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**Divided Identity and Displaced Self in Fadia
Faqir's *My Name is Selma***

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the degree of Magister in Literature and Civilization

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Dedication

This modest dissertation is lovingly dedicated to my departed grandmother “**Aicha**”, to my parents whose sacrifices have brought me to this position, to my brother and sisters and to my best friend ROGTI Maroua.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With immense pleasure that I can hereby acknowledge my debts first and foremost, to God for his blessings. Then my special gratitude goes to my supervisor Dr. GUERROUDJ Nouredine. Thanks to his guidance I was able to stay focused, structured and motivated. Because of his patience with reading over and over, several drafts I have sent him, I have found my inspiration in his words of encouragement, and faith in me. I would like to thank him also for not getting tired of my questions and taking time to correct me where I was short.

I would like to record my gratitude to the members of the jury, Pr. BAHOUS Abbes, Pr. BERRAHAL KAID Fatiha , Dr. BENAISSI Fawzia, who have kindly accepted to examine this work. I would also like to thank my instructors of the theoretical year of my postgraduate studies, who have had a profound influence on my life.

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Abstract

The attempt to come to terms with the meaning of home and identity, both literally and metaphorically, has become a major concern in literary studies. This dissertation explores the representations of displacement and divided identity from the point of view of Arab British novelist. Home, which contains various references to architectural structures, nations, states, or belonging, can no longer be thought of as a generalized or unified experience. For the displaced writer, the concept of home takes shape as a result of interaction between the past and the present, with memory playing a powerful role. It is created as a result of various forces in tension that include personal and national experiences, the context within which migration from the traditional home place occurred. We argue through the exploration of the novel written by Fadia Faqir whose protagonist fled from her home country that the concept of home can no longer be referred to as a generalized, definite or a fixed notion.

This study examines the effects of Diaspora and displacement in the protagonist as presented in Faqir's *My Name is Salma* (2007). It looks at the role played by these effects in the construction of ideas of home and identity in the characters. Displacement is studied here against a backdrop of a long history of movements brought about by exile and voluntary migrations. It deals with ideas of the self identity in the middle forces of displacement and exile. It presents a shifting idea of home as people move from one point to another and it looks at ideas of home as posited by different theorists in relation to the displaced and scattered people.

Key words: Displacement, exile, diaspora, identity, belonging, home, liminal space postcolonialism.

Note on Translation

A few words need to be said about various aspects of the text and the conventions we have used throughout the dissertation.

Translation: except where indicated in the text itself, the translations in the dissertation are our own. Where we relied on translations that are not our own, we indicated this at the first mention of the novel. We also made no attempt to transliterate any of the names of characters and places referred to in the novel .

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Chapter One: Overview of Displacement, Exile, Home and Memory

I.1 Introduction

“*Displacement*” a concept so often and commonly used is, in fact, semantically and symbolically overloaded. Suffice it to survey the literature of any country in the world to realize that it bears its marks in its various forms. Essayists, novelists and poets provide the reader with so many interpretations that a survey of the historical development of the word “displacement” would be necessary to elucidate it. It would be possible then to grasp the many implications that have been associated to displacement throughout time, an association that makes the “*literature of displacement*” a thorny and vast area of research, yet a very interesting one.

To use the word displacement confidently is to be aware of its connotations, which include geographical distance from the original country or birth place, the elements of force implied in that distance and the insurmountable sadness suffered. Therefore, this chapter seeks to display the portrait of the modern displaced subject by way of comparing him to the canonical political displaced of the Roman and Greek epochs because displacement is closely related to feelings of attachment. It also deals with ideas of the personal identity in the middle forces of displacement and exile. It presents a shifting idea of home as people move from one point to another. Displacement is undertaken as a search for a home as well as a search for the self.

I.2 The Notion of Displacement and Exile

The notion of both displacement and exile can be discussed from multifarious perspectives. While it is originally related to geographical displacement, some writers and critics discuss feelings of exile even though they have never quitted their homelands. In this sense, exile cannot be confined to spatial up rootedness but extends to other parameters such as time.

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Conveniently, many scholars deal with the experience of displacement in terms of their nostalgia for what Marcel Proust (1998) calls “*times past*”.

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The verb *displace* comes from the French word: *displacer*: *des-* ‘*dis-*’ + *placer* ‘*to place*’ referred to the state of the refugees. *Displace* is made of the prefix *dis-* and the verb *place*. *Dis-* as a prefix to English words means ‘*the lack of*’ or ‘*not*’; ‘*do the opposite of*’; or ‘*apart*’ and ‘*away*’ 2To be *dis-placed* therefore can also mean to not have a place, not placed, or be away from a place.

Place is a term that seems to speak for itself, but it is in fact just another word, open for infinite definitions. It can refer to a space with a definite or indefinite extent. It can be an area meant for a particular purpose. It can refer to a position, a job or a location. And metaphorically, it can have as many definitions as one would imagine.

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Chapter Two: Displacement and Identity in the Liminal space

2.1 Introduction

The theme of displacement lies at the heart of many historical works in the postmodern age. Many writers choose literature to express their feelings. Displacement in the past was hard to live because the displaced subject has to adjust the radical changes of the host nation state, many critics presently view displacement as no more than a form of dislocation akin to immigration because of globalization.

Therefore, this chapter will be devoted to the discussion of the classifications of displaced literature.. This chapter also provides a theoretical approach about displacement and the negotiation of home . Also, we deal with the process of identification of displaced subjects torn between two homelands.. The last section of this chapter is a brief summary of the literature of displacement and the power of word.

