young protagonist finds refuge in education and secret relationship. She begins to pass through the boundaries concealing the reasons why she wants to be out and creating pretext to leave her home during short intervals by offering to go to the market or do other errands just to find relief "do you want me to go and buy some bread? or I think you need some peas for dinner, don't you? Do you want me to fetch some?"[219] Mimoun's daughter continues to forge excuses to withdraw from her father dominion and escape the house chores.

The remarkable note one can draw is the importance Najat El Hachimi gives to education as a practice of freedom. She regards literacy not only the ability to read and write but also it allows her female characters and those who are marginalized and discriminated against in society to acquire a critical consciousness and start to question power relations. Like the Moroccan feminist Fatima Mernissi, she believes that education proved to be the practical instrument that frees women from the boundaries and restrictions that imprison and lock them in private spheres. She believed that education has the power to provide her with "a better life, full of opportunities, […] they will get an education, and travel. They will discover the world, understand it, and eventually participate in transforming it."[220] Najat El Hachim's protagonist resembles to a great extent Fatima Mernissi' childhood when manipulates her education not only to know the "*Hudud*" but to go beyond them. In the company of her teacher and boyfriend, the narrator tells us how

[218]Ibid., p. 233.
[219]Ibid., p. 224.
[220]Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Childhood* (US: Cambridge, Press Books, 1994), p. 200.

school is considers a haven that offers some pleasure and great relief from her distress, oppression and anxiety.At school, she feels secured as her father cannot erode. "you were lucky father couldn't come into school into your classroom and that was a real haven for you"[221] . School furnishes her with a sense of autonomy and vocality as she could share joy and sorrows with her school mates whose situation is not different from hers and also with her school mistress friend with whom she could "speak to her about love and such things" [222]. Knowing that she has to observe from the shadow of her father and avoid his brutal punishment, the protagonist exercises some agency in the school library where she used to meet her boyfriend with whom she fall in love. In the school library, the two young lovers enjoyed freedom of the body and seem more in control of their sexuality "I did have time to think if I liked him or not because his tongue was already down my throat. It was a sexual burning or my need to run away from all stuff that I didn't say no"[223]. The protagonist is aware of the fact that sex out of the marriage wedlock is red line that is prohibited to cross. However, she knew that it is her ultimate way toward freedom of her body and sexuality.

Another outstanding strategy of resistance that the daughter developed recalls Deleuze and Gauttari concept of "deterritorialization". Whenever she is stuck in a situation or unable to avoid a scenario of depression and violence, Mimouns daughter escapes the light of fight by constructing an alliance with words. "I, who didn't know when it would all ends, started to read the dictionary" [224]. Another example of "deterritorialization" is when her father bands her relation with her school mistress, she resolute to words which were

[221]Najat El Hachimi,*The Last Patriarch,*p.232.
[222]Ibid., p. 233.
[223]Ibid., p. 268.
[224]Ibid., p. 160.

placed in between quotation marks. “He just said that’s the last time you see he; I felt like whoopi ‘Goldberg in the color purple” [225]

> Mother by herself in hospital with not even a rope to hang onto and giving birth in a position that was new to her everyone celebrating the new year, father flat out across his bed still taking in sleep and I didn’t know what to do about it all. Ka, a religious concept in ancient Egypt. *Kabaridi* related to the *kabaradines; kagu, a bird belonging to the peasant species”*[226]

Reading the Catalan dictionary, the daughter intentionally repeats and masticates each word in such a way that frees her from the emotional roper that binds her. She always finds refuge in words which help her to deterritorise and relocate her from an original milieu to new territory of peace of mind. Mimoun’s daughter does not only attempt to free her mental status with recreating Deleuze and Gauttari strategy of “deterritorialization” but rather she moved to a higher level of confrontation and subversion. She adopts the strategy of cross-dressing coined by Bakhtin to elaborate on Bakhtin “code dressing” bypass her father’s authority. Bakhtin conceptualization of cross-dressing is very relevant to violate the tradition dressing codes of Moroccan culture. In this regards, the daughter dresses like a Spanish girl in public while hides in her traditional dress at home to persuade her father that she as Moroccan as he wants to her to be. To illustrate, the daughter used to put the headscarf at home and when she is praying but gets rid of it while going to school she states, “I wore it to pray first, then when I was home”[227]. Moreover, after her marriage with her boyfriend, she put on the headscarf only when she wants to visit her mother as her father stopped her from visiting her mother unless she puts on the veil. This disguise and

[225]Ibid., p. 249.
[226]Ibid., p. 119.
[227]Ibid., p. 207.

ambivalent state gives her a sense new identification where she does not belong to anywhere.

The most plain act of resistance and rebellion the daughter carried on against all the patriarchal conventions embodied in her father is sex. She believed that her sexuality would play a crucial role to put an end to her father power over her and change the nature order of things upside down. When the young protagonist becomes irritated with her father's hyper masculinity, brutal oppression of her as well as her mother and continues inspecting her, she decided that sex is utmost useful strategy of resistance. The protagonist, first, maintained a sexual relationship with her boyfriend despite her father treats and warnings. She let her boyfriend take her virginity fearless of what her father could do when he knows. Virginity lose actually strengthens her more as she has nothing still to lose. "Now I have nothing to lose nothing at all"[228]. Now she could finally confront her father and won the battle of freedom of the body. That is, she turned to be a monster that the last patriarch thinks twice before any attempt to team. She has already made up her mind that "Maybe this was the beginning of the end, or perhaps I simply wanted to be even freer"[229]. By so doing, she realize that the only way to defy the patriarchal order is take away her father's control over her body by make him lose face front of all of his family. She was determined to teach her father a lesson he will not forget and wont dear to talk to anyone about. "Father, who'd never again play the patriarch, not with me, because he could never imagine such a dire betrayal, let alone perpetrate by the daughter he had loved so much".[230]

To be clearer, being aware of the fact that sex and betrayal is her father extreme weakness point, she gives herself to her uncle, (her father lifelong enemy) and experienced an anal

[228]Ibid., p. 296.
[229]Ibid., p. 300.
[230]Ibid., p. 311.

orgasm putting her father face to face with tremendous humiliation. "You ever done it from behind? He gasped amid all the tenderness, and I said no, it hurts, and he said don't worry, I will teach you, if you know how, it doesn't have to. Hey, you know, who better than your uncle to teach you this kind of things?"[231] This ultimate act of resistance against her father constitute a final, devastating blow to the patriarch of the novel, this act of Having an incestuous sexual encounter with her father's brother also represents an a abandonment of rejection of the institution of marriage that straightens the patriarchal control over her life and sexuality. In later writings and after rich critical interests the *Last Patriarch* received, El Hachimi explores in depth the concept of sexuality and the freedom of the body that she took it the extreme. In her novel published in (2013) under the title *Body Hanter*, Najat El Hachmi breaks all the traditional and cultural constraints that bound women's bodies and sexuality. She dares to, radically, discuss sex and desires in totally different way which reflects, to a great extent, her attempt to free the female body from traditional and cultural convictions.

Najat El Hachimi use her creative imagining to recreate the history of patriarchy and champion feminist's ideals. Her portrayal of her female protagonist as revolutionary character who seeks liberation and whose scopes of resistance go beyond patriarchal dominance reveals the power of Art and literature in enacting historical, social, culture and political changes. That is, *The Last Patriarch* is to be read as a craft of resistance against essentialist positions and fundamentalist premises within the context of Moroccan society. It explores the way literature subverts and challenges dominant discourses and opens multiple venues of communication and negotiation. Najat El Hachimi is aware of the fact that her novel is, sometimes, read a piece of writing which is in favor of Western life style, culture and democracy and that gender is the divisionary line between Europeans and non-

[231]Ibid., p. 310.

Europeans. However, it seems to me that El Hachimi is, in fact, in favor of a home of democracy and equality which has the ability to adopt its member beyond gender and racial hierarchies. Thus, El Hachimi's novel does not seem to be in favors of European culture over that of her motherland but she portrayed a revolutionary character who opposes domination wherever it is and who occupy an ambivalent state and liminal position to construct her won hybrid identity. As it is manifested in the following chapter Zana Muhen, like Najat El Hachimi scrutinize every aspect of patriarchal culture and explores the extent to which Arab women are made invisible, submissive and marginalized from in domains of life because of the cultural system and she attempted to change this history.

B- The Patriarchal persecutions and Creative Strategies of Resistance in Sold by ZanaMuhsen (1991))

Preliminary:

Sold: One Woman's heartbreaking. True Account of Modern Slavery is the title of an international bestselling non-fictional novel told by Zana Muhsen and written by Andrew Crofts in 2011. Zana Muhsen's novel created an international controversy, political anarchy and clash of cultures between one of the most primitive nations in the world and the modern world of England. The story took place in one of the most rigid and restricted Golf society that is male-dominate social structure. It is important to the study to present a historical background of Yemen's political and social structure that maps out the general condition of women in Yemen.

The Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) united on May 22, 1990, to form the present-day Republic of Yemen. North Yemen had been established as a tribal-military polity in 1962 after the overthrow of the theocratic Zaydi Shiite imamate. By contrast, South Yemen, which gained its independence from Britain in 1967, was the only Marxist regime in the Arab world. The two countries' attempt of unification was long hindered by political differences, including two wars, but the process was accelerated in part by the end of the Cold War. A 1994 civil war between northern and southern factions ended with the victory of the close circle of tribal, sectarian, and military groups led by Ali Abdallah Salih, who had ruled North Yemen since 1978 and remains united Yemen's president to date.

Yemen has a vibrant civil society and media that do not shy away from criticizing the government. However, its political system is increasingly dominated by one party, the General People's Congress (GPC), despite a competitive presidential election in 2006. In February 2009, the parliament approved a two-year postponement of that year's legislative elections, perpetuating the GPC's control. The Salih regime is facing an increasingly vocal southern movement against alleged northern hegemony, and a Zaydi Shiite rebellion in the northern region of Sa'ada. After four years of fighting, the president declared the end of that conflict in 2008, but the security situation in Sa'ada remains unstable. The lives of Yemeni women have been greatly affected by all of these political developments. The 1990 unification led to the codification of a family law that was considered a setback for southern women, who had previously enjoyed legal equality in family affairs. The end of the civil war led to new modifications of the constitution and the family law, marking a clear regression toward more conservative and gender-based provisions.

As the political situation has deteriorated, women's rights activists have increasingly faced harassment by security forces, and immediate political needs have absorbed resources that

might otherwise have been used to improve the status of women and tackle the serious economic and social challenges facing the country today. Adding to these strains have been the diverse waves of migrants seeking refuge from war and persecution in the Horn of Africa, or transit to economic opportunities in the Gulf states and beyond.

Yemen is a tribal and traditional country where prevailing cultural attitudes, patriarchal structures, and Islamic fundamentalism accord women low status in the family and community and limit their participation in society. Women are subjected to various forms of violence and discrimination, including domestic abuse, deprivation of education, early or forced marriage, restrictions on freedom of movement, exclusion from decision making roles and processes, denial of inheritance, deprivation of health services, and female genital mutilation."[232]

The past five years have been marked by both positive and negative developments for women's status in Yemen. On the positive side, Yemeni nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and activists have been vigorously advocating for gender equality, fostering awareness of gender-based violence, and demanding a change in Yemeni laws, especially family laws, which are heavily biased against women. The 2008 court case of a 10-yearold girl who demanded a divorce from her adult husband caused a public debate that culminated in the parliament considering a minimum marriage age of 17. Some educational and executive institutions have allowed women to enroll in their ranks for the first time, and the Islamist party Islah undertook internal changes that led to the first election of women to its higher decision-making bodies.

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[232] *Elham Manea* (2019), "Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010 - Yemen," retrieved on (June, 21 2019), from https://www.refworld.org/docid/4b99011b1a.html

However, Yemeni laws still discriminate against women, treating them as inferiors or minors who need perpetual guardianship. Major political parties, including the ruling GPC, refrained from supporting female candidates during the 2006 local elections, and women's representation in the executive and legislative bodies remains very low. Finally, the country's economic and political crises have drawn resources away from the education and health sectors, undercutting attempts to narrow the gender gap and improve conditions for women and girls. The primacy of rule of law is largely absent, and it is particularly challenging for women and the poor to access their rights and benefits.

Being a captive in Yemen, the British Yamani writer recounts in her story (Sold) all the political biases, social misogyny, cultural marginalization preyed upon Yamani women, and the religious hypocrisy that constitute the very fabric of Yemen social structure. That is, In *Sold*, Zana Muhsen publicly and internationally shared her experiences cruelty, violence, kidnap, torture; hardship and alienation that she could not imagine a human being can exercises on other human being. In England, Zana Muhsen 15 year old and her sister Nadia13 years old, two teenagers lived a happy normal life in Birmingham in a Muslim family. One day, when their strict father decided that his two daughter will not lead a descent and modest life in England and will be soon influenced by British life style, he sent them to Yemen under the assumption of going to spend a six weeks on holiday. Their father lied that they were going to spend a great holiday and to see paternal side of their family and would experience white sandy beaches and camel riding. While in Yemen. Lately after arriving in Yemen, the two sisters were told by their father's friend that their father sold them into an arranged marriage with two boys who lived in the village. Their lives turned into nightmares when they suddenly had to endure beatings, rape and childbirth at a very young age. Their in-laws forced the girls to write letters to their mother

telling her that they were having a wonderful holiday, but she soon found out why they were really in the Yemen. "Although Zana was forced out-worldly to become a Yemeni wife, just as the men wanted her to be, she always dreamed of getting back to England and her family. She never allowed them to break her spirit, not with the endless work, the beating, the disease, the mental cruelty, the rapes or the agonies of childbirth in the raw."[233] After six years of combat and battle to free herself and her sister, Zana finally got in touch with a journalist MacDonal who paved the way for their escape when interviewed them and took some photographs of Zana and Nadia in a hostile environment and under very bad conditions back to England. Their mother, consequently, found out the ordeals of her two daughters and asa result, got in touch with authorities, influential people, audiences and whoever can help in pursuits of saving the lives Zana and Nadia and get them back to England. The mother reactions unveil the reality of the fact that Zana and Nadia were not the only British or American girls to be tricked into an arranged marriage to Yemen but perhaps Zana was the first to escape back to England with the help of her mother and the British media. Her escape was tremendously expensive since she was obliged to leave her son and Nadia in captivity.

Using a postcolonial feminist approach, this section conducts a textual investigation that includes description, analysis and interpretation of the various manifestations of injustice, inequality and misogyny faced by women in the Arab world as they are reflected ZanaMuhsen's *Sold*. The researcher further attempts to extract the multiple facets of resistance adopted by Zana and her mother to combat the cultural, physical, psychological and structural violence preyed upon them by most of their Relatives as well as the Yemani government and British influential officers. The researcher argues that *Sold: One Woman's*

[233]Zana Muhcine, *Sold: One Women's Heartbreaking, True Account of Modern Slavery*(Great Britain: Little, Brown, 2010), p.221.

heartbreaking. True Account of Modern Slavery dramatizes the life of so many unknown Arab-British and Arab-American schoolgirls who were tricked into an arranged Marriage in Yemen. Zana Muhsen represents the story of an ordinary girl with an extraordinary courage and stubbornness, who refuses to succumb neither to the patriarchal maltreatment nor to world leaders who ignorance of her case. It further argues that Zana Muhsen and her Mother Meryam deconstruct all forms of gender discrimination, and sexism giving us a reason to fight against child marriage and slavery.

1- Cruelty, Misogyny and Cultural Alienation in the Homeland.

For Decades, women had low status in Arab culture and social strata. They have been put in the hyphen and considered secondary citizen whose existence depends on men. However, the emergence of feminist movement in the West in the second half of the nineteenth century influenced the process of change in women's cause and emancipation in the Arab world. Great changes and adjustment in the status of women took place since then and Arab women's activist thoughts started to develop. Women began to envied the public sphere and actively participate in the economic fields and the decision making process of their countries that were, in the near past, exclusive to men, they enjoyed a marine of freedom their female ancestors deprived from.

The emergence of Arab feminist movement witnessed the treatment of issues including work, marriage, suffrage, and breaking out of their disconnection. Arab feminist examine the ways in which women cope with power structures that dictate the frameworks of their lives, how they behave in light of these structures, and how they reshape the limits of their liberty. Scholars like Layla Ahmed, Miriam cook, Denise Candiotti, Beth Baron, Iman Alkachi, Butheina Shaaban, Fatima Mernissi, Layla Abu Lughod, Valentine Moghdem, Margot Badran, and Nawal El Saadawi started delving into the issues and

theories concerning women's writing in general and women's writing in Arabic in particular. In this connection, they sensibly discuss women's circumstance, women's status and composed theories and established political affiliations for the sake of advancing women s' rights. Yet, in many different Arab regions such as Yemen women's rights and gender equality seems to be out of history as Yemeni women still inferior and treated as sub-human compared with men. In Yemen, gender relation is mainly based on a hierarchical structure favouring the male sex and oppressing the female sex. In this regards, the Novel under study decodes the Arab patriarchal ideologies that govern Yamani social system reflecting the rebellion of the female consciousness against the male images of female identity and experiences. In Zana Muhsen 's *Sold,* the patriarch discourse fall apart as the author deciphers all of its aspects from a first-hand experience with gender biases, misogyny and violence in all its forms.

To begin with, Zana Muhsen initiates her story with criticising her father's patriarchal mentality and practices. Despite the fact that her father spent most of his life in Britain, his traditional beliefs and behavioural code are kept enact. As a child, Zana Muhsen and her sister Nadia lived a normal life as any British teenagers. Their father, Muthanna Muhsen, did not take any notice on them as children. Yet, when they reached adolescence, he turned to be a tyrannical father and wants them to maintain Yemeni traditions and behave accordingly. Zana expresses her feelings towards him when he starts to scrutinize their behaviors, restricts their freedom, and even prohibits them from meeting people he does not know she maintains, "*I really hated him*"[234]. Zana criticizes the way Arab men thinks of women stating that, "They never include women and girls in their conversation; it was as if we don't exist." [235] Muthanna Muhsen, as an example, preserves

[234]Ibid., p. 6.
[235]Ibid., p. 12.

the cultural stereotypes that women 's opinions are not worth saying and perpetuates them in his relation to his daughters and wife whom he evaluates as inconsiderable and subservient" Although Mum and Dad were together for nearly twenty years, and had several children, Dad never married her". [236]He considers her neither a life partner nor equal to him. Muthanna Muhsen, Yemeni emigrant, born arise in Yemen represents a solid protector and representative of a stubborn Arab patriarchy. Although he lived a considerable time in England, and witness the pursuits of women's liberation and that women's equality to men is taken for granted in Britain, he maintains the traditional cultural standards of manhood exercising excessive subordination and marginalisation exercises on his family.

