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Mapping identity in Arab-British Anglophone Literature: "the case study of The Translator by Leila Aboulela"

Dissertation submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Literature and Civilization.

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<u>Acknowledgements</u>

<u>Dedication</u>

I would like to dedicate it to my Mother " MOKRI KHAIRA" and my Father"
DAHMANI AHMED», who offers me the inspiration of success and keenness
throughout my life…

I also dedicate this work to my sisters Nedjet, Fouzia, Houria, Fatima, and Abir who
have encouraged me all the way and whose encouragement has made sure that I give it
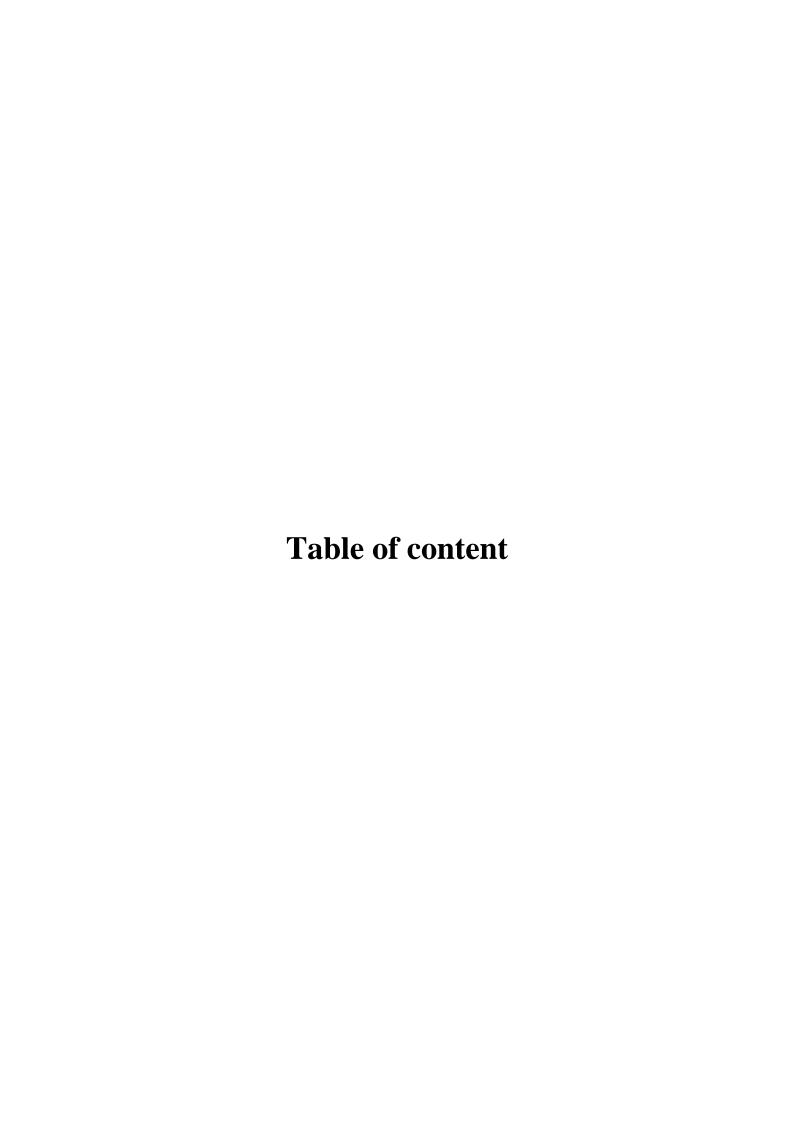all it takes to finish that which I have started.

Thank you. My love for you all can never be quantified.