2.2 Classifications of displaced Literature

At this point, it is important to discuss the different classifications of literature based on the method of departure from the home country. The word displacement has different connotations of force and suffering that is not inherent in the word diaspora. Because both diaspora and displacement derive their meanings from distinct historical circumstances, applying them interchangeably ignores their specificities. At the heart of both terms are questions of how the home is experienced. However, in a world that is witnessing rapid and dramatic changes in terms of exile and communication, these words seem to have lost contact with their original meanings such that they are used to refer to the experience of migration in general. We offer a brief summary of the origin and meanings of both exile and diaspora, as well as the implications embedded in labelling a literature with either term. We believe the distinction between exile and diaspora as two different experiences that could occur

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separately or concurrently helps to frame the upcoming discussion of the representation of home.

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2.2.1 Diaspora and the Diasporic

Although initially related to the models of the Greek, Jewish and Armenian diasporas, the traditional definition of the term diaspora has changed over time. It is now associated with the greater process of transnational migration and increasing cultural hybridity. Thus, the concept that principally applied to the experiences of the Jews, Greeks, Armenians and Africans is applied to more than thirty different ethnic groups today¹. The term encompasses “*a multitude of ethnic, religious and national communities who find themselves living outside of the territory to which they are historically ‘rooted’*”². In this sense, the diaspora is also strongly associated with the assumptions of the migration metaphor in terms of offering revisions of fixed notions of identity.

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Chapter Three: Displacement and Divided Identity in Faqir's Novel

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to analyse the story of the protagonist in Fadia Faqir's "*My Name is Salma*" (2007), drawing on the perspectives provided by diaspora, trauma. The novel narrates the story of Salma, a young woman from the Arab tribe in the Levant, who becomes pregnant out of marriage thus dishonoring her family. The only possibility to escape a most certain honor killing is protective prison. When her brother's thirst for vengeance becomes a pervading threat, exile becomes her only option. Salma arrives in England as an adopted young adult, enters the country as a refugee and lives her life as an exile.

The first part of this chapter will analyse the problematic to define Salma as a displaced subject as her status changes through time. At the same time, we will pay special attention to the concept of in-betweenness, common to many diasporic subjects. The second part of the chapter will analyse the specific trauma that Salma experiences, which is related to her life in Hima but which nevertheless carried through to England. Her traumatic past will ultimately increase the potentially negative aspects of exile thus Salma's trauma will be analysed as the constant interruptions in the process of integration into the host country, as well as the reason that gradually deteriorates her psychic state, which revolves around the reliving of the past, living an imaginary present and dreaming uncertain future.

3.2 Contextualizing the narrative

The offspring of a Bedouin father and a circaesian mother, Fadia Faqir was born to a well-known Jordanian tribe near Amman where she was one of nine children. She is a short-story teller, novelist, editor, an independent scholar and activist in human rights. She graduated with a B.A. in English literature from the University of Jordan in 1983. She worked as a journalist before going to the UK to complete an MA in Critical and Creative Writing at Lancaster.

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1990, Faqir was awarded the first PhD in Critical and Creative Writing by the University of East Anglia, England.

Faqir is a defender of human rights, especially in the Arab World. She is a member of the Board of Al-Raida, a feminist journal published by the Lebanese American University in Beirut, Lebanon. She now lives with her Hungarian, Irish, English, husband in Durham in the north of England

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In recent times, displacement and identity discussions have been in spotlight of many scholars as the interaction between place and personal identity becomes one of the most profound dilemma that effect the postcolonial subject. Throughout much of human history, one's place was a fixed and stable concept. It is possible to see the remains of that uneventful conception of placement and its effect on identity among members of a whole culture, one in where there is little or no visible contrast between the person and society. Identity might be attached to a geographical locale, and will certainly be embedded within a certain culture.

Asking the question what a postcolonial subject actually means when he or she speaks of 'home' becomes a must since it has become a debatable concept, no longer applicable only to a discreet geographic set of cultural practices, given the formation of hybrid and liminal positions. In *The Politics of Home*, Rosemary Marangoly George (1999) discusses the imaginary features of home seeing that it is a "desire" for a stable, rooted identity, and that realistic works of fiction reflect this by situating themselves¹ "(...)in the gap between the realities and the idealizations that have made 'home' such an auratic term"² George (Ibid), thus, indicates that the personal and social meanings of home have been much changed , and that this change in turn could be characterized even if not precisely defined.

Many scholars of the twentieth century , such as Gaston Bachelard (1962), Clara Cooper (1992)and David E. Sopher (1974), have portrayed a close correlation between home and self-identity³ .All of them have seen that the experiences that appear when people inhabit a place for a long time affect the self-identity of those who live there. Nevertheless, for people who have left their original setting, self-identity might become fragmentary and divided

¹ In her examination of the home -space in twentieth-century global literature in English, Rosemary Marangoly George similarly argues that being an "imagined location" is one of the imperative qualities of home. George defines the home in three different yet connected senses: first, home is a 'private' space" second, it is a "larger geographic place where one belongs: country, city, village, community"; and third, it is an "imagined location"

²Rosemary Marangoly, George. *The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth-century Fiction*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996),02.

³ Ibid. 20

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between identification with the older and newer setting. Therefore, home may become ‘*imaginary*’, since the attention is uniting the setting and those practices no longer attainable to the subject.

Identification with one’s home becomes complicated in the case of the exile because the homeland has been changed or left. Within this context, the examination of individual identity formation relative to the notion of home becomes relevant to everyone in society. The crossing between the two must be taken into consideration. The examination of all aspects of home and identity, for all subjects, becomes useful to both literature and life.