One of the important issues Zana Muhsen tackles in *Sold* is the extreme misogyny and violence women like Zana, Nadia and their mother, and other female character experience at home and in the homeland when they were sold by their father as brides. The author treats the issue of violence in all its forms giving a lively example of psychological violence, physical violence and structural violence all executed and legitimated under patriarch regime of power. To start with psychological violence, it is a resonant aspect throughout the novel given that the author describes its manifestations comprehensively. The verbal violence is expressed through Zana's father and her father in-low both in the Britain and the Yemen and it takes forms of laying, treats of violence, humiliation and insults. To give instance of the verbal abuse that take place in the novel, Zana reflects her father's cruelty when he lies about his previous kids that he had already trafficked to Yemen.

[236]Ibid., p. 13.

> Mum and Dad had two other children before me, Leila and Ahmed, but my Dad had taken them down to sivit his family in Aden when I was just two, and they had stayed there with our grandfather. He tald Mum they were just going for a visit, they were three or four, but they never coame back. I gound out later how upset my Mum had been about losing them, but I didn't know anything about it at the time.[237]

Zana's father took Liela and Ahmed to live definitely in Yemen but he permits himself to lie to his wife because he believes that what he does is always right. Muthanna Muhsen exercises this kind of psychological violence not only with his first-born children but also with Zana and Nadia when he decided that they should be married off for fear they lose their morality or assimilate the British life style. Zana and Nadia also become victims of their father plot, cultural and economic ambition. "Dad's married us off. He sold us for £ 1,300 each to Gowad and Abdul Khada"[238]. This reflects the father belief that women are just like other commodities and slaves to be bought and sold. For this reason, he permits himself again to lie to his daughters and drive them from heaven to hell.

> After they had gone Dad told Nadia that Gowad had offered to take her to the Yemen for a month's holiday, to visit our brother Ahmed and sister Liela. He had oftern talked about how wonderful his home country was, and how he painted a picture which made it sound like one of those places where they make film commercials for bounty chocolate bars. He talk about beautiful beaches fringed with palm trees, sunshine all the time and camel rids across the desert" [239](p. 16)

Zana 's father deceived her and Nadia to go to a wonderful holiday to experience camels riding and see beautiful beached along with sun sit and sun rise. The fact is that Muthanna

[237]Ibid., p. 2.
[238]Ibid., p. 6.
[239]Ibid., p. 16.

Muhsen sold his daughter into an arranged marriage in Yemen where they would experience other brutal forms of violence. From the quote above, the author spots lights on an invisible issues namely international human trafficking (from England to Yemen).

The psychological violence is an aspect of patriarchal oppressive system that appearsclear throughout the novel. When Zana and Nadia were deceived into an illegal marriage, Abdul Khada forced them to lie to her mother that they are having a wonderful holiday and they are fine. Zana explains that,

> "There was also the tape that Abdul Khada had forced me to quit rarly on in our stay there. He had hit me and forced me to say that dad was a good man and that we were much happier in Yemen than we had been in England, and how lovely it was out there." [240]

Being aware of the fact that his deed is illegal, Abdul Khada plotted to conceal his crime and his violence against Zana and Nadia by forcing them to lie too. He knows that if their mother gets any news about the kidnap she will not rest until she saves her daughters and takes them out of Yemen.

Concerning Non-verbal violence the female characters were exposed to in the homeland, the author depicts the life of Yemen women under rigid patriarchal rule. Zana and Nadia were forced to share the household responsibilities and also work in the fields and take care about cattle. In other words, Zana and Nadia were victimized by the family member particularly Abdul Khad and her mother in low. To cite some examples of non-verbal violence in the novel, Abdul Khada abusively attacks Zana's privacies in an attempt to conceal and exterminate any relation with her past. He wants to transform her identity from a British Yemeni to a traditional Yemeni wife who abides by his rules and does as he

[240]Ibid., p. 138.

wants. “He expected to have absolute power within the family, and none of them had the courage to challenge his rule. In that society the men are always right and free to do as they please.”[241] For this reason, Abdul Khada invades Zana room in search of any remedy that may reminds her of her life in Birmingham, he destroyed every connection with her home and prevents her from contacting anyone who may help her or know about her case.

> What are you doing? I asked, but he didn’t’ answer. What are you looking for? These!’ He pulled out the few photographs which I had brought with me of Mum and my family and friends. I used to get them out sometimes when I was on my own to look at. […] He lifted them up out of reach. They will just make you unhappy. You shouldn’t have any reminders of your old life. We are your family now[242]

By destroying her photographs, Abdul Khada destroys the last bridge that connects Zana to her old life at the same time he breaks her spirit, her dream to get back to England and her freedom from slavery. He forces her to forget her identity as British and to accept her destiny to be Yemeni submissive wife. The psychological violations Zana and Nadia were exposed to in Yemen caused devastating consequences on the mental and health levels as they suffered from poor self-esteem, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, eating disorders, self-harm and suicide attempts.

Moreover, Abdul Khada and his wife exceed in using of violence in order to team Zana who refuses to succumb to their well. They used all types of physical abuse (rape, biting, hard work, maltreatment and physical exploitation). When Zana arrived in Yemen, she was to be informed that she is married to Abdul Khada’s son (Abdullah) while her sister Nadia was married to Gowad’s Son “ Abdul Khada spoke softly and casually to me. ‘this is your husband’. Later on , he forced her to sleep with his son as it the culture that as a wife she

[241]Ibid., p. 54.
[242]Ibid., p. 92.

has to provide sexual service for her husband even against her well. When Zana refuses, Abdul Khada threatens that he will tie her with the bed and let Abdullah rape her. Abdul Khada, moreover, Forced Zana to change her dressing style. He wanted her to dress like Yemeni traditional women and completely hides herself behind the Berga. When she challenged him, he hits her as he does deal with everything with violence. "I'm not wearing these, I said throwing them down. Abdul khada leapt forward, his temper had finally exploded and he hit me across the face. I screamed, my head hurt and I was as anger with him as he with me."[243]

Abdul Khada, furtherly, forced Zana to do inhuman hard shores as the following extract indicates.

> I had to take frequently breaks because the weight of sacks pushed my head down and I was unable to take breaths. Every day for a week climbed the path up and down, for early morning until late at night […]Abdul Khada would sit outside the house with his Dad, watching and criticizing as I kept coming and doing. [244]

In the grasp of the Abdul Khada's family, Zana was seen a slave or part of the cattle, she had to do tough physical work carrying sacks, mixing cement, carry water from the well, while pregnant etc to build Abdul khada's house. The author criticizes and prosecutes this violation of human rights that enslaves other people. Abdul Khada, like many other man in traditional Arab societies, use their power to control and exploit their owned women. Furthermore, not only did Abdul Khada physically abuse the female characters but his wife Ward as well. Zana Muhsen says about her mother in-low's maltreatment that "Ward enjoyed using her power over me. Sometimes she would leave me without food for several

[243]Ibid., p. 117.
[244]Ibid., p. 123.

days, or would just feed me cold scraps of food left over from the day before" [245](110). Ward, Abdul Khada's wife, exercises her sadistic desires on Zana as a way of teeming the females at the household. The psychological and physical violence that Zana were exposed to from the moment she arrive to Yemen reflects the conditions under which women in Yemen live. The author, in this respect, endeavors to capture the reader's attention about human rights violations, misogyny and sexism that constitutes the general make up the some Arab societies and Yemeni social structure in particular. In her Novel *Sold,* author paid a considerable attention to cultural violence and structural violence.

Dealing with the issue of cultural violence, the author sheds light on the patriarchal discourses that manifest itself in the family structure, culture, religious hypocrisy, political and media bias. Zana Muhsen, deals with these issue providing lively example of the patriarchal ideology that position men in authority over women in all aspects of society. Zana Muhsen criticizes the patriarchal construction of femininity through the process of "housewifisation" that the German feminist Maria Mies coined to decipher the process via which women become mere housewives and deprived from participating in the productive fields of life. In her famous book *Patriarchy & Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*, Maria Mies explains that:

> by defining women as housewives, a process which I then called 'housewifization', not only did women's unpaid work in the household become invisible, […] and 'naturalized' - that is, treated as a 'free good' - but also her waged work was considered to be only supplementary to that of her husband, the so-called breadwinner, and thus devalued. The construction of woman as mother, wife and

[245]Ibid., p. 110.

> housewife was the trick by which 50 percent of human labour was defined as a free resource. It was female labour.[246]

The construction women as housewives promotes men power within the family since he is the breadwinners of the family as consequently in control of everything. Housewifisation affect women social and economic status making them dependent on male figures and subservient to them as the process of housewifisation is discursively implemented to exclude women from wage-labour. In connection of the novel under study, the author manifest how patriarchal culture of Yemen use housewifisation to subjugate their women and position them under the mercy of men. Zana Muhsen explains that:

> When a girl marries into Yemeni family, she is expected to share the burden of the work with the other women in the family, relieving the older ones of some of the worst chores. It one of the reasons why men are so keen to buy healthy, strong girls for their son to marry. Local girls are trained up for the work from the moment they are walking, taught how to carry water on their heads, to cook, clean and look after the land and animals. They are shown no other way and are taught to respect, or at least fear their men. [247]

Through the process of socialization women are constituted as housewives their physical abilities, the extent of obedience and submission to men categories them as good or bed wife. Women in Yemen and many other Arab societies are not evaluated depending on the level of intelligence, education or economic production but rather by the services, they can provide within the household. These patriarchal criteria contribute to the subordination of women. One of the worst consequences of the patriarchal discourse of housewifisation in

[246]Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour* (London: Zed Books, 1986), p. ix.

[247]Zana Muhcine, *Sold,* 2010, p.79.

the centralization of poverty among women. That is, the rate of poverty among women increases and they become dependent on men. Maria Mies reinforce her argument that, "female-headed households in particular formed a larger and larger percentage of the poor."[248] While she analyses the reasons behind the increasing rate of poverty among women she comes up with the conclusion that the household is primary place where gender hierarchies and discrimination surface. Patriarchal discourse subordinates women by deeming them mere housewives and depriving them from the active, productive economic fields. Zana Muhsen, in the same vein, explains the deprivation of women from the most effective strategy of women empowerment. In Yemen women are deprived from all the basic rights manly education.

> None of the other women in the village could read or write, the men wouldn't allow it. The women never received any education. The men made sure of that because if they had started to learn they might begin to question the way they were made to live and argue with the men; that would have been unthinkable."[249]

As the above data shows, Yemeni men are conscience of the importance of education in enlightening women and intentionally deprive them from this right education to maintain their control and supremacy of their women. Educated women would not take for granted the oppression and gender discrimination they face in Yemen. They would utilizes their knowledge to change the status quo as Zana Muhsen endeavors behind writing this novel. Zana Muhsen novel doesn't only intended to reveal the dark side of patriarchy but also the religious hypocrisy and cultural practices such as child marriage, forced marriages, female genital mutilation and so forth. All the violations are done on the name of Islam that interpreted to serve patriarchal agenda. Zana Muhsen exposes how male characters

[248]Ibid.
[249]Ibid., p. 90.

perpetuate their overbearing cultural practices on the name of religion. First, she was driven into grief anguish because her father and his friends lied to her and to Nadia about the "wonderful trip" to Yemen. Neither Zana nor her sister could recognize the conspiracy because the male characters seemed to be religious men and thus believed and trusted. "I believed they were all religious, and so they would never do any harm. He had all tickets and I was never allowed to see them." (p. 22). Zana was persuaded to accept going to Yemen because of the religious hypocrisy who show her what they are not really are. Even in Yemen, Abdul Khada violated the Islamic teach on the issue of marriage to serve his own patriarchal desires and forced Zana and Nadia into unwanted marriage.

> None of the women in the village except Nadia and me had actually been forced into marriage. If they hadn't wanted to marry the boys that were chosen for them they didn't have to. That was why it was so wrong that they had forced Nadia and me to do it, because it was against our will, and against their religion. In the Koran it says that a girl must be asked three times at the wedding ceremony if she wants to go ahead with the marriage." [250]

Forced marriage and child marriage are very common violation of women's human right in many Arab culture particularly Yemen. In Yemen, one of the fundamental reasons behind child marriage is economic reasons in the sense that girls are either seen as an economic burden or valued as capital for their exchange value in terms of goods, money or livestock. Zana Muhsen explains that "there is always money involved in a Yemeni marriage, with the boys family paying the girl's family to 'buy' her."[251]Yemeni parents and guardians are more oriented to marry off their younger daughter because they will get a financial reward behind that or at least cease to care about female children. Other reasons are related to

[250]Ibid., p. 100.
[251]Ibid., p. 101.

Yemen Culture and tradition arguments. Families prefer to marry their daughter for fear of shame and stigma that is attached to premarital sex and bearing children outside marriage, and the associated family "honor," are often seen as valid reasons for the actions that families take. For instance, when Manhutan Muhsen (Zana father) was interviewed, he justifies his decision to marry his two female children to Yemeni men. The author wants to raise the reader's awareness of readers about the phenomenon of child marriage that is still up to the current time exercises despite all the international convention which prohibit any form of oppression and discrimination against women. The author narrates her story of oppression and precariousness under the patriarchal system to deconstruct the patriarchal ideology and the extent to which women in the Arab world and Yemen in specific subjugated. Even though Zana could escape from the captivity in Yemen, the brutal experience she had gone through leave traces on her body and psyche. Despite all the traumatic violationshe was exposed to, the characters of Zana, Nadia and their mother never give up on their dream to get free from the imprisonment. They were determined to gain their freedom and topple down the patriarchal dominant discourse. That is, the following section is mainly concerned with highlighting the different strategies of resistance employed by the female characters to confront the national and international conspiracies.

2- Zana's Creative strategies of resistance

One of the most important reference points in the postcolonial studies are the Processes, approaches and myriad efforts done by women to liberate themselves from the authority and control of men and traditional power structures. Arab women have been striving to gain and secure equal rights for women, remove gender discrimination from laws, institutions and create legal standards that enhance the democratization process. Because of their awareness of the power of the pen to enact change, many Arab feminist

writers reflect their outlook on the issue through their groundbreaking works. These works have successfully and systematically envisioned traditions to deal with discursive and epistemological that has been performed on Arab women at home and in the diaspora. In the novel under-discussion, the homeland seems to be as unsuitable zone of inhabitance as it is an ancient, traditional bound and remote mountain of Yemen.

In the literary studies, we observes that most of writing of the first generation of Arab Immigrants envisage their homeland with alas and pain and reflected their yearning, melancholia, nostalgia and homesickness for the homeland and the birthplace. However, in postcolonial Arab literature, specifically women's, the conception of home has shifted from homesickness to sick from home as it is connected to cruelty, misogyny, marginalization and gender discrimination involved in a load of patriarchal and traditional web. As it has been argued in the previous section, Zana Muhsen personifies the inhuman treatment women are subject to in the Islamic state of Yemen. Notwithstanding, in the same novel, the author fosters a cutting-edge representation of the female characters who resist the patriarchal oppressive system and blow the age of slavery through her three revolutionary characters; Zana, Nadia and their mother. The later characters, with an extra-ordinary courage, maintain their strong spirit despite the exploitive and greedy nature of male patriarchs and they refuse to let the male characters to domination their lives. Being aware of the fact that women have to struggle to break a powerful system which deem women subordinate and predefine their existence, *Sold* reflects women's anger against male violence, the objectification and exploitation of Arab women as commodities, a totally necessary rage that has fired up earlier stereotypes of feminine identity, experiences and existence.

This section discusses perspectives in the transnational feminist thought which reflects the fact that despite great cultural diversity between and within different geographies, there are great commonalities in Arab women's lived experience under colonialism and patriarchy. It is these shared experiences that helped shaped and develop this distinct brand of feminism, which is universally concerned with the ways women manage and challenge multiple oppressions. To achieve this target, the current section aims at bring to the front the various creative, intellectual and pragmatic strategies of resistance employed by the female characters to break down and deconstructing sexist ideologies that devalue women's humanity.

In the novel, and as it has been shown in the previous section, the characters of Zana and Nadia have been subject to multiple forms of violence and violation of their human rights. Notwithstanding, the two characters along with their mother engage in an endless battle to gain their freedom and get back to England. First, as it has been manifested in Zana verbal and non-verbal language, she has been always in conflict with the two gatekeepers of patriarchy namely Abdul Khada and his wife Ward. She challenges their well to construct her identity depending traditional patriarchal paradigms. Abdul Khada as well as his wife aspired to conceal her British Identity and make of her an obedient Yemeni women, Zana in turn was always resistance to their wish "I hated them so much as I could hardly control my tongue. I was as nasty to everyone as I could be, giving dirty looks, scowling and being sarcastic to Abdul khada and Mohammed."[252]She has never submitted to the idea that she stays in Yemen for the rest of her life and decided to do all she could to free herself and her sister Nadia. The first strategy of resistance adopted by Zana is "to continue refusing to cooperate until they got sick of me and sent me

[252]Ibid., p. 49.

home."[253] Zana also intended to confront violence with violence be it verbal or non-verbal towards her kidnappers who colonized her life and maintain their rule over her through violence and repression. "I could not letting go, like a dog with rabbit, biting and biting on his nail until I could taste his blood in my mouth. He was shouting in pain and noise brought Mohammed running into the room".[254]This strategy of resistance reminds us of Frantz Fanon's approach to violence and its effects on the individual. His approach to violence is primarily derived from his lived experience. In *Black Skins White Masks,* (See chapter III, section 3)Frantz Fanon maintains:

> [d]ecolonization is the meeting of two forces, opposed to each other by their very nature…[t]heir first encounter was marked by violence and their existence together – that is to say the exploitation of the native by the settler – was carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons. [255]

Since the colonizer is the generator of violence, according to Frantz Fanon, violence from the colonized subjects' part is considered a process of purging and relieving the individual from the emotion tensions created by colonialism. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon introduces the idea of 'collective catharsis'. Collective catharsis is describes as '[i]n every society, in every collectivity, exists – must exist – a channel, an outlet through which the forces accumulated in the forms of aggression can be released' (1952: 145). For Fanon, this term is inextricable from the colonizedsubject's experience of violently ridding themselves of colonial rule (1963: 42). The violence is the intervening event which is able to remove their feelings of self-loathing which have been internalized after constant repetition from the colonial power. The colonial subject is also able to restore their self-

[253]Ibid., p. 48.
[254]Ibid., p. 55.
[255]Ibid., p. 36.

esteem and control over their political life. Accordingly for the Algerians, violence is cathartic insofar as it allows them the restore the sense of self which was destroyed by colonialism.[256]

Taking Frantz Fanon approach of violence, *Sold* reflects the how Zana perpetuate violent behaviors against the dehumanization of the male patriarchs which helped her to regain her humanity. Her revolution is actual 'reaction of herself' I since it provides a sense of physical, mental and metaphysical relief.