Abstract

This thesis investigates how Arab women feel in-between in their postcolonial societies and Diasporas. It examines the struggle of Arab women to find a secure sense of identity in Sudanese female writer Leila Aboulela's work "The Translator." It also explores how immigrant Muslim women in a multicultural society negotiate and prioritize their Islamic identities. This research is aimed at how the veil can provide women with strength, stability, security, peace, and a sense of belonging in an Eastern setting dominated by Arabness, Islam, patriarchy, and feminism. It adopts a more critical perspective, drawing on postcolonial theory and Islamic feminism. As a result, this study is separated into three chapters. The first gives a postcolonial and Islamic feminist theoretical framework. It also defines key ideas such as identity, hybridity, subalternity, and Islamic feminism. Furthermore, the second chapter examines the rise of Arab immigrants in the United Kingdom, and they promote their voices in the Diaspora. Finally, the last chapter analyses Sammar's sense of in-betweenness in both her homeland Sudan and London. Moreover, it illuminates how the protagonist, Sammar succeeds in forging a new religious sense of identity in Diaspora after a long period of confusion and struggle.

This study then goes into detail about Arab women's experiences in the Diaspora as they strive for a modern yet Islamic identity.
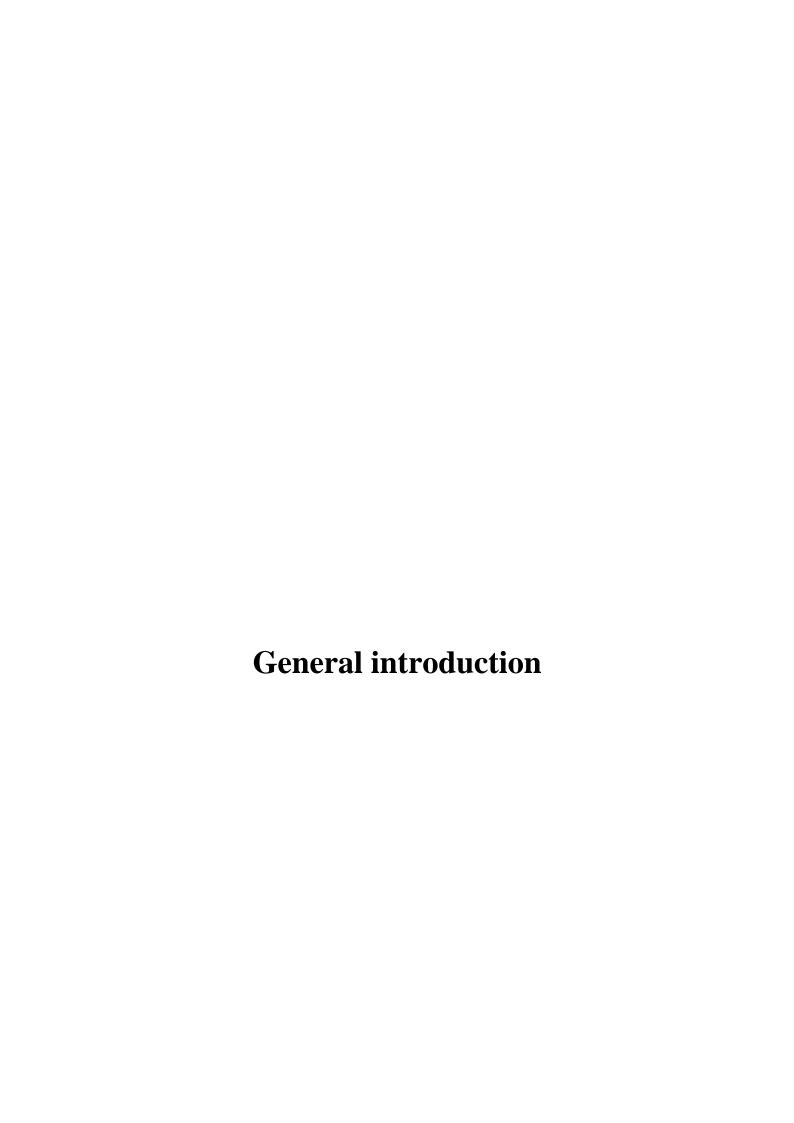
Keywords: Identity, Hybridity, Subaltern, Postcolonial, Islamic feminism, multiculturalism, Arab immigrants.

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General introduction

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Since the twentieth century, an enthralling literary body known as "Anglophone Arab Literature" has emerged, and it has always been a vital element in many interesting literary evaluations and works of criticism. This literary corpus has received a lot of attention, especially since the 9/11 attacks. However, the amount of literary works created by Arab writers has effectively flooded Western bookshelves. Because of its controversial topics that simulate reality, Anglophone Arab Literature has recently gained a substantial number of Western critics, researchers, and readers.