A pure notion of home may refer to one’s place and culture of origin, but if the subject has left his or her homeland (either voluntarily or through necessity) and has no direct access to it, this construction of ‘*home*’ becomes less genuine. Its power may increase even as its qualities diminish. As one critic describes it:

the notion of home has extended beyond its “primary connotation (...)of the ‘private space’ from which the individual travels into the larger arenas of life and to which he or she returns at the end of the day (...)home is also the imagined location that can be more readily fixed in a mental landscape than in actual geography”⁴.

The idea of home can get more power in the absence of access to the place itself, and this imagined construct has the power to influence issues surrounding home and identity. Referencing an imagined homeland is always problematic because it creates nostalgia for something inaccessible.

In some cases, the family unit might be fragmented due to a member’s loyalty to an abstract notion of home. The subject’s loyalty may be split due to a dichotomy between his or her homeland and real, physical home. The subject might also experience a lack of

⁴Rosemary Marangoly, George. *The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth-century Fiction*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 20.

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understanding in his present environment, causing him to identify more closely with the original homeland. In short, a great variety of possibilities exist with regard to this complex interaction. Unlike a physical home, the imagined home as an abstract concept transcends time and space. The idea is powerful, though its definition and manifestation are highly variable. The power of the imagined home or homeland might be central to an understanding of the postcolonial subject with regard to his or her identity formation. Specifically, in the immigrant or exiled subject, the ephemeral, indefinite or imaginary construction of home and self-identification with this imaginary notion of home ultimately impacts the subject's ability to form a hybrid identity.

In the course of this reflexion, we will attempt to ask whether displacement prevents the evolution of identity or conversely, it provides a foundation for the evolution of a new identity in Faqir's *My Name is Salma* (Ibid). Further, we will tend to explain the extent to which the fractured identity that springs from the identification with various places allows the subject to straddle various cultures and creates an innovative identity. A chain of questions will follow to clarify to what extent the formation of a liminal identity as a result of the loss of one's original home might be liberating? To what extent the parameters of memory, history, tradition, and personal experience might limit and empower the subject? To what extent the liminal position might be one of strength, creativity and promise? And to what extent memory could be responsible for the imaginary reconstruction of home.

Without pretending to bring decisive answers to all these questions, we may still put forward some hypothesis on which we intend to build our work. Displacement might hold the protagonist "*Salma*" in Faqir's novel back, results a fractured identity and prevent its evolution. Moreover, this divided identity that springs from the identification with myriad places might not allow to create a fully functional identity and that the formation of a liminal identity as the result of the loss of one's original home and the need to adjust to a new one

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might not be liberating, as it might not free the subject to form a unique identity which carry their own strength. The subject under examination might be both empowered and limited by the parameters of memory, history, tradition and personal experience. That is why, the liminal position might not be one of strength, creativity, promise, and because of the challenges associated with occupying such a position due to displacement from her homeland. Finally, memory might be responsible for the imaginary reconstruction of home as “*Salma*” is separated from her home, history, and language, marginalized and perhaps discriminated against in a new environment, and forced to rely on “*Memory*” to meet identity.

Throughout our readings, the theme of displacement has imposed itself permanently and inevitably whether physical or spiritual, displacement has proved to be a condition that generates this fractured identity. Dealing with the literature of Arab-British, in particular, we try to show that this link is a constant feature in their writings. Choosing for that purpose an Arab-British author.

Why choosing Arab-British? The choice is made because it is one of the communities that have been subjected to exile whether voluntary or not, they were considered also as homeless persons due to their displacement.

The other question that will very probably be asked is why not including another author in the research work? A second writer of this origin would have certainly enlarged the scope of this dissertation and would have brought new and enriching aspects of the Arab-British literature. However, the selection of the writer cited above is guided by the idea that she can stand as a representative of the fringe of society even though she does not have the same cultural identity. Furthermore, she is, one might say, hybrid, Arab and British, a fact that had a great impact on her personality and most importantly writings. More significantly, her view and voice as an Arab-British woman writer are worth probing.

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We are, therefore, content with the study of Faqir's novel *My Name is Salma* (Ibid), as its title suggests, its subject is torn between defiant assertion of her identity, despair at her exile and determination to survive. The protagonist is torn between a brutal past, an alien country with its own, more indifferent cruelties, and the bonds of motherhood, family and culture.

There are many ways to look and to research displacement and, in different fields throughout the history of research, the word itself has been defined differently. Drawing on different definitions of the word displacement and relying on Faqir's novel, we define displacement as the unsettling state of thought and meaning that is caused by *'the separation of people from their native culture through physical dislocation'*⁵, and the struggles to repair or re-establish some sort of continuity with that native culture and a place of origin. In this sense, we look at the state of being displaced as being closely related to the feeling of being unhomed, becoming invisible or finding oneself as another.

Faqir's characters are away from their natal homes, living in diasporic conditions, which are often characterized by a sense of non-belonging, but the very sense of belonging to their original abodes is also well established. In some of the instances that she presents, a character's place of origin seems to present more hostility than the place of settlement. In certain instances, there is hostility and a pervading sense of non-belonging in both original homes and the home of settlement.

Not surprisingly, displacement affects identity which is an illusive concept. As it is viewed as an abstract concept, one cannot be satisfied with just a fixed definition of it.

⁵Angelika, Bammer ,ed. *Displacements: Cultural Identities in Question.*(Bloomington: Indiana U, 1994), 11.