When Zana was convinced that confronting violence with violence would to affect her on the mental and physical levels and make of Abdul khada more stubborn, she invests her energy bring about other mechanisms of resistance to patriarchal dominance. Multiplexing roles changing the scenario of confrontation to planning to get her freedom through learning to read, write and communication on international level. The data below shows the perspicacity of Zana in dealing Yemeni turmoil.

> "Although I was determined never to give up fighting, I began to see the sense in letting them believe that I was coming around to their point of view. In my mind I could see that if I could fool them into trusting me I might get back to England sooner". [257]

Pretending that is gradually becoming familiar of the life in Yemen, Zana enhances her plans with her attempt to learn Arabic in order to able to communication of natives and make her experience more public. The data below exhibits Zana's effort to lear:

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[256]Josh, Pallas(2016), "Fanon on Violence and Person" retrieved on (Jun, 20, 2018), from http://criticallegalthinking.com/2016/01/20/fanon-on-violence-and-the-person/

[257]Zana Muhcine, *Sold,* 2010, p.54.

> "Because no one to talk to me, I concentrated on learning to read and write Arabic before I could speak it. Abdul Khada gave me the alphabets and I worked from there, reading children's book or whatever was around. It was pretty straightforward. Whenever I asked for things like this he was willing to get then for me, which was unusual in that society" (p.90)

Zana's persistence to learn Arabic was encouraged by Abdul Khada not because he changed his attitude that women should not get access to education as it empowers them but rather he helped her to learn in order to avoid her asking about everything people said around her. Zana, in turn, take advantage of learning Arabic to easily communicate with people at the same time recognize whether they say the truth. Zana, furthermore, takes advantage of learning Arab to learn the Qur'an to interrogate the legality of her marriage and whether what happened to her and Nadia is right or wrong. Consequently, Zana discovers that her marriage is against the Islamic teachings since she is forced into a forbidden arranged marriage. Thus, Zana education proved to be of great use to her as she would use it against the men who have forced her into and illegal marriage. Mary Wollstonecraft said on the importance of education in empowering women that "in liberal feminism being active and educated women is kinds of women's struggle in order to they don't hanging out in the men's power, including knowledge, politic and economic" [258]

Zana took of the ability to communicate in two languages (Arabic and English) as an instrument through which she can pave the way for her escape from Yemen and rescue her sister. As far as the strategy of communication is concerned, Zana, Nadia and their mother tried to communicate with each other despite the ideological and geographic obstacles. First, Zana tried continuously contact her mother in England and tells her about

[258] Violence suffered by women in Zana Muhsen and Andrew Crofts's Sold

the conspiracy of her father and his Arab friends. When Zana was sick and went to see a doctor, she seized this opportunity and asked him to send a letter back to England. The doctor, being an educated men and sympathetic of what had happened to Zana, he accepted and keeps her letter secret except for his wife who helped in the pursuits of liberation. When the mother received the letter "Mum had gone mad at this, and screamed at him 'how could you, they are my babies! They are mine." [259],Miriam Muhsen started her campaign to bring her daughters back. She contacted different kinds of media, including newspapers, journals, and television which were involved in covering this story such as The Observer, The Independent, The Guardian, and a French television program. She was able to broadcast for her daughter's cause and show her side of the story. She succeeded in getting a wide range of interest and many agencies with the two government embassies were involved in this ordeal. Miriam was able to reach every possible means for her cause.

By so doing Zana and her mother make of their personal life a public and political issue making her voice heard on a metropolitan scale. They publicize women experiences in Yemen and unveil the discriminatory and violent politics, patriarchal power and patriarchal male-domination that they are surrounded with. Within the framework of the contention "Personal is Political", states that the personal relations must be understood as having political implications. That the inevitable conflicts between human beings must be understood in the context of a larger political pattern that advantages men over women. Women's personal unhappiness has political or social roots. That, no private institution including the family has the right to oppress or abuse the woman. Women's confession in public about their experience, i.e., the everyday experience of women's sexuality, family,

[259]Zana Muhcine, *Sold,* 2010, p.142.

private relationships, body, and the home is a sign of power.[260] That is, the Novel is viewed as valuable sources about emergence of a modern sense of self, of individualization and self-consciousness. In the milieu of Yemen, this autobiography enables us to render more intelligible the complex of forces at work in traditional societies. It resides on many of the major issues of gender, colonization, religion, social change, family and kinship and inter-relationality between self and society that govern the subcontinent.It also reflects her resistance personality that is made to challenge oppression. Making Zana's and Nadia's tragic stories public, their mother wrote a letter to the Queen with the help of Lynette and Mrs. Wellington.

> Lynette's Mum and Mrs. Wellington, who was a good friend to Mum, had also been helping her. She wrote a letter to the Queen asking for her help. A lady-in waiting had written back very sympathetically saying up that her letter had been passed on to the Foreing Office. Mum and Marry Birchel wrote to Nigal Cantwell, the chairman of the charity called Defense of Children International. [261]

The battle that Zana has launched in Yemen against patriarchy in all its manifestation was preceded by her mother who proved to be revolutionary character tha Abdul khada confesses that "Your Mum is very strong women. It is unbelievable what she has done for her kids." [262]Her ultimate goal was to uplift her story to the public in order put pressure on the officials to bring her children back. She proved to be able to bring three of her children

[260] Carol Hanisch, "The Personal is Political," in *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation: Major Writings of the Radical Feminists.* eds. Shulamith Firestone and Anne Koedt (New York: Radical Feminism, 1970), p. 76.

[261]Ibid., p. 143.

[262]Ibid., p. 188.

back except for Nadia whose situation was different given that no one can decide whether she stays in Yemen because she wants to or because she is obliged to. [263]

When Zana's Mother issued letters to the most influential people in England (the Queen, and Foreign Office) she discovered later that all those influential authorities could do is simply sympathies with her case, the result of which the mother decided to seek other forms of struggle to bring her daughter case into the centre. Thus, Zana mother engages the mass media including the live Television and Radio. The mother's struggle in England has been welcomed by many journalists who were moved by Zana's and Nadia stories and much eager to know and publish for them in order to for them to get free.

> We told as much as we could think of. She had brought us a letter from Mum, and she told us everything that Mum had been doing. Apparently my tape had been played to reporters who carried when they heard it, and some of it had been broadcasted on the radio. [264]

The sister's story was recorded by Eileen who got as much information as she could and take them back to England to be written a top stories in a Newspapers headline and be broadcasted on radio. When the story was broadcasted, the Entire England and beyond could directly hear from the victims about the human trafficking exercises on the name religious and patriarchy, the miserable condition the sisters were living in a deserted village in Yemen and as a result the Yemeni government inter in troublesome arguments

[263]The case of Nadia is still ambiguous since according to Zana and her mother Nadia is forced to stay and force also to say she is fine in there. Zana Muhsen tells as that after escaping captivity in Yemen she made a promise to Nadia that she would do impossible to obtain their freedom as well. That is, in Promise to Nadia (2000) Zana continous describing the plate of Nadia and futile compaign of the family against the Yemeni authorities as well as against their government which no more than sympathy.

[264]Ibid., p. 179.

with the British embassy and Abdul Khada finds himself defenseless on this matter. Publishing the stories, and broadcasting it in radio was an effective tool that contributes to the liberation of Zana from the captivity in Yemen as the Yemeni government was forced to give Zana her freedom to go back to England.

To sum up, Zana Muhsen's novel Sold remains of one the most authoritative resistant literary piece of writing for its courage to treat issues of human trafficking, international conspiracies, and pursuits of slavery in modern world. Though it is a heartbreaking story, the author use the power of the pen to deconstruct and decode the patriarchal history and write her-story of revolution, combat and confrontation with an unprecedented courage. Throughout the novel, Zana Muhsen endeavors to sensitize reader about women's human rights violation, gender discrimination, sexism, misogyny, and all the tradition patriarchal codes and practices that contributes to women's oppression in the Arab world and in the diaspora.Zana Muhsen makes of her story a historical document that incriminates persecution of Women worldwide and re-advenced the feminist the maxim "the Personal is political"[265] bringing about the so called women's personal problems into the political and public arenas. After escaping from the imprisonment in Yemen, Zana Muhsen believed that her struggle against women's oppression has not come to an end but rather it has embarked a new beginning to give women's personal and private problems political implications. Women's misery, abusiveness, and excommunication inevitably must be understood in the context of a larger political pattern that advantages men over women. Women's personal unhappiness has political or social roots. Zana Muhsen's confession in public about women's everyday experience of sexuality, family, private relationships, body, and the home is a sign of power. For these reasons, After Zana came back to England, her story become very popular and she and her mother were very famous.

[265]Carol Hanisch, "The Personal is Political," p. 76.

They committed themselves to continue fighting to get Nadia back to England and Zana decide to write a novel to inform reader let readers in and outside of England about what happened to them in the Yemen and in England. “Everyone was sympathetic, but no one knew what to do. I decided that I should write a book. I felt that if I could do that I would have something which I could use to publicizes Nadia’s plight.” [266] Zana’s Novel that we are reading now reflects the fact that Arab diaspora women writers share a rich and powerful history of resistance despite the attempts to silence and deem them invisible.

I- Obdurate Origins and Precarious Identities: Hybridity, Resistance and Trans-Cultural Dialogue

[266]Zana Muhcine, Sold, , p. 261.

Preliminary:

It has become commonplace to observe that the experience of colonization of the Islam and Arab world made the nature of West's relations with the Muslim Middle Eastern world mired in an intensifying cycle of political and cultural conflict, and that represents the most significant part of identity formation. Edward stated, as it has been dealt with in the first part of this study, says in his *Orientalism* (1978) that the Western world ruled the Eastern world for over 2,000 years time since the royal clash between the Greek West and the Persian East: "The other feature of Oriental-European relations was that Europe was always in a position of strength, not to say domination. [...] But the essential relationship, on political, cultural, and even religious grounds, was seen –in the West to be one between a strong and a weak partner". [267] He adds that in the period of colonialism following Western military conquest, there followed an epistemological imperialism of the East where western intellectuals and scholars appropriated and refashioned the Orient according to their political and colonial agendas. Said said respectively:

> Orientals or Arabs are shown to be gullible, "devoid of energy and initiative," much given to "fulsome flattery," intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals; Orientals cannot walk on either a road or a pavement (their disordered minds fail to understand what the clever European grasps immediately, that roads and pavements are made for walking); Orientals are inveterate liars, they are "lethargic and suspicious," and in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race. [...] The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, "different"; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, "normal." [...] so far as the West was concerned during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, an assumption had been made that the Orient

[267] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, p. 40.

and everything in it was, if not patently inferior to, then in need of corrective study by the West. [268]

The essentialization and homogenization of the Orientals under attributes of backwardness, savagery, irrationality etc and deeming the Western word as opposite of all of that creates frictions and clashing interests that overflow into the culture space, bringing about the politicization of identities and an escalator strife dynamic in which the fundamental values, convictions and morals of the "other" are viewed as problematic and hazardous.This atmosphere leads to uncertainty, doubt, and discourtesy in which endeavors to rule and dominate the Orient hinders the collaboration and aspiration of intercultural comprehension and mutual political accommodation.

On the other hand, the terrorist attack of the September 2011 and the War on Terror enact dramatic changes in the Arab image in the West generally and in American In specific. Agony, hater, scrutiny and violence against Arab and Muslim reached their extreme scale. Many it becomes a common sense that Muslims and Arabs after the 9/11 attacks are framedin Western media in a radicalized manner. Arabs were classified as the threatening “other” and depicted as inferior and “white but not quite” who do not fit into the American mainstream. This energize the Arab diaspora writers mainly women to write premeditated works to define Arab community in the US and correct the stereotypes of Arab in the eye of the west challenging the marginalization of Arab women on basis of their ethnic belonging and gender. That is, a survey of the literature written by and about Muslim women in the West demonstrates that Arab Muslim women are concerned with confronting and subverting racial stereotypes shedding new lights on Arab American and Arab British negotiation of identity, belonging and the roles of women in Islamic religion. Fadia Faqir, Naomi Shihab Nye, Diana abu Jaber, Randa abdelfatteh Mohja kahf among

[268]Ibid., pp. 38-41.

many other Muslim women writers in the West have betrothed in resisting this inaccurate portrayal of Muslim women and have ventured to construct place of agency, equality and respect for Arab women in Arab culture as well as a space of co-existence, cross-cultural dialogue and subjectivity in the Western ethnic borderland.

Having experienced colonialism and belonging to a postcolonial era Arab women diaspora writer engage a in a process of identity formation that primarily shaped by mobility and globalization. The Arab diasporas found themselves located in a place of liminality and, as a result, the common make up of their identity are "mimicry", "hybridity"[269]and "ambivalence". These peculiarities of identity resonate in most of Arab women diasporic literature in the sense that they portray their female protagonists as hybrid subjects who undergo various experiences in attempt to construct their subjectivity within the overpowering secularism of western culture. Faqir Faqir's *My Name is Salma* ,for instance, tells us about the precariousness of her female character who flee death of dishonor in her motherland to find herself in a state of in-betweeness. Faqir adopts a non-linear narrative form which is fashioned in mixing the present and the past, English and Arab and cross-cultural journey between Jordan and England. The young Arab Bedouin girl Salma grapes between two different identities and undergoes a life time journeying and the search of the self.

Perhaps, one of the common features of the majority of Arab diaspora female writers is ambivalence, journeying and resistance. Most of whom portray their female protagonists as revolutionary character who refuses to dwell one side of the hyphen. Yousef Awad Argues in his study of the works of Arab British and Arab American women's writing that "there

[269] Hybridity, according to Homi K. Bhabha's formulation, is undestood as argument against the concept of western liberal Multiculturalism that define boudaries of culture. The concept, in postcolonial studies, provides subaltrans and postcolonial subjects and with a way out to bypass the binary thinking and distablise dominenet powers.

is a tendency among Arab British women novelists to foreground and advocate trans-cultural dialogue and cross-ethnic identification strategies in a more pronounced approach than their Arab American counterparts who tend, in turn, to employ literary strategies to resist stereotypes and misconceptions about Arab communities in American popular culture." [270] For instance, the protagonist of My Name is Salma, who was born and raised in Arab culture and smuggled into a western Milieu could by the end of the novel celebrate cross-cultural identification and the convergence of the different cultures and languages in one entity. In contrast, Khadra Shamy in Kafh's The Girl in Tangerine Scarf has never been satisfied with her life in an American milieu in which Arabs are treated as an immortal enemy. Khadra keeps journeying through inconsistent cultures of the United States, Mecca, Syria and travelled to Philadelphia. She does not only embarks her journey for self-discovery but also for the same of resisting and correcting the misconception of her Arab affiliations. Khadra's voyages and mobility nourished the hybridization of her identity and straightened her understanding of herself as she returned a completely different person with new attitudes about herself and her religion.

Similarly, Aboulela's*The Translator*, sheds light of the different hardships Arab Muslim women encounter in the diaspora. Like khadra in The Girl in Tangerine Scarf, Sammar has akin motifs of journey which contribute to identity formation. Sammar, the protagonist of the novel, is a Sudanese woman who faces discouragement after the demission of her husband, she leaves everything in Sudan and escapes to Scotland imagining that she will overlook the past and begin another life. In Scotland, Sammar meets Dr. Rae Isle with whom she fall in love, yet, Rae"s refusal to convert to Islam, Sammar backpedals to Sudan where she starts to consider her life and future.

[270]Yousef Awad, "The Quest for self-discocery: A study of the Journey Motif in Kah's The Girl in Tangerine Scarf and Aboulela's the Translator," *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies (IJAES),* Vol. 16 (2016), p.26.

Consequently, her voyage to Sudan echoes the importance of mobility in shaping Sammar's personality and identity.

Reviewing some of the works of Arab women diaspora writings reveals the fact that Arab diaspora Literature is transnational in its innateness as it is the outcome of cross-cultural and cross-ethnic dialogue. It presents a hybrid genre whose main characters keep journeying on international level and cross the cultural boundaries in an attempt to bridge the divide between the east and the west and correct the fallacies as well as the misrepresentation of Arab Muslim women in western pop-culture. The character Salma, in *My Name Is Salma*, undergoes self-transformation to amalgamate British and Arab cultural components in a one hyphenated identity. Moreover, the two novels; The Girl in Tangerine Scarf and The Translatorare analogous specifically in terms of the journey motifs in the sense that the protagonists of the two novels undertake journeys of self-discovery. "There is a turning point in the life of each of the two protagonists that instigates a self-discovery journey. The turning point in Khadra's life is her divorce and her abortion, while Sammar's separation from Rae may be considered as a life changing event. Khadra learns how to be proud of all aspects of her hybridized identity and Sammar, at the end, learns how to clear her intention towards Rae's conversion. So, journeys are crucial for the protagonist's lives identity construction."[271]

Remarkably, the western literary context has witnessed the growing presence of the literary products of Arab women Diaspora writers. Author like Zana Mohcine, Najat El hachimi, Hohja Kahf, Lisa Suhair Majaj Etel Adnan, Naomi Shihab Nye, and Diana Abu Jaber have fundamentally strengthened Arab women communities in the diaspora and advocated the elimination of all forms of injustice, discrimination and favoritism against

[271] Ibid.,p. 29.

Arab Muslim women. They straggle not only with patriarchal dynasty in Muslim societies but also their works are often addressed to refashion US Orientalisms and global feminisms' stereotypes. In this chapter, the main aim is to extract the different forms and strategies of resistance employed by Arab women authors namely Fadia Faqir, Mohja Kahf whose narratives designed to fight women's double oppression of both colonial state legacies and patriarchal oppression and the strict Islamic gender codes. These issues are mainly analyzed through postcolonial lenses; theories of feminisms are used to analyze patriarchal gender discrimination while Stuart Hall conceptualization of identity, and Homi. K Bhabha's hybridity, ambivalence and Third space are applied to analyze home and identity construction in the two novels are used This chapter, therefore, argues that Arab women Diaspora namely the two mentioned writers use storytelling and double critique to refashion their hybrid identities and bridge the divide between the East and the West.

A- Reading Double Oppression and the Quest for Home and Identity in Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma*

Preminary

My Name is Salma is a feminist piece of writing which deals with ordeals of Arab Muslim women who are oppressed by archaic patriarchal codes and the aftermath of 'orientalism'. It was written by the Arab British feminist writer Fadia Faqir in 2006. Fadia Faqir was born in 1956 in Jordan (Amman). She has obtained her BA in English Literature from the University of Jordan (Amman), and her MA in creative writing at Lancaster University, England. Her PhD was obtained in 1990 in Critical and Creative writing from the University of East Anglia. She then worked as an editor or of *Arab WomenWriters Series*, which earned her 1995 New Venture Award. Fadia Faqir can be considered a defender of human rights, especially those of women in the Arab countries. She is as well a member of the Board of Al-Raida, which is a feminist journal published in Lebanon by the American University in Beirut. With regard to her own personal life which is reflected in her novel *My Name is Salma*. [272]

Fadia Faqir has many publications including novels, plays and articles most of which question the status of Arab women in Arab culture that are deeply embodied in her personal experiences as a woman. At the main time, her works transcend the cultural boundaries to give voice to voiceless and marginalized women immigrants in international societies. Andrew Vic Onlyango notes in his study of Identity Formation in *My Name is Salma* that Fadia Faqir's identity is multi-cultural as she is a product of both cultures. Writing about the experiences of people in Britain and in the East is a way for Faqir to come to terms with her multicultural identity. Andrew Vic Onlyango puts it clear that understanding Faqir's works entails knowing her life as she builds her writings on the ground of her experience in both Jordan and UK. Faqir dwells on the issue of the veil as it reveals the identity of the wearer and one of the issues facing Muslims in the West is the question of whether to wear or not to wear the *hijab.* Thedilemma of the Hijab resonates in

[272]Nayera, El Miniawi(2016), "The Crisis of Identity in My Name is Salma" retrieved on (Aril 04, 2019), retrieved on (date), from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313350785

Faqir's writing specifically *My Name is Salma*. Arguably, Faqir's Islam and conception of the hijab have been influenced by her personal life experiences and the position of the woman in Muslim societies. Later in borderland wearing or not wearing the hijab presented a real challenge for Fadir as she reflected it in her *My name is Salma*. It seems that the author attends to express her personal fluctuation with the veil through the character Salma because, in many Arab and Islamic societies, wearing the veil is not a personal choice but rather an obligation.

In addition to the issue of the veil, Faqir dwells on the issues of honour killing as a fundamental cultural practice in her mother land Jordan. She draws her personal life in her novel *My Name is Salma* which represents the deprivation, the exile and the suffering of losing one's enfant. Salma's lose of her baby girl resembles Faqir's experience of losing the custody of her son. Faqir shows how her personal experiences influenced her portrayal of her characters and the themes in this novel and in her other novels. She describes Salma, her novel's principal character, as being close to her: "She is part of me, yet not me";
Fadir says in an interview "I felt such a failure; I was riddled with guilt. I started writing because it was the only way out of this.. Verging on the edge of madness. It was perhaps a way to talk to my son. Perhaps it's a long letter to him, all of it."[273]. The analysis of the novel unquestionably reveals the extent to which Fadia Faqir is one the Arab Feminists writers who have devoted themselves to women's emancipation, equality and agency not only in The Arab world but the western world as well.

Fadia Faqir's novel narrates the story of an Arab Muslim young woman from Jordan. Salma, aged sixteen years, was born in Hima where she falls in love with a Bedouin young man and begin to arrange dating and meetings despite the rigidity of their

[273] Lindsey Moore, ""You Arrive at a Truth, Not the Truth": An Interview with Fadia Faqir" *Postcolonial Text*, 6: 2 (2011), p. 2.
Ibid.,

society. Their love relationship developed with time and they had a sexual relationship outside the marriage wedlock the result of which Salma becomes pregnant. When she tells her boyfriends about her pregnancy, and his promises of marriage, he rejects her accusing her of seducing him to commit unforgiveable sin and considers her a 'whore' who does not deserve to be married to "You are responsible. You have seduced me with the yearning of your pipe and swaying hips" [274]. Salma finds herself in charge of the 'crime' and knows that her shameful act of harming the honour of her family would not be purifies except with her death. Consequently, Salma, with the help of her teacher, was put in Jail to avoid being shot between the eyes, than she was shipped to Lebanon and to England where she reinvented herself and home. However, the novel ends dramatically with a tragic death of Salma exactly as her mother foretells "You smeared our name with tar. Your brother will shoot you between the eyes".[275]

In the British Borderland, Salma was destined to experience different forms of oppression as an Arab uneducated woman. As it is well known, the bombings of the world trade towers in New York on the 11th of September 2001 dramatically changed the landscape of the west-east relations into blatant binary opposites of us and them. Within the western hemisphere, the repercussions of the 9/11 continue to be felt by minority Muslim communities living within the larger non-Muslim mainstream society such as America and Britain. The heightened tension has escalated into a new discourse termed Islamphobiacausing Islam to be regarded as "a source of intolerance, extremism and terrorism, one whose adherents are out to destroy Western values." Muslims living in the West, especially those who overtly exercise their religious sensibilities, be that in the form of the hijab for women or beard for men, bear the brunt of xenophobia exhibited by the

[274]Fadia Faqir. My Name Is Salma (USA: New York, 2007),p. 177.
[275]Ibid., p. 13.

mainstream society. This panel presentation sets out to address the issue of Islamophobia in fiction. The main premise of the presentation is to problematize the experience of being a Muslim minority as narrated in post 9/11 fiction of women. How did the 9/11 bombings affect the Muslim's sense of reality as a member of religious and cultural minority? What multifaceted realities are Muslims in the west, be that born Muslims or reverts, exposed to? These issues will be examined based on the selected fiction by Muslim women writers in America and Britain. That is, in the upcoming two sections, the attempt will be made in order to examine how Salma is doubly oppression by her Bedouin traditional society on the basis of her gender as a woman and on the one hand by her adopted Western society where she is marginalized on the basis of her ethnic background as an Arab. The two different cultures; Arab culture and Western culture constitute a double oppression to Arab women. These two sections will look also at the different strategies of resistance and integration employed by the character to construct her own home and identity.

1- Reading Primitivism and Honour Crime through a Feminist Perspective

Fadia Faqir is one of the Arab feminist and diaspora writers who engage in criticizing the Arab patriarchy and questions the oppression of Arab Muslim women in the name of Islam which is intertwined with Arab tradition and culture. Like many Arab female writers, Faqir uses her works to fight against her society's traditional norms that

relegate Arab women to state of powerlessness and voicelessness. In her writing either prose or critical, Faqir tries to display that Arab women are oppression and subjugated by the traditional norms of their honour based-societies because of their gender as women. In this novel, Faqir chooses Bedouin society because it is proud of its old norms and traditions. Bedouin people still have their own way of life in the Arab World and are still "congregated in groups, families, clans, tribes, and have their individual culture and laws which are deeply rooted in their behaviour.

Bedouin societies are renowned for their caring about certain cultural and moral norms such as honour, courage, hospitality and fortitude. In this novel, Fadia Faqir exposes patriarchal coercion and the inaccurate interpretation of Islamic teachings which subsidize the violation of Arab women's human rights. From a feminist perspective, this section is meant to question the cultural aspects and the social traditions pertaining to the issue of honour crime and the role play by patriarchal system in enacting, and perpetuating this tradition.From a postcolonial feminist perspective, honour crime and gender discrimination faced by Arab women in general and Jordan and beyond are explored. Through the dialogic narrative in *My Name is Salma,* Faqir decodes the persecution of a young woman and the exilic trauma in Britain as a result of honour crimes.

Speaking on the issue of honour killing, it is defined as honour based violence that includes physical harm injury, and killing or psychological harm like threatening, singling out and persecutions. Honour based violence occurs when a female relative is perceived to smear the family honour by having a sexual relationship outside the marriage wedlock. The cultural belief of honour crime is not exclusive to only the Bedouin societies but also in some Arab and Muslim communities with varying degree of intensity. This practice is deeply rooted in most Arab honour based-societies like Jordan. Gill Aisha explains that the

concept of honour crimes includes all forms of violence directed towards individuals in the name of honour. It is a punishment that aims at cleansing the dishonour through the use of emotional, social or physical coercion against a female relative whose behavior crossed a fundamental cultural boundary. The punishment involves the killing of the transgressor of the code of honour. Honour killing is in general defined as: "the murder of women for suspected deviation from sexual norms imposed by society". Perpetrators are not only the husbands or partners of the victim, but other male or female family or community members can carry out the act. [276]

These definitions are very useful for the purpose of the study since Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma*, explores the cultural aspects and the social traditions pertaining to the issue. It maps out the general constitutional violence perpetuated against females within the framework of patriarchal structures. Through the protagonist Salma, Faqir displays the different scenarios women, who are engaging in, or being suspected of engaging in, sexual practices before or outside marriage, go through. The character of Salma is the first female to be suspicious of bringing shame and dishonor to her family where her mother anticipated protagonist's ultimate tragic death saying "You smeared our name with tar, your brother will shoot you between the eyes" [277]

The novel reports a number of honour killing of female 'sinner' in the village of Hima while Salam is the last to be shot between the eyes by her brother Mahmoud whose duty is to purify the family's dignity and reputation. One should note that the family honour can only be tarnished if a female relative engages in inappropriate sexual behavior as Pitt Rivers notes in his article *Honour and social status* that, "The honour of a man is involved therefore sexual purity of his mother, wife and daughters, and not in his own".He

[276]Aisha Gill, "IN Honour Killing and the Quest for Justice in black and minority Ethnic communities in in the UK," *Criminal Justice Policy Review,* 20:4 (2009). p. 477.

[277]Fadia Faqir, *My Name is Salma*. p.37.

futher argues that" The honour of a man and of a woman therefore imply quite different modes of conduct. This is so in any society. A woman is dishonored, loses her vergüenza, with the tainting of her sexual purity, but a man does not".[278] The Egyptian feminist Nawal El Saadawi share the same stance arguing that "the man's honour is safe as long as the female members of his family keep their hymens intact". [279]

What this implies in the fact that honour and reputation of the family according the Jordan 'society is related to women's sexuality and thus this institutional code is primarily meant to restrict women's freedom of the body and sexuality. For instance, Salma has always been under the control of her father and brother. Her father imposes on her to wear the traditional "black Bedouin madraga" [280]which cover her whole body. He also observes the development of her body as she grows into an attractive woman and ordered her "Your breasts are like melons, cover them up! My father haj Ibrahm would said" [281] last she might seduce male in the village. Salma's brother, on the other hand, is deemed superior to her whose fundamental duty is to exercise certain vanquish over his sister. Salma said, "My brother Mahmoud kept an eye on me while brushing his horse. I started hunching my back to hide my breasts, which were the first thing Hamda, noticed about me"[282].

The implication that this statement yields is that women's bodies don't belong to them but rather to their male guardians. The author shows that freedom of the body and sexuality is censored in Arab Islamic word and in Jordan in particular. Faqir notes "I was forced to wear the veil by my father, a reluctant tyrant. He imposed things on us like praying five times a day, a 7 p.m. curfew… all kinds of things that made me react against

[278] Jullian Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and social status," *in Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society,* ed. J. G. Peristiany(London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965). p. 20.

[279] Nawal El-Saddawi, *TheHidden Face of Eve. Women in the Arab World* (Translated and ed. By Sherif, Hetata. London: Zed Books Ltd, 1980), p. 117.

[280]Fadia Faqir, *My Name is Salma*. p.13.

[281]Ibid., p. 13.

[282]Ibid., p. 13.

institutional religion. Some of my siblings and I felt like we were in a camp, a confined space, an army, and that our father treated us like cadets." [283] In this interview Faqir unveils the fact that her relation to Islamic religion is much more about obligation and imposition rather than a personal choice or out of personal conviction which she reflects in her novel through the character Salma.

To unmask gender based discrimination and the biased nature of Jordan patriarchal society, Salma recounts her love story with Hamdan which is more a master- slave relation rather than love and romantic relation. Hamdan, as Salma recounts, perceives her as his own slave, whore and simply a body he uses to please his voyeuristic desires. In the novel, Salma fell in love with a young Bedouin man whose handsome look and gaze makes her heart melts. She follows her grandmother advice to "follow your heart always daughter of mine"[284]. The two young loves arranged meetings under dark and in remote place for fear to be seen together in the village. Despite the rigidity of their community, they ventured to cross the social red lines by practices sex outside marriage contract. However, Hamdan has never reacted to Salma as an equal partner. When arranging to meet, "If I were not waiting for him out there among the vines Hamdan would make a shrill sound as if he were calling his dog back to the barn"[285] . Hamdan used to dehumanizes Salma calling her with shrill, the same manner he used to call his dog. This implies, in simple terms, that Arab women in many Arab societies are value free in Jordon particularly if they give themselves to a man they love.

In the novel, there is no single statement that indicates that Hamdan and Salma are equal, he never uses her name to call but rather Salma is conceived of as a worthless slave

[283] Lindsey Moore. "You Arrive at *a* Truth, Not *the* Truth," p. 1.
[284]Ibid., p. 31.
[285]Ibid., p. 50.

and ‘whore’ “My whore is still here! He would say and take me quickly”[286]. In the opposite, Salma, being born and raised a society that favors men, addressed her lover with glorious attributes “He would tag at my hair and say ‘you are my courtesan, my slave. Yes master, I would say”[287]

Salma’s life turns upside down when she discovers that she is pregnant from the man she trusted most and dared to give her life to him. She realized that Hamdan’s promises of marriage "our wedding camel caravan crossing the village, carrying us to our own dwelling" (p.177) were simply plots to objectify her and please his sexual needs until he knows about her pregnancy. At this particular moment, Hamdan put off the mask to show his tyrannical patriarch face holding her responsible over the deed. "You are responsible. You have seduced me with the yearning of your pipe and swaying hips"[288]. What Fadia Faqir intends to echoes is that only women become responsible for the violation of cultural code of sexuality without taking into consideration the responsibility of the man. Men are set free and reflect the undemocratic basis of Bedouin society. Many feminist, indeed, get frustrated at the fact that women’s sexuality and bodies are not their own as they cannot do what men can do with their bodies and in case there a violation of honour codes of sexuality, the woman only is hold responsible though both are partners the committing of a wrong deed. This practice ultimately leads to the woman becoming the singular victim of her community’s unjust traditions. In this respect, Salma‘s life becomes in real danger as her name was put in the black list of Bedouin honour code. Her father and brother will not sleep a wink until they purify their family name with her blood. “I will never hold my head high as long as she is breathing, said my father.” [289]

[286]Ibid., p. 36.
[287]Ibid., p. 50-51.
[288]Ibid., p. 177.
[289]Ibid., p. 111.

Reading Salma's situation from a feminist standpoint, the crime against women committed on the name of honour is, in fact, an instrument and a part of a broader pattern of patriarchal domination and control of women bodies, sexuality and life. This brutal penalty is meant to trace the frontiers of an illicit acts deemed condemned by society. At the same time, it is meant to give a direct or a symbolic lesson to other members of the community on the consequences of honour code violation. Nayera El Miniawi observes that, "Traditions and religion play a significant propelling agent in the events of the novel. What has come to be known as the 'crime of honour' was the engulfing issue in the story of Salma. Salma, who escaped safely to England, is constantly haunted by the imaginary revengeful figure of her brother. She is also haunted by her own guilty conscience."[290]In the case of Salma, she is incriminated alone for the commitment of adultery wile Hamdan, who played a part in the whole scenario, is actually held free and no one accused or promised to kill him as a result. This means that Salma is more victim than a doer. She is a victim of her society and a victim of man who prejudge her leaving no chance to her to defend herself. Salma becomes a whore and slut in the eyes of her community as Lila Abu-Lughod observes:

> The more women are able to deny their sexuality, the more honorable they are […]the modest woman admits no interest in men, and makes no attempt to attract them through behavior or dress, and covers up any indicator of sexual or romantic attachment (even in marriage). The woman who does't is called a 'slut' (qhaba) or a 'whore' (sharmuta).[291]

[290]Nayera El Miniawi, "Cross cultural communication in my name is Salma, "My name is Salma-By Fadia Faqir," *Global Journal of Art and Social Science Education*, 3:1 (2015), p. 63.

[291]Geoffrey Nash, *The Anglo-Arab Encounter: Fiction and Autobiography by Arab Writers in English*, (Germany: Internation Academic Publishers, Bern, 2007), pp.128-129.

Thus, being a woman, Salma has to struggle alone against is the gender-phobic codes of traditional Arab society since her 'offence' cannot be construed except with having her bloodshed. The novel seems to point out that Salma stands for and document Jordanian women precarious set of life experiences within the patriarchal Honour based-regime. Through Salma, Faqir could highlight the traumatic experience of fragmentation, disconnectedness, persecution and numerous honour killing that Salma had witnessed before she was killed by her chauvinist brother. When her irresponsible lover deserted her, Salma's life turns into an endless night mar. After her family had discovered about her pregnancy and Salam's attempts of abortion were futile, Salam's name joined the honour black list and was, consequently, sentenced to death. Salma could never escape her death penalty without the help of her school teacher Miss Nailah "I rushed in then stood in the middle of room. Beating my chest with my right hand, 'I place myself in Allah's protection and yours. Miss Nailah. What is it? I am pregnant".[292]

As a consequence, Salma will be set free from prison after eight years of suffering and detachment from her family and mainly daughter. Her school teacher knew that Salma is not going to live longer if she remains in Jordan and with the help of the prison governor and Khairiyya she was shipped to Lebanon to start a new life. Despite the fact that she will live all her life, friends and family behind, Salma was delighted to get out of prison. "My mind was kissing everything: the spacious blue sky, the green plains, and the large trees, even the donkeys and other cars. I was free"[293]. later, because her brother was an insistence persecutor and follow her footsteps, Salma was obliged to flee to Lavant in Lebanon and later to Britain to avoid her imminent death. Andrew Vic Onyango observes that:

[292]Fadia Faqir, *My Name is Salma*. P.68.
[293]Ibid., p. 70.

"Honour" killing is important in the process of Salma's identity formation in that it is the cause of her flight from the Levant to Britain. After her arrival in Britain, Salma is still haunted by the ghosts of her past in Hima. She keeps imagining that her brother Mahmoud is out on the loose in Britain in an attempt to hunt her down and kill her. She reslects her agony saying "[...]dark figures behind the curtained and said " yalah, tukhni wkhalisni / shot me and let me get it done. It will be my deliverance"[294].

As a fugitive, Salma could never avoid feeling guilty over her past sins and blames herself to let her baby daughter in the hands of her merciless brother and father. In fact, this introduces the reader to another aftermath of hounor killing phenomenon mainly psychological violence. The feelings of shame, guilt and humiliation accompanies Salma throughout her entire life in Britain, she reflects this through "When he finally let go of me I was so sad to be still alive. I deserved to be mocked, beaten, even killed. I abandoned her, let them take her away"[295]. Layla, the abandoned daughter of Salma is also a victim of honour crime. Her uncle Mahmoud drowns her in the Long Well claiming that Layla has also brought dishonour to the family"s name just like her mother given that she is the product of Salma"s sexual relations.