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Different scholars including philosophers, linguists, humanists, and scholars at other fields have defined identity almost in the same way: your identity is who you are.⁶

The different themes attributed to this novel make it attractive and worth studying. It might be open to a variety of themes such as hybridity, honour killing, and the disempowerment of women in Middle Eastern literature, love, sex and psychological matters among others. What motivates us to conduct the research is that the novel is contemporary and it has not been tackled a lot. This research is also motivated by a desire to contribute towards filling this gap by exploring how an Arab British writer imagines, constructs and portrays home in relation to the experience of exile, displacement and migration. In addition to contributing to filling this gap in literature by focusing on the representation of home in novels by an Arab British living away from her country of origin. this research is also driven by a need to engage this kind of literature with the wider discussion of migration, exile and the representation of home, which is taking place among post-colonial critics.

In developing the parameters for this dissertation, the following aims and objectives were established. First, to understand sudden, significant and transformational experiences as characterised by the term displacement with a focus on a change in self and identity. Secondly, to take a critical look at Faqir's treatment of issues of displacement and Diaspora in the novel *My Name is Salma* (Ibid). Finally, the findings will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing a new definition of displacement and its new and alternative interpretation by applying the theories of self and identity.

The concern of the first chapter is to introduce the theme of displacement in its various aspects. It explains why and how the condition of displacement whether it is voluntary or not generates a divided identity. The latter is studied through the definitions of some of the most

⁶Nikolas ,Coupland. *Style: Language Variation and Identity*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2007),33.

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important concepts such as “*homessless*”⁷ “*cultural differences*”, “*self-transformation*”. We identify these concepts not as motionless, fixed and isolated but as “*centers of vibrations, each in itself and every one in relation to all the others*”⁸.

The second chapter explains the feelings of nostalgia and its relation to exile and displacement, as well as we provide a theoretical approach about the process of identifications of displacements between two homelands .We also examine the three possible identification processes of displaced subjects, most notably, assimilation, nationalism and hibridity.

The third chapter analyses the problematic to define Faqir’s “*Salma*” as a displaced subject as her status changes through time. At the same time, it pays special attention to the concept of in-betweenness, common to many diasporic subjects. This chapter analyse the specific trauma that Salma experiences, which is related to her life in Hima but which nevertheless carried through to England. Salma’s trauma also analyses as the constant interruptions in the process of integration into the host country, as well as the reason that gradually deteriorates her psychic state, which revolves around the reliving of the past, living an imaginary present and dreaming uncertain future .

A general conclusion stating the findings of this research closes the dissertation by summarizing the major findings about Faqir presentation of diaspora⁹ and displacement.

⁷ Homi K, Bhabha, “The World and the Home” Social text essay. (N, P ,1992),.31-32. Web. 14 Jan 2014.

⁸Gilles, Deleuze and Guattari Félix. *What is Philosophy?*Tran, Birchill Graham and Tomlinson Hugh (Columbia University Press ,1994).23.

⁹Although it may be impossible to describe “*diaspora*” in a single definition, the term carries a sense of “*displacement*”from and longing for home in all cases; that is, the individuals so described find themselves contesting the established norms of home and experience physical and metaphorical dislocations from their homes.

General Conclusion

In each of the previous three conclusions, one viewpoint is emphasised in relation to the novelist' portrayal of home and identity. We highlight the nature of migration faced by Arabs when it comes to examining the portrayal of home in the framework of the metaphorization of identity . The unique situation of displaced subjects led them to experience migration differently. Therefore, the conclusion to chapter one emphasises the inseparable link between the personal experience and displacement in the perception and representation of home and more the effect that the variety and multitude of personal experiences played in determining different representations of home and the experience of displacement from the home country. We have drawn also attention to the various preoccupations with issues of migration, the creation of personal homes.

In this dissertation the concept of '*exile*' is stretched to accommodate the theoretical framework in which this thesis operates. '*Exile*' is employed to indicate more than simply the change in space of the creation of the literary work. The space we chose here, is not only geographical, but it also refers to the presence outside of the margins of the nation-state; this way justifying the inclusion of Palestinian writers who might still be present on the same territory of the desired nation state but outside it as a politically recognized entity. Arab writers, who are included here, exist in spatial exile from the nation-state regardless of their ideological affinity with it. Together these two spaces in geographical and political distance from the home country presented a fertile location for examining Bhabha's valorisation of the migrant site, the one which held a so-called promise of revising and redrawing the concept of the nation and sentiments of nationalism. The insistence on seeing the meaning of culture "*in-between*" fixed spaces such as East, West, North and South, as well as making clear distinctions between migrants and nationals, minorities and majorities, while it seems to overcome the binary divisions frowned upon by the postcolonial critics, is evidently complicit in asserting them. In the novel discussed, the protagonist "*Salma*" maintains allegiances to her original home country while making home in new ones.

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She highlights displacement as a painful experience rather than a privilege. “*Salma*” moves fluidly between these positions reminding us of the complicated way in which memory and nostalgia operate to assert the roles that cultural intimacy as an expression of cultural nationalism plays in determining the imagination of home and relationship to the home country.

Bhabha (Ibid) explains his point of view in his two books *Nation and Narration* and *The Location of Culture*. He claims that this “*in-between*” space, as promised in the site of migration, holds the promise of re-drawing the centre, here the nation state. He is not alone. Other Arab critics held a similar view. Mohamed Salah Omri (2006), for example, argues that diaspora – here implying a geographical removal from the territory of the nation-state – “*presents us with the process of representation and construction of identity at the complex juncture where the categories and impulses of empire, nation, gender and metropolitan location converge(...)*”¹ He also adds that, given the current situation in the Arab world, it is inevitable that any Arab writer, who exhibits an element of collective history in his work, will find himself trapped in nostalgia². In effect, this claim is neither entirely substantiated nor entirely discarded. Likewise, suspicion of all forms of roots, and eyeing the nation and all forms of nationalism with aversion is not usually figure as the primary concern of the Arab British writer discussed here, though many did indeed critically engage with the concept of the nation-state as a site of oppression and violence, as well as a constructed imagined space .