In many ways, Fadia's *My Name is Salma* is first a response to the experiences of pain and sufferings of women in Jordan. It is ought to be read as a resistant literature as it unmasks the gendered power relation where decades of patriarchal exploitations and aggression are answered by the author through the character of Salma who rejects the culture on which the men's supremacy is founded. The novel tackles one of the most internationally controversial issue pertaining to the Arab culture namely hounor crime. The

[294]Ibid., p. 97.
[295]Ibid., p. 41.

later, as Faqir intended to show, is deeply rooted in many Arab societies and it is intertwined with Jordanian collective patriarchal cultural beliefs and it constitutes a strong apparatus of patriarchal domination over Arab women. Dealing with such an issues, in fact, is a courageous gesture of liberation. *My Name is Salma* represents the life of women who violated their society's cultural norms and consequently were sentenced to death. None of the females who are suspected of an illicit love affair or dared to crossing the hounor codes could escape imminent death including Salma.

In sum, Fadia Faqir's novel documents the plight of so many young girl who have been tormented by their tradition and cultural honour codes. Despite her living in the west, Faqir revisit her home and Arab world through her writings. Faqir reflects her views on the Arab and Islamic culture and the ways in which women within this network are subjected to the well of patriarchy. In *My Name is Salma*, the author exhibits how because, of honour codes of Jordan, her character undergoes a detrimental journey from the East to the West, from the Arab village of Hima in Jordan to the western English city of Exeter and from life to death. "The story is one of a physical and psychological journey from innocence to experience, from an Arab set up and Arabic language to an English environment and English language and culture, and Faqir is one of the Arab novelists who write in English and live in the West without forgetting the issues of the Arab and the Muslim world."Salma's flight to Lebanon and to England is an allegory of running away from a dark past and menacing culture she says: "Like a key witness in a Mafia crime case I changed my name, address, past and even changed countries to erase my footsteps"[296]. Even in England, she has to change her identity in order to skirt being hunted in her new adopted land. Salma engages in a process of identity formation where she transforms herself from a traditional Bedouin Arab woman to a person whose identity amalgamates

[296]Ibid., p. 249.

between Western liberated standards and Arab Islamic aspects. In the following section, the attempt will be made in order to analyze the alienation, resistance and identity construction in My Name is Salma.

2- From Ambivalence to the recreation of hybrid Identity in British Ethnic Borderland

Being a prominent feminist voice of the Middle East,Fadia Faqir, through *My Name is Salma*, sensitizes and inflames the public of gender discrimination, misogyny and hounor based violence prey upon Arab women in many conservative Arab societies particularly in Jordan. However, Faqir's novel goes beyond the exploration of honour based victimization to centralize on the experience of immigration, diaspora, and the marginalization Arab minorities encounter in British ethnic borderland. The most important remarks many critics note on Faqir's literary works is her attempts to foreground trans-cultural and cross-ethnic identifications. Yousef Abu Amrieh argues that "the tendency among Arab British women novelists to foreground and advocate trans-cultural dialogue and cross-ethnic identification strategies in a more prominent compared with Arab American writers who are more oriented towards employ literary strategies to resist stereotypes and misconceptions about Arab communities in American popular culture."[297] In *My Name Is Salma,* the protagonist is represented as Arab a character whose social and cultural background and journeying through geographic and cultural boundaries contributed to the transformation of her identity. Salma is depicted as an Arab British subject whose hybrid identity is constructed in light of the precarious positions she occupies while journeying through cultures.

[297] Yousef Awad, *The Arab Atlantic: Resistance, diaspora, and trans-cultural dialogue in the works of Arab British and Arab American women writers*, (Saarbrucken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012), p. 5.

Moreover, Faqir's novel opens original insights of Arab women diaspora experiences as she highlights the marginalization of a particular category of Arab women immigrants namely the uneducated, and unskilled young female immigrants. Nash notes that the focus on Salma's experiences in Britain is powerful. He rightly points out that the novel presents a theme that has not been explored adequately by previous Arab British novelists since the eponymous protagonist is an Arab woman refugee rather than an educated middle class Arab woman. [298] In this regard, the novel appraises the protagonist's maneuver and procedures to engender cross-ethnic identification and bridge the gap between the West and the East. This section explores the sense of otherness and alienation embodied in Fadia Faqir's *My Name is Salma* as well as the transitional experience toward a multicultural hybrid identity in a postcolonial Western context.

The experience of otherness and alienation resonate throughout the novel since Salma, as a black Arab Boudioun woman is not welcomed into the British social fabric. In fact, the marginalization of Arabs and the uncertainty of their ethnic classification is not current issue but it has a long history. In British ethnic and racial discourse, Arabs remain unrecognized racial category and rendered invisible minority in the Britain.

In this broader perspective, Fadia Faqir intends to defend Arab minority rights in the diaspora. In her novel, she foregrounds the dilemma of Arab refugees and subalterns who are rendered invisible by virtue of their ethnicity and their social status. The character of Salma dramatizes and rearticulated the double oppression, racism, and cultural alienationwomen just like her encounter while contemplating self-discovery and self-realization in the UK. As a woman, Salma is not only tormented when she crossed her conservative society's hounor code and Brokenhearted to have her baby daughter taken

[298] Ibid., p. 64.

from her custody but also her exile to Exeter in England exacerbate her feeling of dislocation. She has to deal with the hardships of living in milieus where the individual is luminal.When Salma inroads the British mise en scène and as veiled Muslim woman she encounters bigotry as she happens to be in an unsympathetic culture toward the head scarves and a country where Islam and religious affiliations are generally questioned. Salma is detained by the immigration authorities for two months where she reports racial maltreatment from the Prison guard who asked the Porter where is she from, she answers that Salma is an Arab, he responds "Fucking Arabic! She rode a camel all the way from Arabia to this dump in Exeter, he said and laughed" [299]. The Porter also reproduces the same racial discourse and stereotypical attitude vis-à-vis Arab when refuses to share the room with Salma "I am not going to share the room with an Arab's she spat"[300]. Moreover, Salma is always obliged to hide her origin and Arab identity in order to be accepted into the British socio-cultural and economic sphere. When she meets an English man (David) who asked about her origin, Salma discards her real belonging and lied that she is Spanish otherwise she is to be rejected. She says in this vein: "If I told him that I was a Muslim Bedouin Arab woman from the desert on the run he would spit out his tea.'I am originally Spanish"[301].

Based on Salma's disclosure, Arab women refugee in particular are perceived as other who doesn't fit into the British Western entourage since she faces antipathy from people around her because ethnicity as oriental woman. Obviously, British people perceive Arabs through an orientalist perspective and are deemed them inferior to the people from the West. This reminds us again of Edward Said's conceptualization of the orient. He says in Orientalism that:

[299] Fadia Faqir, My Name is Salma. p. 51/
[300]Ibid., p. 15.
[301]Ibid., p. 30.

> Arabs, for example, are thought of as camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers whose undeserved wealth is an affront to real civilization. Always there lurks the assumption that although the Western consumer belongs to a numerical minority, he is entitled either to own or to expend (or both) the majority of the world resources. Why? Because he, unlike the Oriental, is a true human being".[302]

The way Salma is fantasized and dehumanized reminds of the old-fashioned prejudices that were produced centuries ago and still persist and recycled in the western mainstream media and popular culture mainly after the drastic events of 9/11. It should be noted that the way the Orientals are portrayed in Western media aggravate the feeling of estrangement of Salma as she is treated on the based on those stereotypes.

Salma, an Arab refugee, is not acknowledged a full citizen in Britain but rather she is always made invisible. She is not considered a human being who can walk on the same footing with British people. This marginalization is reflected in Salma's saying "He kept me in the background and never called me to the front of the shop while he had customers around"[303]. The Restaurant owner believes that Salma is a different other whose Arab feature and black skin would impact his business as British people are not ready yet to accept the presence of a traditional Arab woman around them. The Restaurant owner alsoconsiders Salma to be an exotic other and he treated her accordingly by putting her in the shadow.

Fadia Faqir wants us enter into Salma's skin to experience displacement, depreciation and exclusion Arab minorities face in British context. This fact is reinforced through many characters in the novel who fail to recognize Salma as an Arab woman. For instance, neither the Prison guard nor her boss Mr. Max acknowledge her origin as an

[302]Edward Said, *Orientalism,* p. 108.
[303]Fadia Faqir, My Name Is Salma.p.277.

Arab. When Salma reached England "the guard pointed at my veil and said Turkish"[304]. Additionally, Salma's boss "I fore saw with dread the next few minutes. How many times had I been asked this question since I came to Britain? After years of working in his shop, Max, my boss, still asked, where did you say? Shaaami Hiiimaa?" (68). These abstracts clearly imply Arab as ethnicity is dismissed and meant to be ignored in British ethnic and racial discourse which makes Salma and a majority of Arab women maximize their feeling of isolation "much like a tree without roots"[305].

Andrew Vic Onyango remarks in his study of Fadia Faqir's novel *My Nam is Salma* that: "As an Arab immigrant in England, Salma is a subaltern who has been condemned by the society to a life on the fringes. Mainstream English society does not care about her, cannot see her and is therefore oblivious of her presence. For them, she does not exist. This is aptly depicted when Salma writes her university essay for Dr. Robson; her conclusion is about her experience as an alien in England: "They, and I, think I do not live here, but I do, just like all the women who were ignored in those tales"[306]. As Salma is alien, English society does not care about her and is put in the hyophen.".The same stance is held by Suaad Muhammad Alqahtani who believes that being Arab, Salma must also suffer marginalisation, racial slurs, and sexual exploitation in England. Salma could not understand why people in England "look at [her] all [the] time as if [she had a] disease" (p.102). Her alienation is aggravated by her life in this culture that "enforces the supremacy of everything that is Christian, Western, [and] white".[307]

Salma complains

[304]Ibid., p. 116.
[305]Ibid., p. 111.
[306]Ibid., p. 221.
[307] Suaad Muhammad Alqahtani, "Western Feminism or Return to Authentic Islam? Jordanian Women in Faqir's Pillars of Salt and My Name is Salma,"*AWEJ for Translation & Literary Studies*, 1:2 (2017), p. 82.

sarcastically saying: “I could hear it sung everywhere in the cathedral, ‘Where Do You Come From?’ Sometimes even the cows on the hills would line up, kick their legs in unison and sing, ‘Where do you come from, you? Go home![308]

The frequent incidents of marginalization, both in her motherland and in the exile, consequently, increase Salma sense of alienation and disharmony with British people and even with herself. The novel is full of images and scenes that recount the feelings of cultural alienation from the very moment reached Exeter “I had tasted my first fish and chips, but my mountainous Arab stomach could not digest the fat, which floated in my tummy for days”[309]. The taste of food seem uneasy to swallow for Salma since she is used to different taste in Hima and even different eating habits in the sense that in her village she used to eat with her bare hands but in Lebanon, she is exposed to eating with knife and fork. As far as Salma’s appearance and dressing style is concerned, Salma appears alien even to herself in her black Bedouin madraqa robe. The later, refers to her traditional society but in British society Salma feels that is a different other. For instance, when Salma check out the newspaper for a job, she finds out that she is far away from the requirement of a suitable Sales girl.“I was neither presentable nor able to speak English well. Nothing that would suit a woman like me with no looks, no education, no experience and no letters of recommendation.”[310]Salma’s awareness of herself as a culturally dislocated object after years of stay in Exeter and being seen as strange and invisible makes her realize how difficult it is to live a an alien traditional woman she says which was “how immigration officer described me […]every morning, I was reminded of my alieness”[311].

[308]Fadia Faqir, My Name Is Salma.p.167.
[309]Ibid., p.9.
[310]Ibid., p. 17.
[311]Ibid., p. 27.

The repeated encounters with racism, and bigotry and Salma's realization that "It was not easy living here in England as an 'alien'" [312] contributed extensively to the protagonist identity construction since she realized that in order for her to fit into her newly adopted society she must adjust her identity with the prerogative of British society at the same time conserve her Arab Muslim roots. Salma realize that "Salma resisted, but Sally must adapt"[313] and with the help of her Pakistani friend Parvin, she begin her journey of identity formation to adapt to diasporic life. Following Stuart Hall conceptualization of postcolonial identity that one's identity is never static and unchanged and that person's identity construction is greatly influenced by the environment in which one lives. Our protagonist employs different strategies of assimilation and resistance to form her won subjectivity that blurs the East/ West boundaries. Stuart Hall insists in Cultural Identity and Diaspora that cultural identity:

> Is a matter 'becoming as well as 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories, but like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to continuous 'play' which is history, culture and power. [314]

Stuart Hall's premise on Cultural Identity which undergoes constant transformation is of great consistence with and very relevant to analysis of Salma's Identity transformation since Salma forms her own individuality based on her past experiences and future Horizons. The protagonist's identity is subject to transformation from the very moment she

[312] Ibid., p. 37.
[313] Ibid., p.9.
[314] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," p. 225.

leaves Hima toward Lebanon and later to England given that she goes through unique experience in her new adopted environment. When Salam flees away from her village in which she is sentenced to death, her adopter, Miss Asher, changes her name from Salma Ibrahim El-Musa to Sally Asher taking an English name. Having an English name and moving to England embody very courageous step in process of Salma's identity formation. However, Salma was resistant to change but she wants to keep her Arab Islamic "No I want Arab name"[315] except for the fact that if she uses her Arab name she will be considered a foreign students and pay the university fees and also she may be sent back to her homeland. For this reason and in order to keep her Arab along with an English name Salma opted for a hybrid name "Sal". Nayera El Miniawi contends that "In '*My Nameis Salma'*, the heroine is obsessed of her name. The meaningful quality of the name identifies the individual with the collective, and it is this communal self that Salma wants to retain. "Salma uses the diminutive 'Sal' to avert confusion over the second part of her name, the encasing part. Sal is the interstitial person slipping into being Salma or being Sally". "[316]

As it has been explore previously, the protagonist seems unfit to her new environment given that she suffers immense racism and marginalization to the extent that she is looked at like a 'disease' Salma has no option but to reinvent herself by embracing a hybrid identity. While in Exeter, the protagonist finds it difficult to integrate in British economic life particularly with her headscarf and loose clothes that connate her Islamic and Arab origin. This fact is manifested in a conversation between Salma and her guide friend Pervan. Parvin says: "We have to look for a job, said Parvin, but I must ask you about the scarf you keep wearing' people look at me all the time as if I am disease said.[317] At first,

[315]Fadia Faqir, *My Name is Salma*.p184.

[316]Nayera, El Miniawi(2016), "The Crisis of Identity in My Name is Salma" retrieved on (Aril 04, 2019), retrieved on (date), from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313350785

[317]Fadia Faqir, My Name is Salma.p123.

Salma could not put off her veil without which she feels naked. Salma considers putting off her hijab as 'I cannot take off veil, sister. My country, my language, my daughter. No piece of cloth. Feel naked me."[318]. Fadia Faqir say on the situation Salma is put in that Salma "has to take it off in Britain because her friend Parvin keeps saying ―you'll never get a job with that on. It is painful for her, taking it off, the hardest thing she has ever done. She feels as if she were severing herself from her language, culture and class."[319]This reflects the protagonist ambivalence and fluctuation between two identities and two different opposing cultures in which she is confused whether to adhere to the culture in which she was born and arise or assimilate the culture that adopts her.

Despite the fact that the protagonist desires to keep strong ties with her Arab Islamic culture, she decides to take of her veil in view to be integrated and welcomed into British economic fabric. Salma says: "I looked again at my reflection then slowly began untying the knot of my white veil. I slid it off, folded it and placed it on the bed. I pulled my hair out of the elastic band and tossed it out" [320]. On the one hand, discarding the veil does not only reflect the protagonist endeavor to sound more British but also it symbolizes a revolutionary act against the traditional patriarchal institution that oppresses women in the Arab world. As matter of fact, the veil was imposed on Salma by her father back in Hima while in England; Salma takes advantage from the liberation the West offers her to rebel against the Patriarchal 'Islamic' institutions. In most of Fadia Faqir's writing, she endeavors to echoed her critiques of the Islam or more precisely the male interpretation of Islamic religion that contributes to the subjugation of Arab women. In the novel, the protagonist is subject to different forms of gender-based discrimination which are

[318]Ibid., p.165.

[319]Lindsey, Moore. "You Arrive at a Truth, Not the Truth": An Interview with Fadia Faqir," *Postcolonial Text,* 6 : 2 (2011), p. 6

[320]Fadia Faqir, *My Name si Salma*. p129.

legitimated on the name Islam. The protagonist reflect these notions saying that "They put us in prison, took away our children, killed us and we were supposed to say God was only testing his true believers"[321]. In the same regard, Salma continuous reinventing herself and constructing a life, an identity and a space of her own following her friend's advice.

Parvin advices Salma that she should "Groom yourself! Beautify yourself! Sell yourself! You are in the West now.[322]So that she can follow the steps of western women and hold a mirror up to modern British society. Salma behaves accordingly throwing away her traditional Bedouin dress "I was ready to go out for a walk. I wore blue jeans, a T-short and tried veil under my chin out"[323]to become the sophisticated English Sally. Having said that the protagonist seems revolutionary against religion or rather the biased interpretation of the Islamic teachings, the protagonist is no long that devotee Muslim woman as she used to be in Hima. Salma no longer does her five prayers a day and yet she considers herself to be a Muslim given that she does not have a boyfriend. Sadiq observes that: "You have even forgotten how to pray to Allah" he said what about you? Praying all the time and selling alcohol to in fedels. Business is business also" [324]he observes also that Salma has changed considerably in the sense that she seems more British simi-practicing Muslim woman. Sadiq says "Salma, Salma, you are becoming a memsahib. Soon you will be English also." [325]

Notwithstanding, one cannot claim that Salma preached from her Islamic identity given that she still believes that she is a Muslim and she does not dare to, for instance drink alcohol or eat pork. Salma's identity is multi-cultural; she is Salma, the Muslim Bedouin Arab as much as she is Sally, the English rose she becomes upon immigrating to England.

[321]Ibid., p136.
[322]Ibid., p.8.
[323]Ibid.,p 129.
[324]Ibid.,p 125.
[325]Ibid.,p 125.

Her ambivalence is clear when she says: "I begged myself to follow him, but Salma and Sally refused to budge"[326]. Through the character of Salma, the author, reflects her own version of Islam or rather fashioned her own version of Islamic religion; a version that totally different from the Islamic standards imposed on her by her father. Salma believes that Islam is much more about the prominent pillar of Islam, namely performing prayers. She believes that she is true Muslim as she does not drink alcohol or eat Pork. This belief is more transparent in her conversation with her friend Sadiq,

> Well, you have ever forgotten how to pray to Allah',
>
> He said. What about you? Praying all the time and selling alcochol!
>
> Business is business also'[327] (p. 125)

It is observed by many critics that religion is a fundamental aspect which most of Arab diasporic writers attach to in their writings. Like many female authors, Faqir 's character negotiate the religious background while in the process of identity-making. Islamic authors try to reinvent their Islamic identity and share their won understanding, interpretation of Islam in relation to their national, culture and social status and thus present their own version of Islam. In the case of Fadiq Faqir, she presents a character whose identity is fluid and combatant with predicament with Western view of Islam as a religion of oppression, anti-female and aggressive.

This implies that she holds a hybrid identity which she personally acknowledges and articulates. Salma cannot authentically feel truly at home in any one place (Hima or Exeter); therefore, all of her homes constitute to her hybrid identities construction that challenges colonial legacies. The transformation of Salma's identity from a tradition Bedouine woman to an English modern woman takes many shapes as she shows a great desire of integration. In addition to Grooming of beautify oneself, Salma starts learning

[326]Ibid.,p 251.
[327]Ibid.,p 125.

English language so as to be able to understand and communicate with her British surrounding. Besides, Salma is keen on learning English mannerisms from her friend Rebecca, "I received Rebecca's gentle instructions about table manners" as indicated in the following extract:

> This was the small bread plate, this was the main course knife and fork, this was the soup spoon and this was the dessert spoon. I had learnt how to corner the green lettuce, cut it into pieces, shove it in my mouth and eat it unwillingly as if I were full. I had learnt how to butter a piece of bread, hold it with two fingers and eat it with the soup. I had learnt how to be patient and wait for others to start eating and then start after them. I had learnt how to wait for others to stop speaking before I started talking. I had learnt how to start each conversation with a comment about the weather[328].

Learning the English language and English mannerisms signifies the cultural transformation and change of Salma's cultural identity which in some sense reflects her alienate and forsakenness of her own cultural that oppression because of her gender. The process of cultural transformation of our character occurred when she come into prolonged, continuous, first-hand contact with British civilization. Notably, Salma Journey contributed to the transformation of values, attitudes, and beliefs which symbolically connotes her resistance attitudes towards the oppressive cultural and traditional beliefs and, on the other hand, the cultural transformation she undergoes reflects her quest to start a new life for herself away from the nightmare that was her life in Hima. As it has emphasized in the introduction of this chapter, British Arab female writers always have a great tendency to promote cross-cultural identification and dialogue, novel under-

[328]Ibid.,p 124.

discussion reveals its author's tendency as she celebrate this attitude through the marriage of Salma to an English man. The novel recounts how Salma's relation with John, her university tutor, developed and later on, they get married. Salma expresses her feeling of happiness to her friend Nour saying, "Dear Noura, I am happy, so happy. I got married to an English gentleman from a very good family, and we are expecting a daughter."[329]Thus, Salma is officially married (espoused) to what is English, literally and figuratively. The marriage between Eastern (Salma) and Western (Her English husband) reflect the convergence of two distinct cultures that results in the birth of a hybrid baby boy whom they name as 'Imran'. The new baby boy Imran stands for an operation of building a prosperous future between the Arab orient and the accident.

In sum, Fadia Faqir's third novel is postmodern in genre and feminist in essence. *My Name is Salma* examines issues related to women's invisibility in Arab countries and Arabs' invisibility in the Diaspora. Faqir's masterpiece tells the story of Salma, a young woman from a traditional Bedouin society in the Middle East, who was impregnated before marriage. For this, she was sentenced to death by her society and family whose honourwas tarnished. Starting a long journey of displacement, dislocation and exile, Salma was put in prison for her own protection for several years where she gave birth to a baby girl, Layla, whom she could not raise or see until years later when the girl was murdered by her uncle, Mahmoud. After prison, Salma, was again dislocated to another place,a new home, but this time for a permanent stay in England, a completely different country that seems to be different in culture and religion.

In Exeter, Salma goes through a process of self-discovery and refashioning a new identity with a new name 'British Arabic name'. However, in her new home, and her new attributes, Salma could never get rid of the past deed in Hima. Interestingly, Salma's

[329]Ibid.,p 54.

experiences of immigration, alienation, and the brutal process of acculturation gives us a clue on many the life of so many young Muslim immigrants who live without a firm identity of their own. Salma foregrounds the bitter journeys of Arabs' displacement and the re-territorialization of an invisible dislocated Arab British post-human subjects. In this perspective, Faqir, among many other fourth generation Arab British novelists, contracts to focal point on major faces of Arab British day-to-day lives and the experience of ethnic-based exclusion. In fact, it is the precarious position Arabs have long occupied in the racial discourse in the UK that has nourished most of Arab British allegoric narratives.

B- Double Critiques in MohjaKahf's The Girl In Tangerine Scarf

The importance of Mohja Kahf'[330]sdebut novel appears in its attempt to give some answers to a couple of significant ontological queries related to racism, marginalization and bigotry faced by Arab Americans in the USA mainly after the terrorist's attack of the

[330]Mohja Kahf is a Syrian-American poet, academic and cultural critic. She has been writing poetry since the 1990s taking up a variety of topics. Her poems have been numerously republished throughout the Internet, projected on public buildings, pictured, illustrated in photosets, reduced to inspirational and motivational quotes and performed at many charity events.*Emails from Scheherazade*, Mohja Kahf's first collection of poetry (2004), gives an insight into what it feels like being an Arab and a Muslim woman living in America at the turn of the millenium. Her poetry "offers articulate, passionate challenges to commonplace perceptions" of the Middle East and its people,

11/9. As it has been emphasized earlier in the first part (chapter II page 41), Arab American's political, social and cultural status changed dramatically in post 9/11 given that they moved from a state of ethnic ambiguity and invisibility to acquiring a new profile that renders them a threat to the American wellbeing, uncontrolled fundamentalists who don't fit in the American socio-political fabric. Arab American lost their sense of belonging and identification as the western mainstream media presented them as a different "other" which created unprecedented hostility and agony against them.Dallel Sarnou explains further that in the recent decade "racial discrimination against Arabs as an ethnic minority group and against Muslims as a religious minority group in most Western host countries–in international media and in world politics–has led to falsified and perverted characterizations of these human beings as bloody religious fanatics endangering world peace. Muslims and/or Arabs are being de-humanized, in humanized and *zombified* for the simple fact that they are broadly perceived as a terrorizing group."[331] Interestingly, this new state of being had prompted a new awareness of the subjectivities, ethnic, racial, religious and cultural identities of Arab female authors reflect in their literary expressions. Post 9/11 Arab literature become more oriented towards defending and defining Arab American identity, answering back Orientalist's prejudices and reconstructing and affirming hyphenated identities that combine distinct cultures, languages, and ethnicities.

In relation with race and gender, Arab American female literary productions translate a sense of disruption of the dichotomies of private/ public, oppressed/ liberated; self / other in view to challenge the popular understating that patriarchy is the only sit of oppressed. Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*is actually read a literary resistance text that aims at revolutionizing dominant discourses as well as the configurations of Arab

[331]Dalal Sarnou," Post-humanizing Arabs: Case of Diana Abujber's Arabian Jazz (2003) and Fadia Faqir's My Name is Salma (2007) and Willow Trees Don't Weep (2014)," *Preprints* (2016), p.1

American female identities through unthinking the orientalists and fundamentalists streams.

Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* recounts the story of Khadra Shamy, a Syrian girl who moves with her family to the United States. Khadra feels isolated from her surroundings and refuses to assimilate the American life style as she grows in an Islamic community that aim to spread the word of the prophet and to help fellow Muslims perfect their practice of Islam. The protagonist's fluctuation between her Arab Islam culture and that of USA aggravated her feeling of dislocation. Aiming to forge some harmony with herself, khadra goes through a long journey of self-discovery where she had to endure many tribulations while living in between cultures. Khadra's life is made up of different voyages between inconsistent cultures since she, first, moved to the United states when she was still a child. In her adulthood, she undertook a journey to Mecca with her family to perform pilgrimage and returned back to the United States. She also travelled to Philadelphia, and finally stalled down in there. Safest to say that Khadra's mobility nourished a multicultural American identity, and straightened her understanding of herself, the veil and ethnic and religious diversity.

One of the main motivations of writing such expressive novel are Kahf's endeavors to deconstruct the various implications and symbols the veil yield beyond the Orientlist's configurations and stereotyping. On the one hand, The author aims to explore the complications of living in the diaspora as an American Muslim veiled women and a feminist in the western hemisphere given that the veil is mostly understood as a tool of oppression of Arab women. On the other hand, through her protagonist, Kahf delves into interrogating and rediscovering the contradictions and overlapping meanings of Islamic religion as it is intertwined with patriarchal institutions that the protagonist Khadra

discovers while journeying through geographies and cultures. Interestingly, unlike Salma, in Faqirs' My *Name Is Salma*, who put off the veil in order to blur the divide between the East and the West, Khadra sticks to wearing the veil that distinguishes her from Americans and asserts her identity as a Muslim American Arab woman. In this regards, this chapter is devoted to foreground the way Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* negotiates and deconstructs the concept of the veil forging a double critiques to resist Western Orientalism and Oriental denunciation of feminism.

1- Resisting Orientalist Narrative of the Post 11/9 Era

A Strong expression of the contemporary images of resistance echo in Mohja Kahf's*The Girl In tangerine Scarf* where she probes into the current discourses of Islamophobia and clash of civilizations the result of which the blatant binary oppositions of us and them triumphed. Kahf depicts the after math of the bombing of the world trade towers that dramatically changed the West-Eat relationships. Within the Western hemisphere, Muslim and Arab minority are seen as menace, extremists and terrorist particularly those who plainly exhibit their religious affiliation either in forms of veiling or

beard for men. The hostility of Americans against Arab and Muslim communities is represented throughout the novel in an attempt to make visible the vilification of Arabs. "Hubbard was tall, gaunt man with crew cut and a limp who liked to wear his old army uniform; I'm not speaking from ignorance," he'd said quietly. "I've lived in their countries, and I know. They *will* destroy the character of our town."[332] Like most of Arab American Novelists, Mohja Kahf deals with the practice of Islam in the United States as Steven Salaita rematks that "In Kahf's novel Islam is a primary theme, one that she explores as a highly diverse set of beliefs and customs. A poet, literary critic, and novelist, Kahf invests in writing about Islamic subject matters, depicting major challenges Muslims encounter in the U.S., through imaginatively recounting Muslim stories of integration and stories of troubled self-identification."[333] Kahf also scrutinizing troublesome issues of religious radicalism, gender role, patriarchy etc. She negotiates not only the complex state of being Muslim in America but also the complex interpretations and dimensions of Islam in Islamic countries where her fictional protagonist Khadra embark discovering. The writer also delves into defining the symbol of the veil beyond western feminist's interpretations as a sign of oppression. This section, therefore, is devoted to analyses the way Mohja Kahf forges an Occidentlists discourse to counter-balance the Orientalist's hegemonic ideologies and stereotypical depictions of Muslim veiled women in the a hostel host society of US.

The Orientalist discourse is primarily based on the dichotomy of 'us' and them, the self and the other favoring the Western life styles, culture and modernity on the expense of other minor culture of many ethnic minorities living in the diaspora of the United States. These disparities and intolerance of the other's differences map out the dominating source of conflict basically between Muslims and non-Muslims. This so called clash of

[332]Mohja Kahf. *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* (United States:public Affairs, 2007), p.42.

[333]Adam Yaghi, *A Nation of Narrations: Religion, Hegemony, & Self-identification in Arab American Literature* (USA: University of Victoria Libraries, 2015), p. 100.

civilization is elucidated in Kahf's *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* through the protagonist Khadra and her Shamy family and the American surroundings. When the Shamy Family fled injustice and lack of democracy in Syria towards the United States, their presence in there was not welcomed particularly with their exhibition of their Islamic background. The sensibilities of Americans towards Islam simply say to them " back where you came from".[334] The Shamy family lived first in Squire One in the Rocky Mountains where little Khadra and her brother Ayad learn the basics of Islam and learn the incompatibility of their Arab culture and religious to that of America.

Later, when the Shamy family moves to Indianapolis and joins the Dawah Center, a Muslim community, to contribute the strengthening of Arab presence in American and "to find solutions to the ways in which living in a kuffar land made practicing Islam hard"[335]which they consider a "noble jihad in kufar land"[336]. However, despite the fact that there is some "freedom of religion in America, the practice of Islam and the attempts to elevate its presence in US is extremely battled. Mohja Kahf shows the extreme sensibility against Islam in her saying "America was mad at Khadra personally, Shamy family, and all the other Muslims of Indianapolis"[337]because of their anti-Americanization attitude. In Indianapolis Dawah Center, Khadra begins her identity and self refashioning under the supervision of Islamic teachings demeaning American life style yet she always believes that she is an American until her first encounter with racism at her school. When Khadra starts to wear the hijab, out of her own choice, she couldn't live in harmony with her American friends to whom she seems exotic, and strange. They keep criticizing her "Even if I am hot, same as anyone on a hot day, I'd no sooner take of my hijab than you'd

[334]Mohja Kahf, The Girl in Tangerine Scarf, p.7.
[335]Ibid.,p . 13.
[336]Ibid.,p 14.
[337]Ibid.,p 119.

take off your house in the middle of the street, livvy, "she said to her American friend."[338]Khadra is not only exposed to the American condemnation but also to their oral harassment and physical assaults that is proved through the Protagonist of the novel. While at school, khadra has to bear her schoolmates who harass her because of the way she dresses "oops", said a voice behind her. She whirled. Brent Lott and Curtis Stephenson. She was cornered; the whole school was at the rally in the gym. She could hear the pep squad's war whoops in the distance. Curtis grabbed Malcom X off the pukey greed floor"[339].

Khadra's schoolmates believe that it their duty to stop khadra from wearing the hijab and they want to eradicate the possibility of her walking with the veil at school. They do not only orally assault her "Take off your towel first rag head"[340] but they dear to physically violate her right to dress the way she pleases as the following statement manifests "Brent Lott's hammy hand clamped on the nape of her neck, yanking her backward. The scarf went down around her shoulders."[341]It is not surprising that kids attack Khadra and try to remove her hijab since as Jack Shaheen (1983) elaborates that American Mass-media presents deformed and negative portrayal of Arabs in Disney Animation and other forms of knowledge that accompany children from an early age and teach them that Arabs are different from 'us" American. In Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People, Shaheen exposed how the entertainment industry manufactured a prejudiced image of Arabs, condensing more than 300 million persons spread across 22 countries into a few dehumanizing portrayals. Out of the 900 films Shaheen analyzed which contain Arab characters or images of Arabs, only 63 did not

[338]Ibid.,p 113.
[339]Ibid.,p 124.
[340]Ibid.,p 124.
[341]Ibid.,p 124.

present Arabs with a negative stereotyped image. [342] (Look chapter 4). Unquestionably, the stereotypical attributes attached to Arabs and Muslims in the US news media and commercial film industry is translated into agonistic behavior against Arab Muslim communities in American particularly.

The Girl in Tangerine Scarf scrutinizes the core of American Orientalism. That demeans Arabs as villain other. "khadra is an "other" in many aspects. First, because she originally comes from Arab country, i.e, Syria, she is thus culturally considered as backward. Second, she is a Muslim woman who ardently believes in the practice of hijab and chooses to veil. She is thus regarded by Americans as a debased woman who submits to the patriarchal norms of Muslim societies by her own volition. For these reasons, Khadra's community constitutes a civilizational threat within the American nation." [343]

With regard to the relationship between the Arab Muslims and the Western Orientalist discourse Mohja Kahf points out to counter occidentalist's discourse that is symbolized through the Shamy family and Indianapolis Muslim community 's accidentalist attitudes that counterbalance the Americanisation and westernization tendencies. In the novel, Khadra's parents believe that America is mere "Kufar's land" and that American life style is no better than their Arab Islamic culture. Americans believe the individual was more important than the family, and money was more important than anything. Khadra's dad said

> Americans threw out their sons and daughters when they turned eighteen unless they could pay the rent—to their own parents. In addition, at the other end, they threw their parents into nursing homes when they got old. This, although they took

[342]Gaby Semaan, "Arab Americans: Stereotypes, Conflict, History, Cultural Identity and Post 9/11,"*Intercultural Communication Studies*, XXIII: 2 (2014), p. 19.

[343]Hanaà Berrezoug, "Orientalism and the iconography of the veilin Mohja Kahf's The girl in the tangerine scarf (2006)," *Etudes Francophones*, 28: 1 &2 (2015), p. 25.

slavish care of mere dogs. Overall, Americans led shallow, wasteful, materialistic lives. [344]

In this view, all Americans are essentilised under homogenized unlikable peculiarities given that they favor individuality over communality, self-interests and self-promotion on the expense of the general interest of the community. These characteristics of Americans subvert and reverses the superiority/ inferiority dichotomy and reconstruct a different contradictory image of 'us' Muslims better than 'them' the filthy and impure, non-Muslim American.

Kahf also deals with many aspects of American culture, which appears to be inappropriate and incompatible with Arab culture and religion. Many of the practice that Americans values of Americans consider aspect of American modernity and liberty are condemned in the novel given that Khadra's father considers them as immoral. He could not understand how "Americans allowed their kids to do this thing called "dating" boggled his mind. How could any decent father hand his daughter over to a boy and tell them, go on, go out into night, hold hands, touch each other?"[345]. The anti-Americanism evinced in the attitudes of Indianapolis Muslims towards westernization given that they defend their original culture and national life style through Islam that functions as a defensive mechanism. Kahf expresses the rejection of American culture in Arab Muslims' prohibition of their kids to adopt American's culture "roaming streets" that they allege immoral and impure. When khadra and Eyad were hanging out and return back home "their father dragged (them) by their ears to the door" and their mother "looked she was about to cry, but what she did was scream. " do you think we are Americans? Do you think we have no limits? Do you think we leave our children wandering in the streets? Is that

[344]Mohja Kahf, *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*, p 68.
[345]Ibid.,pp. 86-87.

what you think we are? We are not Americans! She sobbed, her face twisted in grief. "We are not Americans"[346].

In this respect "Islam in the hands of the Shamy functions more as a defensive mechanism against the new culture than a possibility to reach a better understanding of both the self and the other. In other words, Islam, here, is mostly used as a means to an end which is strengthening of sameness and demonization of otherness.

As I have noted previously in this chapter, *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* covers a variety of subjects ranging from the most private and personal to the most public and political. The novel studied here focuses on the conflicting representations of veiled women with the intention to subvert the western imagination and interpretations, narration and constructions of the veil as a sign of oppression, submission and obedience to the patriarchal norms. Ultimately, from an Islamic feminist's stand point, Mohja Kahf foregrounds the problem of representation not only to challenge western narratives and western feminism's generalizations but also more crucially to defend her rights as a Muslim Arab women against patriarchal configuration of Arab women's identity.