Reading this contemporary narrative of the Middle East, one is provoked to contextualize and analyze the accuracy and relevance of statements that seek either to undermine the centrality of nation to the questions of belonging and identity or simply take the signs of the vaguest nostalgia and longing as evidence of nationalism. While the nation-state is a political entity, one has to

¹Zahia Smail ,Salhi and Netton Ian Richard .*The Arab Diaspora: voices of an Anguished Scream*,(London: Routledge, 2006), 71.

²Ibid .53

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remember, as Lynn Meskell (1998) points out that “*the political is always personal*”³ such that seeking to form a clear division between the nation as a people and the state as a political instrument and entity, while a good effort, undermines the painful reality of many displaced individuals. Through an analysis of this novel that presents different portrayals of home, we demonstrate how the personal converge when representing a national experience. This is amplified by the historical context in which the representation occurs. What most of this novel do demonstrate is that nationalism and exile can no longer simply be seen as opposite realities where one can be embraced at the expense of the other.

One of the aspects that problematized the determination of the ideological view imply in the product of the migrant, marginal, hybrid or exilic position is inherent in the process of interpreting the literature itself. In this analysis we have focused primarily on an interpretation of the themes, and we have examined the choice of the settings of the novel in an attempt to determine the preoccupations of the writer: she who chooses to highlight. While the interpretation of any novel could easily be contested by a different reading, We have aimed here to maintain consistency in our reviews by comparing the settings of the novels (the original country or the host country), the personal experience of the protagonist and their most immediate concerns and, finally, an overview of the strongest elements of the structure and texture of the text. After a brief background about the novelist, We have shed light on all of the preceding aspects before linking the analysis to the theoretical debate on the centrality of the nation in these cultural products.

We aim to evaluate and assess the implications of this over-valorised location on the margins of the nation, as well as to offer a survey of the various representations of the experience of home in a small slice of migrant Arab literature. We have tried to maintain a good balance in the selection of the novel.

³Willeke ,Wendrich ,ed .*Egyptian Archaeology* ,(Wiley-Blackwell, 2001),191.

General Conclusion

While We have made no attempt to group the novel or novelist into limited category, we turn now to addressing concerns that we have perceived as major issues in the past chapter : the portrayal of the experience of immigration, speaking about the nation/nationalism. These are issues raised in each of the three main chapters but we have turned to them here in an attempt to draw some final parallels. We have presented nostalgia as a major concern in the novel surveyed. We have relied on Boym's distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia in the way that the memory of the past life in the home country is recalled and represented. We have maintained that the dynamic of these recollections highly influences the experience of developing a home in the new location. We thus have highlighted the role of memory and the writer' selective representation that is spurred by her female heroine personal. "*My Name is Salma*" (Ibid) captures a sense of debilitating nostalgia as the protagonist exposes a sense of grief inherent in the departure from *Hima*, intensifies (paradoxically) by the voluntariness of the decision to depart. However, her nostalgia is wrapped in her personal experience of immigration and relocation as a witness to her abandonment of her daughter "*Layla*".

Faqir's novel focuses primarily on the personal experience of attachment to home: defining it and locating it. This focus is reflected in the choice of the title "*My Name is Salma*" (Ibid), Home where the female protagonist attempts to outline the boundaries of a personal home. She paints migration as a favourable option that makes the attainment of a home that promises comfort and security possible; promising an exit from the cycle of family strife.

It is difficult to declare this position as entirely ideological. She points towards the several facets of the experience of migration or immigrating; it has psychological and social implications. In fact, the positions of the novelist outlined here on the advantages and disadvantages of migration owe elements to the arguments put forward by all of the critics mentioned previously including Bhabha (Ibid), Ahmad (Ibid) and George (Ibid). This novelist does not simply write accounts in which she vows allegiance to the nation, nor did she presents one-dimensional images of privileged

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cosmopolitan citizens enjoying a free-floating existence in isolation from national belongings. Moreover, the so-called mythical nature of the imagined nation figures as her primary concern. The assumption that a favourable portrayal of an experience of migration amounts to an undermining of the centrality of the nation-state would be too simplistic as it fails to take into account all the different dimensions of the migration and relocation experience which occurs in overlapping folds.

She addresses migration from the point of view of her refugee who voluntarily experiences mental and geographical exile, and highlights both the psychological and political implications of their displacement. In this case, home is not simply reduced to Ahmed's stance as "*a matter of how one feels or one might fail to feel*"⁴ even if this figures as one of its aspects, but it becomes part and parcel of a project that is at once profoundly refugees by recalling the names of the cities, villages, streets and roads that coincide with the real and actual journey. These references were and still are part of the lives of many of those refugees among whom is the writer.

Although we have hesitated to draw generalizations, a strong voice is heard in many passages of the novel that loudly assigns women the metaphor for the homeland. Her narrative avoids the representation of the national experience as one dimensional and insists on exposing the complexities and shades without resorting to the simple binaries of home and exile, when it came to the choices of the character whether to leave or stay in her home country.

In addressing the claims inherent in the postcolonial discussions of the metaphorization of migration, this research allows, through an examination of the novel by Arab British writer whose geographical place in the world is determined to different degrees by inbetweenness, a thorough review of the imagination of home in a small sample of modern English fiction. While questioning the practicality of applying the postcolonial theoretical background to novel that are produced at a site which complicates its identity, this novel offers a panorama of the different ways in which hybrid writers have narrated the experience of home.

⁴ Zahia Smail ,Salhi and Netton Ian Richard .*The Arab Diaspora: voices of an Anguished Scream*,(London: Routledge, 2006),82.

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This research's most important finding was in explaining the dichotomy between the protagonist's two opposing identities, Sally and Salma, to show how trauma and the fact of having been formerly imprisoned, both literally and metaphorically, deny her the possibility of fully integrating into the host country and developing a hybrid identity.

The ever past becomes a source of trauma that impedes the development of a coherent hybrid identity. The novel also considers the past as a mental condition and the colonial simulacrum that Salma experiences in England in order to show how the diasporic subject, as represented by this female character, may enjoy moments of stable identity, but only constantly threatened by the recurrence of her past.

The existence of a variety of experiences and imaginations of home that does not coincide with a collective perception or a certain experience of exile or migration, is a function of how the memory of the migrant novelist recalls the first experience of home in the home country. The distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia explained the difference between cultural nationalism and political nationalism. These literary creations disrupt attempts that suggest a tidy categorization and reject a definition that is based on the site of their production.

Glossary of Key Terms

Ambivalence: the ambiguous way in which colonizer and colonized regard one another. The colonizer often regards the colonized as both inferior yet exotically other, while the colonized regards the colonizer as both enviable yet corrupt. In a context of hybridity, this often produces a mixed sense of blessing and curse.

Belonging is the phenomenon of attachment, or sense of belonging, in academic literature generally highlights the group and territorial dimension and it is when people do yearn for communal membership, do have a strong sense of us and them, of territories as homelands, of belonging to culturally defined and bounded worlds which give their lives meaning.

Diaspora: the voluntary or enforced migration of peoples from their native homelands. Diaspora literature is often concerned with questions of maintaining or altering identity, language, and culture while in another culture or country.

Ethnicity: a fusion of traits that belong to a group—shared values, beliefs, norms, tastes, behaviors, experiences, memories, and loyalties. Often deeply related to a person's identity.

Home has discrete social, personal, physical, political, and cultural qualities, although these qualities are experienced as a whole. Home signifies not only a physical place but also represents a center of activities, source of identity, belonging from the past, a goal for personal and social development, an abstract state of being, and a legal concept .

Homelessness can be seen as a condition of detachment from society characterized by the lack of the affiliative bonds that link people into their social structures. Homelessness carries implications of belonging nowhere rather than having no-where to sleep.

Hybridity is new transcultural form that arises from cross-cultural exchange. Hybridity can be social, political, linguistic, religious, etc. It is not necessarily a peaceful mixture, for it can be contentious and disruptive in its experience. Note the two related definitions: **catalysis**: the (specifically New World) experience of several ethnic groups interacting and mixing with each other often in a contentious environment that gives way to new forms of identity and experience. **creolization**: societies that arise from a mixture of ethnic and racial mixing to form a new material, psychological, and spiritual self-definition.

Identity is the way in which an individual and/or group defines itself. Identity is important to self-concept, social mores, and national understanding. It often involves both essentialism and othering.

Language (in the context of colonialism and post-colonialism) has often become a site for both colonization and resistance. In particular, a return to the original indigenous language is often advocated since the language was suppressed by colonizing forces. The use of European languages is a much debated issue among postcolonial authors.

Abrogation: a refusal to use the language of the colonizer in a correct or standard way.

Appropriation: "the process by which the language is made to 'bear the burden' of one's own cultural experience."

Liminality is derived from Latin *limen* meaning "threshold", liminal refers to a transitory, in-between state or space, which is characterized by indeterminacy, ambiguity, hybridity, potential for subversion and change. The concept has been introduced by anthropologists van Gennep and Turner, who employ liminality to describe the transitory stage

characteristic of rites of passage in various cultures. Upon their ritual exclusion from society, adepts enter a liminal zone of indistinction from which they are bound to return changed thereafter becoming fully acknowledged members of their respective communities. In literary, post-colonial, and cultural studies the concept has been successfully adopted to circumscribe a being on the border, or on the threshold, dividing distinct spheres, identities or discourses. Cultural theorist Homi Bhabha, for instance, refers to the liminal in post-colonial literature as a potentially disruptive in betweenness.

Nation/Nation-state an aggregation of people organized under a single government. National interest is associated both with a struggle for independent ethnic and cultural identity, and ironically an opposite belief in universal rights, often multicultural, with a basis in geo-economic interests. Thus, the move for national independence is just as often associated with region as it is with ethnicity or culture, and the two are often at odds when new nations are formed.

Nostalgia is an elusive concept formed from the two Greek roots: *nostos* return home and *algia* pain. *The Oxford English Dictionary* 1998 defines nostalgia as “a form of melancholia caused by prolonged absence from ones home or country; severe homesickness”. *The New Oxford Dictionary of English* (1998:41) defines Homesick as “*Experiencing a longing for one’s home during a period of absence from it,*” and nostalgia as “*a sentimental longing for the past.*” In other words, the Greek term ‘*Nostalgia*’ means ‘to return home’ and ‘*algia*’ is a painful condition. It is that type of yearning which makes an individual restless to reclaim and reinvent the past.