The general conception of the veil in western narratives is essentialised into a symbol of oppression, violence and backwardness of Islamic religion. Because the hijab is a prominent sign of the Islamic faith, Muslim women who wear the hijab are sometimes treated as terrorists, fanatics and backward and other time are pitied for being victims of Islam and patriarchy, debased and in need of liberation. Miriam cooke coined the term "Muslimwoman" to refer to the denigrating practices and aggressed Muslim women as a homogeneous objects. "In an attempt to make sense of a growing problem confronting Muslim women I, too, have coined a neologism, "Muslimwoman." My concern was to find a way to draw attention to the post-9/11 collapse of religion and gender into a singular and

[346]Ibid.,p. 67.

imposed political category."[347] According to Miriam cook, the neologism "Muslimwomen" highlights the discursive construction of Muslim women both those who wear the veil and those who do not as a homogenous category that denies them of their difference and diversity. Muslim women in western feminist thought, additionally, are labeled under an essentialist ahistorical identity. "Muslim women today that veiled, and even unveiled, women are no longer thought of as individuals: collective they have become the Muslimwomen… /T/his identification is created for Muslim women by outside forces." [348] In the same vein, through strategic narration, Mohja Kahf unveils the reality of the Western representations of the veil that have been politically construed to serve colonial and imperial projects.

Constructing "Fanonist approach of resistance", Kafh chronicles various events of dearly attempt to unveil Muslim women. This historical event is recycled in the novel as the author intends to show that veiling has always been a historically troublesome issue. She notes that:

> In "Algeria Unveiled," Frantz Fanon, for instance, comments on the situation in Algeria in the 1930's, when the veil was used to fissure national and resistance movements. Sociologists revealed the solid and dynamic existence of matriarchy that united Algerian society while remaining behind the veil of patriarchy. This is why it became important to control women. This discovery, according to Fanon, has shaped the political doctrine of the French colonizer who concluded, "If we want to destroy the structure of Algerian society, its capacity for resistance, we

[347]Ina Merdinova, *Rediscovering the Umma: Muslims in the Balkans Between Nationalism and Transnationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 83.

[348] Ibid,. p. 83.

must first of all conquer the women; we must go and find them behind the veil where they hide themselves" [349]

This means that, the veil has been a challenge for the colonialist program as it presents a barrier which hinders the dominance of Algerian women in specific and Veiled Arab women in general. In the novel, the story repeats itself as the attempt to unveil veiled Muslim Arab women. Thus, in the novel, Khadra was exposed to violent attempt of unveiling by her American schoolmates which symbolically connotes colonial attempts of unveiling the Algerian women. Surprisingly, Mr. Eggleston, is a witness of the physical assault, yet, instead of coming to rescue Khadra, "he shook his head, gave her a mild disapproval look and went back inside" [350]. On the one hand, the teacher did not consider Khadra asa victim but a sinful for wearing the veil and on the other hand, he does not condemn this action because he believes that Khadra is being liberated by her fellow Americans. Nonetheless, Khadra loves being in this forest of women in hijab, their khimars and saris and *jilbabs.*"[351] The veil for Khadra symbolizes a protection and a defense mechanism against the American boys' scoptophilia curiosity to ascertain what is behind the veil. This action of unveiling Khadra metaphorically recalls obsession of the French colonizer with Algerian women 's veil that in itself represented a barrier that hindered the envision of Algeria. That is , Khadra "didn't want to give anyone in the building the satisfaction of seeing her barehead" [352] . At this moment, Khadra felt extreme misidentification to America and she start to reflect upon her identity as an American particularly when her friend Zuhura is found murdered. Zuhura was an active member of

[349]Hanaà Berrezoug, "Orientalism and the iconography of the veil in Mohja Kahf's The girl in the tangerine scarf", p. 31.

[350] Mohja Kahf, the Girl in Tangerine Scarf. P.125.
[351]Ibid.,p 55.
[352]Ibid.,p125.

Indianapolis Dawah Centre who starts to hold meeting on the issues of Islam, gender and politics, was found murder in mysterious circumstances.

Back in Syria, Khadra learns that she is not exceptional in her experience of univeiling discourse given that her mother and Syrian women in the 1982 were subject to the same political doctrine. When Khadra paid a visit to her Aunt in Syria, she got to know that the government banned wearing the hijab in public and those who refuse to unveil were threaten "to get a gun to your head"

> The day the paratroopers tore off our veils," Aunt Razanne said absently, stirring the spot. On September 28, 1982, during the height of the trouble in Syria, President Assad's brother Rifat dropped a thousand girl paratroopers over Damascus, with a guy backup soldier behind each one…. You could strip off your hijab and jilbab, or get a gun to your head. [353]

Additionally, Khadra learned that her parents resisted theses governmental attempts and instead of confirming to the status quo of Assad, they decided to" stay(ed) true to themselves, and had not twisted their mind to fit into a camped space" [354]. "Khadra's mind couldn't help but reel at this. At least her parents had stayed true to themselves. Wajdy and Ibtihaj stood taller in her sight. They had not stooped. Had not twisted their minds to fit into a cramped space, had not shrunk themselves like poor Uncle Mazen and Aunt Razanne. Her parents had fled, even if it means leaving everything, everyone they know."[355]. This makes Khadra proud of her parents at the same time empowers her to continuo the battle against the Western imagination of the veil and to defend her Islamic agency as an Arab Muslim woman.

[353]Ibid.,p.281-282..
[354]Ibid.,p. 282.
[355]Ibid.,p. 282-283.

Safest to say that Mohja Kahf embarks a double critique of both Orientalism and sexism, two hegemonic discourses that render Arab Muslim women inferior. Kahf devoted the first half of her novel *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*to readdress the current issues of Islamophobia, and Western imagination and representation of the veil particularly in post 9/11 era paying considerable attention to the extent to which Arab American lives are profoundly affected. By so doing, Kahf builds an Occidentalist narration to counter-balance Orientalism where the veil functions a symbol of resistance. However, in the second half of her novel, Kahf goes through a liminal experience like many Arab Americans while refashioning their identities. Kahf shows how her protagonist Khadra is caught between her American identity and her Arab Muslim identity fluctuating between two distinct cultures. In this respect, Kahf foregrounds the challenges Arab women face in Arab regarding the veil and as it is explored in the coming section, the author continuo her double critique portraying Khadra as a resistance character who refuses also to adhere to her Islamic patriarchal culture. *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* opens another avenue for reclaiming Muslim women's agency.

2- Khadra's Transgression of Patriarchy and Reclaiming Muslim Feminist Agency

The last section came with conclusion that the protagonist of *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* feels expatriation and displacement after enduring many encounters of racism and

egoism that she had to resist in her Adopted home American. Moreover, the killing of her friend Zuhura breaks the last bound that connects her to America and more crucially shakes her understanding of herself, identity, and belonging to the American society "maybe we don't belong here" [356]. The narrator, consequently, expresses Khadra's eagerness to visit her motherland to which she thinks she belongs and in which inevitably would feel culturally alien. When an opportunity presented itself for the Shamy family to visit the land of their ancestors, "Haj! Their parents announced it. They were going this year" [357]. The Shamy Family, decided that it is time to go to do pilgrimage, notwithstanding, Khadra's antagonisms are violated given that she is destined to face value-judgments, gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment and basically her veil in understood to connotes obedience to the patriarchal traditional system. Khadra's veil, as it has been emphasized earlier, carry more than one dimension in both the Western and the Eastern. This section, therefore, argues that Mohja Kahf intends to show that the veil is interpreted in accordance with the cultural milieu her protagonist intrudes and that Khadra's journey across geographic and cultural boundaries contributes to the refashioning of her new identity as an Arab Muslim American woman. Using an Islamic feminist approach, I trace how Mohja Kahf highlights a broad spectrum of Muslim feminist agency through deconstructing Oriental representations of the veil and resisting the patriarchal traditional conceptions of Arab women's identity.

As it has been stated in the first chapter of this study, Islamic feminism as a theory and practice is very useful tool to analyze the misconception of Muslim women's identities. Through Islamic feminism, Muslim women forge their own way to negotiate their subjectivity and individuality within the patriarchal dominant discourses. Thus, our

[356]Ibid.,p. 97.
[357]Ibid.,p. 156.

exploration of Kahf's narrative reveals that the Muslim young protagonist is repositioned in multi-sites and goes beyond the horizons of her patriarchal culture, demands and practices. The protagonist actively and continuously challenges the stereotypical image of the Muslim woman's self. Hence, through utilizing Islamic feminist discourse, this study traces the very mechanism Mohja Kahf uses to address her criticism of the biased Muslim religious practices namely the violation of women rights of Islamic practices, dress liberty, marriage and traditional gender roles.

It seems clear that Mohja Kahf postulates a non-coercive model of resistance that is reflected in her critical consciousness which prevail against generalizing viewpoints of any particular ideology or institution. The author begins her critique of the unfair treatment and gender based discrimination of Muslim women, just like herself, face in Islamic states. When the Shamy Family paid a visit to Saudi Arabia to perform the Islamic Pilgrimage, the protagonist was moved to hear the voice of the *Athan al fajr* and with a naivety she went to pray in the mosque. Having no idea of the restrictive private/public divide in Saudi Arabia, Khadra was arrested by the religious police for going to pray Al-Fajr Prayer [Dawn Prayer] in the mosque. Khadra was eventually shocked to be treated as a criminal and to realize that she cannot do her prayer in the mosque in an Islamic state while she can in America. The police declared "We found her trying to get into the mosque; they said it as if she was a vagrant or something. Uncles said shook his head no, not looking at her bare face"[358]. Khadra's father was deeply ashamed to have to explain to both the police and his daughter and finally explains "Well, women are not allowed to pray in the mosque here"[359] to which Khadra reacts defensively arguing against the patriarchal prohibition and exclusion of women. Like Mohja Kahf, many Islamic feminists bring to the fore the idea of making the mosque exclusively a male space and putting women in the margin of this

[358]Ibid.,p. 166.
[359]Ibid.,p. 167.

fundamental pillar of Islam. Fatima Mernissi, for instance, explains in her book *The Veil and The Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*that, in the prophet's time, women used to enjoy a life of freedom and used to have a lot of privileges unlike the present era. Mernissi recalls how women and the prophet's wives in particular enjoyed the privilege to be active in both the public and private spheres alike. The Prophet's first wife Khadija was a businesswoman and she was also the first to "asked for the hand of the Prophet"[360] . Besides, Mernissi highlights the fact that among the proponents of the prophet were also women. For instance, Hind Bint 'Utba whose "name was on the list of the few Meccans condemned to death by the Prophet" [361], played a crucial role in opposing the Prophet as well as the religion of Islam. This is manifested through "the songs and the dances she performed among the dead Muslims on the battlefield of Uhud."[362]. The main endeavor of Fatima Mernissi is to trace the main source of the prevailing discrimination against women in Muslim societies. Based on Qur'an and Hadith, Mernissi explains that this gender discrimination and sexism are not fundamental tenet of Islam as many men would claim but rather that Islam is basically egalitarian in its innateness and that the discriminatory behaviors, treatment and attitudes are only patriarchal made.

Similarly, Badran argues that the majority of mosques are designed in a way that expresses "a patriarchal ethos" that accords men the main or central space in the mosque. In this sense, Khadra in Kahf's novel neither shows obedience norturns a blind eye to this kind of abuse of the rights of women guaranteed by Islam. She rebels against this exclusion, marginalization and questions the Islamic teachings her parents have been

[360]Fatima Mernissi. *The Veil and The Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam* (Reading Mass: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co, 1991), p. 116.

[361] Ibid.

[362] Ibid p.116

passing to her since her childhood. Khadra defensively says, "But, baba, how can women not be allowed? Khadra had never heard of such a thing. No mosque she had ever encountered hadn't had a place for women."[363] to which her father responded that prohibiting women from praying in the mosque is part of most of the Muslim world's custom for hundreds of years. We should note that the exclusion of women is related to the traditions of Arab societies and has nothing to do with the tenet of Islam. This idea is clearly manifested in kahf's Islamic feminist attitude by going back to the original teaching of Islam and quoting some hadiths from the Prophet to combat man-made interpretations of religion. Khadra says:

> But you said—you said—she whirled here to including her mother. "You always said it was part Islam. What about Aisha? What about how Omar wished his wife would not go to the mosque for fajr but he couldn't stop her because he knew it was her right? What about the prophet's saying ' you must not never prevent the female servants of God from attending the houses of God? I told the matwwa that hadeath and he laughed—he laughed at me, and said "listen to this woman quoting scriptures at us!"[364]

Its seems that Kahf attempts to convey an idea that under patriarchal culture, it is difficult to distinguish between what religious and what is cultural given that both are intertwined to the extent that Islam and its egalitarian message sounds foreign in our Muslim societies. According to Islamic feminism, women's rights seem a problem for Oriental men not because of religion but simply because those rights are in conflict with their interests of domination. By so doing, the feminist writer calls for the collaboration of women to stand against the system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women on the name of Islam.

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[363]Mohja Kahf, *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*.p. 167.
[364]Ibid.,p. 168.

Moreover, the portrayals of various scenes of the un-homely encounters prevail in the novel. Khadra was not only sexually harassed and physically assaulted in the 'Kofar land' America but also her Arab brothers proved to be no different. These un-homely encounters once again shake Khadra's understanding of herself and belief to belong to Arab world. Having returned to her Arab origin, Khadra Shamy has never expected to be culturally displaced or more accurately homeless. She has not expected to be treated as foreign, or stereotypically identified as filthy and immoral American girl. While in Mecca, Afaf, Khadra friend, invited her out under a pretext of shopping. To khadra's surprise, she later finds out that she is going into a group date with some Saudi young men. She even become more shocked when she observes hypocrisy of her friend Afaf who "throw of her veil and abaya inside the limo." [365]

Khadra gets to understand that many Arab girls put on the veil not out of conviction or adherence to the Islamic requirements but the veil is taken as a mask to hide behind and an envelope that covers many Arab girls' dark side. All of Khadra's horizons and expectations were practically violated since she has to defend her Arab identity against the Saudi young men who identifies her according to their essentialist identifications of Americans with sexual liberty. One of the Saudi guys insisted that "you re really American? You don't speak Arabic with an accent"[366]. Khadra, defensively, answered their insistence on seeing her as an American and not an Arab answers "no Khadra said I'm Arab. I told you, I 'm Arab just like you. She got out of the car"[367]. The feeling of insecurity even among her Arab brothers was augmented when one of the Saudi teenagers exaggerated in their sexist and prejudicial treatment by first attempts to force Khadra to take off her veil "take surely you don't wear that thing in America" he said tugging at her

[365]Ibid.,p. 105.
[366]Ibid.,p. 176.
[367]Ibid.,p. 167.

veil and pouting boyishly"[368]. This incident that reminds Khadra once more of the American kids attempt to take off her veil. Second, she was also sexually harassed by Saudi teenagers for being an American.

> Why? No one can see us" he said without warning, he was pulling her veil down the back of her head and pushing his other hand up against her breasts and his mouth was grazing her now exposed neck. She was squeezed up against the car door, and then he was pushing himself on top of her, his jeaned thighs taut. (p.177) We have our clothes on—and you grew up in America—don't tell me you never do stuff like this in America. [369]

As a result, having never been an easy going character, Khadra resisted all the attempts to both unveil her and sexually assault her. Noticeably, Khadra find herself in the cultural margin and more hyphenated as she is not seen by Americans as an American girl and not seen as an Arab by Arabs. This new state of being influenced khadra's view of the veil and respect of her Arab belong which clearly portrayed in her changing the color of her veil, from black to colorful on Remarks that that:

> when she came back from Saudi Arabia, her decision was to change her dark hijab to a white one with tiny flowers. She shoved her black scarf with other dark clothes to the back of the closet and got rid of all the political and revolutionary books and cassettes she had. She also started to see what she once called "McMuslims"(p.186). She began to wear the white hijab particularly when she

[368]Ibid.,p. 177.
[369]Ibid.,p. 178.

liked one boy, a brother of a friend. Therefore, this lighter scarf was a symbol of love and understanding, and so indicated the end of a "neoclassical phase" [370]

The metaphoric shift from the black hijab of Khadra to a colorful one symbolizes Khadra's change of her mental state from having one static idea of the veil, Islam and her Arab affinity to a perspicacity of the fascinating legends regarding and the veil and its multiple meanings. Khadra Shamy, after enduring different experiences and reactions from boarder communities, and with her new multiple concisenesses becomes more resistant and continues her journey in challenge the metaphysics of the veil that, on the one hand, serves the Western political ends and on the other serves the supremacy and dominance of the patriarchal system. The embodiment of resistance sounds more profound in the protagonist's rebellion against and subversion of gender roles and sexism. Specifically, women in the Arab world are still powerless, interiorized and prevented from their basic rights. The public life is still relatively exclusive to men given that women are far from actively participating the political affairs of their communities and still subject to different forms of subjugation. For this reason, Mohja Kaff, like many Arab and Islamic feminists, uses her authoritative pen rewrite Arab women's history in the Arab world and beyond. That is, the discourses of women's inferiority, sexism and marginalisation fall apart in*The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* where the protagonist reflects and uses her feminist consciousness as a defense mechanism against the male guardians namely her husband and father.

When Khadra gets tired of the mal-treatment in Saudi Arabia, she continuous her pursuits towards self-discorvery. This time she decided to visit her mother Damascus where she stayed with Teta with whom she shares a lot of point in common. Khadra come

[370]The Symbol of the Veil in Mohja Kahf's *the Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* -- Dr. Areen Khalifeh Assistant Professor English Literature and Criticism Philadelphia University Jordan -- *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 6, No. 1; January 2016 (*195).

to learn, as it has been mentioned earlier, that she was not exceptional in the unveiling experiences but rather her ancestries have gone through the same experiences. In Damascus, Khadra meets a Kuwaiti young man who expressed his appreciation of Khadra's character that "that she had not lost her Arab identity despite being raised entirely in America. Juma didn't know personally any other girl who combined all those qualities"[371]and he shows his interest to get engaged to her. Khadra, on the other hand, accepted his marriage proposal believing that Juma is a different open minded young men who would stand up to her potentials. However, when they got married, cultural misunderstanding begin to surface as Juma turns to be another patriarchal man who expects from his wife Khadra to no more than a housewife who perfectly performs her traditional gender roles. Khadra, on the opposite, believes that men and women should enjoy the same right and privileges in both the private and public spheres. Khadra stands against cultural stereotypes attributed to women's identity and favored to be herself rather than compromise to keep her marriage enact.