Other is the social and/or psychological way in which one group excludes or marginalizes another group. By declaring someone "*Other*," persons tend to stress what makes them dissimilar from or opposite of another, and this carries over into the way they represent others, especially through stereotypical images.

Post-colonialism is a study of the effects of colonialism on cultures and societies. It is concerned with both how European nations conquered and controlled "*Third World*" cultures and how these groups have since responded to and resisted those encroachments. Post-colonialism, as both a body of theory and a study of political and cultural change, has gone and continues to go through three broad stages: 1- an initial awareness of the social, psychological, and cultural inferiority enforced by being in a colonized state 2- the struggle for ethnic, cultural, and political autonomy. 3-a growing awareness of cultural overlap and hybridity

Space/Place space represents a geographic locale, one empty in not being designated.

Place, on the other hand, is what happens when a space is made or owned. Place involves landscape, language, environment, culture, etc.

Third space was a concept first developed in depth by Bhabha (1994) as a metaphor for the space in which cultures met. It is a space in which colonial authority is challenged and hybrid identities are created.

Transnationalism is a social phenomenon and scholarly research agenda grown out of the heightened interconnectivity between people and the receding economic and social significance of boundaries among nation states. The term was popularized in the early 20th century to describe "*a new way of thinking about relationships between cultures*"

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Appendices

Appendix I

The biography of the writer

Fadia Faqir was born in Amman, Jordan in 1956. She was raised by a conservative Muslim father, “*a reluctant tyrant*,” who required that his nine children practice Islam as devoutly as he did. At a young age, supported by her liberal Muslim mother, she learned to bargain with her father, relinquishing a late-night curfew in exchange for freedom from wearing the Muslim veil, intended to protect the family from shame.

She was married at age 19 - an arranged marriage that was so miserably disharmonious that her father removed her from it only shortly after her son was born. The Jordanian government revoked Faqir’s custody of her son, and this estrangement from her son is Faqir’s biggest heartbreak in life. She has mended this emotional fracture in her own life through writing, and always makes a note dedicating her novels to her son.

Despite her father’s traditional political and religious beliefs, he was committed to providing education opportunities for his children, and allowed Faqir to go to Britain where she received her MA in Creative Writing from Lancaster University. Interestingly, she writes all her books in English. She wrote her first novel, *Nisanit*, in 1987 and has since written *Pillars of Salt* (1996) and *My Name is Salma* (2007). She served as the senior editor of the Arab Women Writers Series, and won the New Venture Award for her work in 1995. In 2014, she published *Willow Trees Don’t Weep* that negotiates the minefields of family, politics and religion and She is now a board member of Al-Raida, a feminist journal published by the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World in Beirut. She is also a lecturer and coordinator at the Center for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at the University of Durham, in England, where she lives with her husband.

Appendix II

Synopsis of the novel

My Name is Salma (2007) tells the story of Salma, a teenage Bedouin who lives with her parents and elder brother, Mahmoud, in a small village in the Arab World called Hima. Her family is very conservative, consequently her care-free life ends when she gets pregnant out of This is a turning point in her life so as not to be killed by her father or brother; she takes refuge in the protective prison where she gives birth to a baby girl, Layla, who is snatched out of her arms by her cell mate.

After about six years in prison, a Lebanese nun decides to smuggle Salma to a convent in Lebanon. Ultimately, Salma is adopted by a British nun: Miss Asher who changes Salma's name to Sally and arranges to take her to Britain.

Salma tries to begin a new life in England but it is difficult for the unsophisticated Bedouin young woman to be so abruptly uprooted and reject her upbringing, confront a different culture and meld Salma into Sal or Sally, her English adopted names. She faces a new set of problems as an alien who has somehow to find a new identity and a life for herself. She yearns for her daughter, and is haunted by the trauma she suffered back home that she has hallucinations of a man who has come to kill her.

Salma gets married to an Englishman as a way of accommodating herself to the new country. However, after giving birth to her baby boy, she begins dreaming and imagining Layla calling her for help. After hesitation and in spite of the objections of her husband, she goes back to Hima to find that her daughter has been recently killed by her brother. While crying for her daughter, she is shot by her brother, too.

APPENDIX III

This interview is the culmination of several discussions between Faqir and Rachel Bower¹ at conferences and seminars in 2009, followed by email correspondence.

Rachel Bower I want to ask you a bit about your physical relationship with Jordan, where you were born. You have lived in Britain for 25 years, and write mainly in English. Your novels have been translated and published internationally, particularly your most recent novel, *My Name is Salma*, which has been published in 16 countries and translated into 13 languages. I wonder how far you consider yourself an “*international*” author, and how important you feel it is to be read in Jordan.

Fadia Faqir I was born and brought up in Amman in Jordan and, although I do not physically live there, Jordan is part of my mental landscape. I was born in the year of independence from the British and grew up in humble but vibrant East Amman. One of my earliest memories is of hills covered with wheat and a large English club nearby, with a wire fence, dogs, guards and gardens. The native Jordanians were not allowed to enter the club and that made it more alluring and mysterious. We tried to sneak in many times, but the guard caught us and the boys were beaten with a stick. This image of an affluent, exclusive colonial space has remained with me and keeps reappearing in my writing. I also lived with the Bedouins who were semi-nomadic then, herding the goats and sheep, reaping crops, and travelling to the wheat threshing floor. *Pillars of Salt* (1996) was written to document that magical landscape and preserve the Bedouins’ noble way of life which was fast disappearing. The term “*international writer*” is abstract, and means little to me while actually writing. It is still difficult to grasp the fact that people are reading my fiction in (soon to be) 14 languages. And yes, it is very

¹Rachel Bower is in her second year of doctoral research in the Faculty of English at the University of Cambridge. Her research focuses on epistolarity and encounter in the contemporary novel, examining the intersection of mode and theme in the epistolary form, and how it stages encounter across national, cultural and historical boundaries. Rachel is also interested in the way in which historical and political contexts shape the material texts available to readers. She is the co-convenor of the “Postcolonial Institutions” group at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) in Cambridge, and also a member of the university’s Centre for Material Texts.

important to me to be read in Jordan. The Arabic translation of *My Name is Salma* is available there now and I do hope that it will be picked up and engaged with.

RB You have talked in the past about your admiration for the magnificent poet Mahmoud Darwish, arguably the most influential and recognized Palestinian poet and author in the world; and in particular, your admiration for the beauty of his work combined with his political commitment. How do you feel that politics and aesthetics work in your novels? Do you feel a “*burden of responsibility*” as an Arab writer, and do your political commitments shape your novels? What do you think about the possibility of “*art for art’s sake*”?

FF When political views are repressed and you live under a monolithic, monological autocracy, literature becomes an outlet for expressing such views. The late Palestinian author Emil Habibi propagated his Marxist views in his fiction and in his later years lamented that fact. If you are born in an area of conflict, writing “*art for art’s sake*” becomes a luxury. However, my literary journey shows how writing political fiction can also change. I started with *Nisanit* (1987), a howl from the heart: raw, close to reality and unsophisticated perhaps. In *Pillars of Salt*, I moved on to explore imperialism and sexual politics and used the oral tradition and the tradition of travel writing. In *My Name is Salma*, a novel about the constraints of the human condition, migration and racism, I began exploring lyricism and pace, and used minute descriptions of daily life to construct a whole. All my novels are socio-political, but I hope the tone, style and structure have evolved. In other words, novels are windows to the world; they humanize, bring injustice to the reader’s attention, and act as cultural bridges. In *My Name is Salma* I have no “*goodies*” or “*baddies*”. In fact, all of the characters are tragic figures, even the English landlady Elizabeth, who mistreats Salma.

RB In your introduction to Badr’s novel you also write: “*Arab women are generally treated as a minority in most Arab countries. They feel invisible, misrepresented and reduced*”, and talk of the “*double veil of gender and culture*” that “*most westerners*” perceive Arab women to be behind. The (mis)treatment of Arab women is also a prominent feature of much of your fiction. However, although

the Arab Women Writers series was started to redress the lack of interaction with Arab culture and to counter westerners' stereotypical images of Arab women's lives, the oppression of women is also a prominent western stereotype of Arab cultures, as critics like Lila Abu-Lughod sharply point out – for example, in “*Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?*” How would you respond to the critique of perpetuating Orientalist stereotypes about the Arab oppression of women, particularly in relation to *My Name is Salma*'s plot of the honour killing (which often holds an exoticized place in the Orientalist imagination)?

FF Honour crimes happen in many countries and to associate them with the Arab world is unfair. Jordan must not be penalized for documenting the crimes and fighting them – it must be encouraged. My students looked for honour crimes incidents and they found them in Sweden, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Greece, Turkey and many other countries. So the problem cannot be dismissed as an Arab Muslim problem. Christian women get killed in so-called “*honour crimes*”. So I wanted to open up the debate and widen it. It is important to be self-critical. There will be no reform without that. Yet the way issues are tackled is important. I am not an Orientalist or an Islam basher. I write about the Arab world because I love it and because I have a deep desire to change it for the better. Perhaps it is all about motivation. Are you maliciously misrepresenting the Arabs or are you driven by a desire for change? I am aware of the pitfalls and I walk that tight-rope every day. It is also important to note that *My Name is Salma* is partly about honour crimes but mainly about the immigrant experience in Britain today. Salma is torn between her past, in the idyllic rural village, and her present in England; between the Arab and English cultures. The form of the novel reflects Salma's conflict. She is lonely and linguistically and culturally unprepared to face the West. She has a huge legacy that pulls her back. There is so much to love and deplore about both cultures. The novel hopefully holds a mirror to Arab and British societies and is equally critical of them.

RB Imprisonment is a theme that seems to haunt most of your literary work, and the portrayal of incarceration is not limited by national context. For example, in your novel *Pillars of Salt*, two women

are confined in a mental institution in Jordan during and after the British mandate, whereas *My Name is Salma* details the imprisonment of Salma and other women in the Levant and in a port detention centre in Britain. Do you see the incarceration of women as a transcultural, global issue, and can you comment on its significant presence in your work?

FF For much of my childhood, I felt that I was living in a prison, and likewise when I got married. My father's political views and his desire for change landed him in prison in 1969. You can see imprisonment, metaphorical and literal, everywhere in my work. I based part of *Nisanit* on my father's story. My mother never allowed us to visit our father because she didn't want to expose us to that kind of experience. But I imagined that space; it became part of my mental landscape. In fact, I see every human being, regardless of gender, as disempowered somehow. There is always a challenge and there is always something that's restricting you. My characters tend to be caught in a structure or a web. Characters are the victims of history, geography and politics in *Nisanit*. In *My Name is Salma*, Salma has done something she's not supposed to do, although it is in harmony with her nature. She just happened to be born in a village where the rules are strict, so she has to be punished. And then you have Liz [*My Name is Salma*], who's English, and again, the victim of a long history: she was not allowed to get married to the Indian man she was in love with. Another power structure pertains in that case – a class structure. Liz is located in a hierarchy that prevents her from actualizing herself. My characters are always victims of the human condition – always confined.