Khadra resisted the discourse of housewifisation that her husband endeavored to exercises on her. First, she defended her right of education and freedom to act the way she pleases. To Juma, who was born and raised a patriarchal milieu, Khadra's going to the university by her bike and participating in a campus demonstrations were shocking and unacceptable behaviors. "If he'd wanted to have to explain every limit…of course someone might see me, honey it's not a secret or anything." [372] Moreover, "Every time she went out in a campus demonstration, Juma complained. "Does it have you be you? He asked. "let somebody else demonstrate. There's no shortage of people. Does it have to be

[371]Ibid.,p. 101.
[372]Ibid.,p. 228.

my wife." [373]. It seems clear that Khadra in *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* resembles to great extent the Egyptian feminist writer Nawal El Saadawi in her novel *A Daughter of Isis* who believes that education is the most weapon against patriarchal subjugation.

El Saadawi, as a child, believes that education and going to school saves her from the domestic life by stating "I hated the kitchen […] school was the only place that saved me from closed walls and kitchen chores."[374]For her, school was considered "a release from the things which bound"[375] her. As Nawal El Saadawi expected, studying provided her with the opportunity to escape being stuck in the domesticity by clarifying that "my performance at school encouraged her to insist that I continue my education" [376] and "their diligent daughter was capable of obtaining a 'licence' or a *baccalaureate* herself. Her future no longer lay in marriage like the submissive, idle girls waiting at home for a bridegroom to appear." [377] Thanks to her determination in being totally free and independent, the narrator excels in her studies to the extent that she became an example to follow. That is to say, the headmistress of Al-Saneya School sent a letter by the end of the year to the narrator's father Sayed Bey telling him that "the pupil has been awarded top marks in algebra and geometry and thus is eligible for admission to the course line on mathematics and can be given a scholarship, and a monthly stipend." [378] She had also a good reputation in the Helwan School where she was a boarder as people clarified that "'she is a model pupil, combines science with religious faith' is outstanding in chemistry,

[373]Ibid.,p. 241.
[374]Nawal El saadwai. *A Daughter of Isis,p 52*
[375]Ibid.,p. 196.
[376]Ibid.,p. 185.
[377]Ibid.,p. 252.
[378]Ibid.,p. 248.

physics and rhetoric"[379]in addition to writing poetry and prose and learning by heart the Qur'an and the Prophet's Hadiths.

Similarly, Khadra confront her husband on the issue of gender roles refusing the idea of demystifying women roles. One day, when Juma sees no dinner prepared for him, he reprimands Khadra of not observing her role as wife in their relationship. Whats's on dinner Juma asked. The first time it was cute. Then it got annoying. Finally it made stream come out of Khadra's ears. I don't know, why 're you asking me? Like I'm supposed to know? Khadra groused. When she tries to convince him by resorting to their common knowledge of the Prophet's ways of helping his wife at home in such supposedly "womanly" tasks, he objects that he "wasn't a graduate student. Khadra tried to defend her stance restored back to Islam and quoting from the Prophet's life with his wives saying "The prophet, never asked his wives to do anything in the house for him, "Khadra snapped. What was the use? It takes a Dawah Center man to appreciate that sort of thing. A regular Muslim from old country like Juma wouldn't get it. Seeking knowledge was more important than traditional feminine tasks"[380]. Perhaps, Juma's expectation of the tradition roles and the obedience of his wife were violated as Khadra refuses to live a life of submission to keep up to her husband's predispositions. This rebellious act against the reassigned roles, identity and performativity of Arab women subvert both the Western and Eastern imagination of Arab Muslim women. Obviously, Khadra marriage turns into a night mar because she realizes that if she wants to save her marriage she has to be another person all together which seems impossible. She expressed her inability to maintain the gendered status quo saying: " I just—I don't know if I can stay married to him Eyad. I feel

[379]Ibid.,p. 302.
[380]Mohja Kafh, *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf*.p.241.

like I can't go on in this marriage without killing of the 'me' that I am Khadra said to her brother."[381]

Consequently, the protagonist decided to divorce Juma in order to gain her life back and keep her life under her won control. She "offered Juma a *khulu*" [382] despite the cultural attitudes towards divorced women and despite her parents abjection. This plain act of resistance reflects Khadra's feminist beliefs given that by this divorce, she divorced the institution of marriage that homogenized Arab Muslim women under prescribed identity and roles and validate the supremacy the masculine category oven the inferiority of the feminine category. Divorce, in this respect, symbolizes a revolution against patriarchy as whole. Resisting patriarchal paradigms entails big sacrifices and the protagonist proved to be exemplary devoted to topple down this oppressive norms. Challenging stereotypes of Muslim women's victimhood, the protagonist went too far in her rejection of women's oppression on the Name of Islam and decide to abort in order to abort any contact that may remind her this painful experience of subjugation. At this moment, Khadra becomes more convinced of what she really wants as she realizes that she doesn't totally belong to Arab world and believes that her home is actually out there American. She wants to find her true self because she believes that people have "to have a self to even start a journey to God"[383]. She begins to realize that embarking on a journey becomes a necessity and there is no way to escape it. All these desires to be who is even on the expense on her relational and emotional levels are reflected in her argument with her father. Khdra said " yeah, you did Khadra thought sullenly. You raised me to go out and learn, but deep down you still want me to be just like your mother. So where did you think all these contradictions would

[381]Ibid.,p.224 .
[382]Ibid.,p. 251.
[383]Ibid.,p. 248.

head me if not to this frustration. This tone of voice. But I am not going to kill myself to fit into the life you have all mapped out for me."[384]

To conclude, the protagonist of *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* leads a unique experience of confrontation, resistance and journeying through geographies and cultural boundaries to find her true self and construct an identity that combines inconsistent cultures and life styles. These experiences contribute extensively to the construction her hybrid identity that does not dwell on one specific side of the hyphen. Khadra's identity that is symbolically represented through her the color veil which reflects her new state of being and her Muslim feminist agency. Khadra's new colorful veil stands for revolution, realism, freedom that she could maintain throughout her journeying. In spite the cultural misunderstanding and the political sensibilities of wear the veil, Khadra puts on the veil in Muslim countries as well as America refusing to accommodate herself to Western society's mores and rejecting the patriarchal oppressive traditional criterions that do not give Muslim women the option to practice freedom of choice. Martina Koegeler-Abdi maintains that "Even if *the girl*'s cover image of a women with a loosely clad orange scarf, dressed in Jeans and lookingassertively into the camera deconstructs typical orientalist assumptions about passive,backwards and oppressed veiled women, literary ambivalence can cut both ways. Kahf's playwith orientalist views of veiling and their colonial legacies may also end up confirming thetropes she seeks to subvert for some readers."[385]*The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* explores all aspects of female diasporic experiences along with Muslim women's lives in the homeland to deconstruct the ahistorical dimensional image of Arab Muslim woman as passive, backward and in need of salvation. Through the character of Khadra, Kahf reflects the heterogeneity within the Muslim and Arab-American

[384]Ibid.,p. 246.

[385]Areen Khalifeh, "The Symbol of the Veil in Mohja Kahf's *the Girl in the Tangerine Scarf," International Journal of Humanities and Social Science,* 6: (2016), p. 10.

community. She also presents the various sexist, racial and religious challenges that limit women's lives.

Conclusion:

In this dissertation, I have studied the textual and literary resistance as well as the construction of heterogeneous identities of Arab women in transnational diasporic locations through four selected contemporary novel of Arab diasporic female authors. My dissertation has attempted to underline the critical strategies of resistance employed by these authors to challenge, redefine and construct the different images and representations of Arab women's identities and experiences. Despite the fact that different narrative styles and scopes of resistance are employed to deconstruct the oriental and western hegemonic discourses, all seem to propose alternative views to the dissatisfaction that the globalized condition has brought to the force. The preceding analysis of the fictions of Zana Muhcine, Najat El Hachimi, Fadia Faqir, and Mohja Kahf have revealed a lucid aspiration to construct a unified feminist discourse against women's discrimination globally. Their prose revolves around journeying across cultures and geographical location for the sake of self-definition and discovery. Muhcine's protagonists are depicted as maniacal with homecoming though at perilous prices. El Hachimi's characters are caught in a cosmopolitan dialectic that declines stasis. The protagonists of Faqir and Kahf travel in time and space between the old and the new homes through imagination.

Being located in the so called 'the third space' Arab immigrants occupy hybrid positions where the possibility to rebuild an independent self and construct a unique identity is no longer futile. As it has been illustrated throughout this thesis, the protagonists studied engage in a process of transformation that accentuate their uniqueness as individuals and the complexity of their identities. This conclusion

cements my argument that Arab women diasporic writers forge counter-discursive strategies to oriental and western dominant discourses and that their narratives serve as forms of resistance to Western reresentations of otherness and traditional structures of power relations across gender, ethnicity,religion and cultural borders.

My examination has concentrated on female diasporic authors who endeavour to delineate thematic differences that emanate from their different localized experiences and unclear positions they occupy within the racial and gender hierarchy in their host countries and home of origin. These authors try to present examples of novelistic characters for which identity or its rediscovery is at the core of their being. Modern Muslim diaspora existence at present is located between the option of a transnational existence, while rediscovering the self, there is always a constant confusion whether to adhere to the Islamic and Arab traditional paradigms or to fully integrate and melt into the host culture and life styles. Perhaps for this reason, most of Muslim diasporic writers including the cases of study of this thesis deploy the issue of Islam in their narratives.

Zana Muhcine's *Sold* presents a rich examination of the lives of two Arab-British young women struggling in the borderlands of Yemen between patriarchies, cultures, and political agendas. Torn between religious beliefs, cultural traditions, gender dynamics, these Arab-British young teenagers experience brutal oppression and precariousness which the author attended to echo through her novel. By deconstructing the patriarchal ideology, she reflects her feminist thought and echoes the transnational victimization of Arab women in Yemen in particular.

I have examined Zana Muhcine's exposition of different patriarchal hegemonies which continue to position these women within narrow essentialist constructions. Through the textual investigation of these works from a postcolonial feminist perspective, this study highlights the multiple manifestations of injustice, inequality and misogyny faced by women in the Arab World as they are reflected Zana Muhsen's Sold (1991). Interestingly, Muhcine's narrative is not only about exposition but also about the use of multiple facets of resistance adopted by Zana and her mother to combat the cultural, physical, psychological and structural violence preyed upon them by most of their Relatives as well as the Yemani government and British influential officers. The researcher argued that *Sold* dramatizes the life of so many unknown Arab-British and Arab-American school girls who were tricked into arranged Marriage.

One of the interesting remarks to note about Muhsen's novel is the fact that it brings to the fore international issues that were or made invisible. The novel bravely treats issues of human trafficking, international conspiracies, and pursuits of slavery in modern world. Though it is a heartbreaking story, the author uses the power of the pen to deconstruct and decode the patriarchal history and write her-story of revolution, combat and confrontation with an unprecedented courage. Throughout the novel, Zana Muhsen endeavors to raise the reader's consciousness to struggle against women's human rights violation, against gender discrimination, sexism, misogyny, and all the tradition patriarchal codes and practices that contributes to the oppression of women in the Arab world. Zana Muhsen makes of her story a

historical document that incriminates the oppression of Women worldwide and re-advances the feminist maxim that "the Personal is political".

Similar to Zana Muhcine's *Sold* which depicts, examine sand critiques most of the aspects of the social life of Arab British expatriates, through the narratives of two Arab teenage sisters who undergo different experiences of displacement, El Hachimi's novel traces the shared histories of Morocco and Spain, Flester argues that "Spaniards (and Catalans) have responded to Moroccan immigration by tracing clear frontiers between the 'Moors' and themselves.[386] *The Last Patriarch* is a narrative about modern emigration, from Morocco to Catalonia, and the clashes of cultures, identity and feelings involved. El Hachimi opted for a sarcastic language and a taboo speaking style in her portrayal of the last patriarch 'Mimoun'. She tries to build the story of Mimoun on actual events rather than imaginary. She wants her story to be rooted in real social, daily and simple happening which concern the majority of Moroccan youth who were brought up to be patriarchs. By mapping out the general conditions of Moroccan women under patriarchal rule and the way this system of oppression bound women's abilities and increases their marginalization, the author reflects her feminist consciousness and deep understanding of the cultural aspects that foster and encourage stereotypes on Moroccan women. It appears clear that El Hachim is more concerned with riasing the feminist consciousness in Morocco.

[386]Areen Khalifeh, "The Symbol of the Veil in Mohja Kahf's *the Girl in the Tangerine Scarf," International Journal of Humanities and Social Science,* 6: (2016), p. 10.

On the other hand, the narrative focuses on the significance of border crossing and dislocation of Moroccan women from and exchange of ideas contextualize their differences. *The Last Patriarch* is to be read as a craft of resistance against essentialist positions and fundamentalist premises within the context of Moroccan society. It explores the way literature subverts and challenges dominant discourses and opens multiple venues of communication and negotiation. By the end of the novel, El Hachimi shows how her protagonist succeeded in celebrating her triumph against patriarchy in the Spanish context and successfully integrates into the Spanish socio-economic fabric through adopting a hybrid identity which combines Arabness and Spanishess. Najat El Hachimi is aware of the fact that her novel is sometimes read a piece of writing which glorifies Europe for its ability to integrate and liberate oppression immigrant women and the fact that gender is the divisionary line between Europeans and non-Europeans as Flester argues that "Spaniards (and Catalans) have responded to Moroccan immigration by tracing clear frontiers between the 'Moors' and themselves.[387] Thus, El Hachimi's novel does not seem to be in favors of European culture over that of her mother land but she portrayed are revolutionary character who oppose use her cultural heritage and diasporic experience to oppose domination wherever it is and who occupy an ambivalent state luminal position to construct her won hybrid, diasporic identity.

As I have emphasized in the last chapter of the theoretical framework of this study, those Arab diasporic authors translate their cultural heritage and their

[387] Sandra Stickle Martín,*Moroccan Women and Immigration in Spanish Narrative and Film (1995-2008),* p. 10.

displacement in the different diasporic locations into solid stone to build a culture and an identity of mutual understanding. It is interesting, in this vien, to go back to Majaj argument that works of Arab Muslim authors use their ambivalent to subvert their inherited oppressive tradition and the persistence of orientalism. Majaj affirms that; texts written by Arab women have helped to dispel the persistent Orientalist fascination with Arab women that reduced their live to gender and sexual oppression under the purportedly unchanging, backward of Arab society.[388]Thus, both of Zana Muhen, like Najat El Hachimi scrutinize every aspect of patriarchal culture and explores the extent to which Arab women are made invisible, submissive and marginalized from all domains of life because of the cultural system and she attempted to change this history.

In contrast to the narrative styles of Muhcine and El Hachimi, Fadia Faqir chooses nonlinear narrative styles travelling imaginatively between the past and the present and across the homeland the host land. In *My Name Is Salma,* Faqir reflects her views on the Arab and Islamic culture and the ways in which women within this network are subjected to the well of patriarchy. In *My Name is Salma*, the author exhibits how, because of honour codes of Jordan, her character undergoes a detrimental journey from the East to the West, from the Arab village of Hima in Jordan to the western English city of Exeter and from life to death.

[388]Suhair Majaj, Lisa, et al., eds. *Intersections: Gender, Nation, and Community in Arab Women's novels* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002).p.12.

Through *My Name is Salma* Faqir juxtapose the different experiences of the protagonist Salma‘s hybrid identity construction. First, She explored the historical links between the religion of Islam, the societal oppression of women, and the suppression of democracy in predominantly Muslim nations namely Jordan. Second, the author takes us in journey of her protagonist’s identity transformation as a mechanism of integration. Salma engages in a process of identity formation where she transforms herself from a traditional Bedouin Arab woman to a person whose identity amalgamates between western liberated standards and Arab Islamic aspects. By so doing, the author reflects the revolution of the female consciousness against the Oriental traditional archetype and echoes the strategic integration of the Salma into the British fabric. As it argued by many critics, there is a great tendency among Arab-British writer to advocate cross-cultural communication in contrast to the Arab- American’s whose literature is oriented towards challenging American steroetyes, these dissertation come with the same conclusion. Faqir reproduce the tendency of the Arab British women literature to foreground coalitions and alliances that bypass national, racial and ethnic boundaries. The British Aarab author’s My Name is Salma celebrate cross-cultural communication, dialogues and identification and the plainest justification is her marriage to British man and giving birth to Imran.

As far as Arab-American authors are concerned, The American writer Mohja Kahf tries to destabilize the historical vilification Arab Muslim women through her Female character Khadra who resist their hyper-invisibility, exclusion, and discrimination in the mainstream American culture. *The Girl in Tangerine*

*Scarf*addresses the stereotypical images in the minds of West. Kahf embarks a double critique of both orientalism and sexism; two hegemonic discourses that render Arab Muslim women inferior. Kahf devoted the first half of her novel *The Girl in Tangerine Scarf* to readdress the current issues of Islamophobia, and the western imagination and representation of the veil particularly in post 9/11 era paying considerable attention to the extent to which Arab American lives are profoundly affected. By so doing, Kahf builds an occidentalist narration to counter-balance Orientalism where the veil functions a symbol of resistance. However, in the second half of her novel, Kahf dwells on the liminal experience Arab Americans go through while refashioning their identities. Kahf shows how Khadra is caught between her American identity and her Arab Muslim identity fluctuating between two distinct cultures. Kahf foregrounds the challenges Arab women face regarding the veil. Therefore, kahf's translates her won Muslim feminist agency into an authoritative discourse which maps out how a Muslim feminist agency can operate within multiple normative views. It presents Arab women's multiple consciencesness and reinvents Khatibi's discourse of double critique to challenge the double bind and jeopardy to forge new spaces for women's voices and heterogeneous selves.

It is worth-mentioning that through the writing process of this dissertation, I have found that the study of Arab women diaspora writers in different diasporic location have, for a long time, been evaluated by orientalist and colonialist thinking, which positions the Arab world as an inferior exotic place and registers its culture and civilization in the Western mind with stereotyped images. Additionally, the study of

numerous contemporary Arab women diasporic texts exhibit the malaise of these writers with their home, culture and traditions which they evaluate as they main cause behind their expatriation. Consequently, Arab women diaspora writers' attempts to forge counter discourse to resist the double oppression, marginalization, and vilification of Arab displaced subjects and construct a different representation of their identities.

In this dissertation, I have tried to show the different strategies of resistance endorsed by Arab women authors to break the chains of domination and negotiate the challenges and multiple questions pertaining to diasporic identity formation and belonging. I have also shown that the strategies of resistance adopted by these authors are meant to diminish any historical, cultural or political construct of Arab women's identities from an essentialist perspective.

It is worth emphasizing that, being a hunger research, the completion of this thesis has energies my eager to dig deeper in investigating Arab women diasporic identity, gendered and racialized hierarchies from other perspectives. The research in the field should continue to cover other themes and issues pertaining to Arab immigration and diaspora in literature. Some of the future research may be concerned with explore Arab women diasporic works from transnational feminist approach and questioning Arab women's lives Arab diasporic women's lives culturally, politically, and economically in contemporary global capitalist hegemonic structures.

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