This latter involves representing and depicting the lives of immigrants in British society, where Arab issues cannot be ignored or disregarded as a result; Arab female writers have demonstrated a great commitment to communicating their experiences as Diaspora migrants. The literary response to the 9/11 events has marked a watershed moment in contemporary British fiction. It is very concerned with debating multiculturalism, diaspora, exile, identity formation, and so on, as well as issues with Islamic image in a Western society. In this regard, British Muslim writers share the responsibility of challenging the stereotypical image, as well as negative assumptions and misrepresentations of Muslim women in the West and around the world. Moreover, they have conceptualized a new knowledge of Muslims and created a good picture of Muslims in British culture. For example, Aboulela's novels are seen as stepping stones that have made it possible for modern British literature to understand Islam and Muslims better.

as the study seeks to shed light on the perplexing process by which Arab Muslim Women define themselves in postcolonial Arab and British contexts., it raises many questions:

➢ How did Arab women contribute to representing Arab identity and reviving Arab culture in the Diaspora?

➢ What is the role of Islamic teachings in controlling the lives of Arab Muslims and regulating their relationship with others in western countries?

➢ How the writers were able to clarify and embody the identity of Arab women in Diaspora?

In this sense, the following research questions are hypothesized:

✓ Arab women focused on the social and cultural aspects of the Arabs in Diaspora, and their experience to present their identity and culture through their works, such as, writings novels, poems, and translations.

✓ Despite the pressures and difficulties encountered by Arab Muslims during their migration to western countries, they maintained their position and adhered to their religion.

✓ Arab women tried to search for a way to prove themselves and their identity through writing and creativity in various fields, especially novels, to express their suffering from marginalization within western society.

Even though, this research document is based on anecdotal experiences rather than facts, a qualitative research approach was used to ensure the objectives of this research study and to attempt to answer the previous questions. On the other hand, various and diverse sources, such as books, articles, journals, and internet resources, were included into this research assignment to collect data.

This work is broken into three chapters to meet the goals of this study. The first chapter is subtitled "Definitions and Theoretical Framework", provides a conceptual background for the major theories and definitions of important elements in postcolonial theory and postcolonial feminist theory. Moreover, the second chapter is divided into two sections . The first section deals with extensive and profound detail about the emergence of Arab immigrants in the United Kingdom historically, socially, and economically in addition to the literary side. And the second section offers a synopsis of Arab Anglophone literature. Furthermore, the last chapter conducts a literary analysis and contextual study of the novel "The Translator" by Leila Aboulela.

Chapter I: The shaping of Arab women's identity in Diaspora

Introduction

The present study elaborates on the attention-grabbing subject of postcolonialism that is considered as an act which intervenes painfully in changing concepts and notions. Therefore, postcolonial notions, theorists, writers and people who have to fight and resist strongly the colonizer's greed. They create a sense of responsibility for their entire nation's concerns. Furthermore, this chapter discusses important concepts, such as, post-colonialism, postcolonial theory, and feminist theory. Finally, it focuses on the Arab women feminism in Western world.

1.1 Postcolonial literature

The term post-colonial and postcolonialism emerged as a famous and powerful discourse (Ashcroft et al, 2004: 2). Even so, the hyphenated term is usually used to refer to a chronological separation, i.e. the circumstances of life after the end of colonialism.

As a result, postcolonialism represents a distinct meaning of struggle through language and representation. They focus heavily on the native's knowledge and the process of self-discovery. Diverse writers and theorists from all over the world contribute fruitful ideas, in order to; unite their beliefs against the reality of colonialism and its hidden intentions. In this regard, Ashcroft explains his own definition of postcolonialism:

All that cultural production which engages […] with the enduring reality of   colonial power […] -post-colonial is still best employed, as it was in the first edition, to refer to post-colonization. This is a process in which colonized societies engage in various stages and kinds of conflict with the conquering authority, both during and beyond the actual time of direct colonial domination. (2002: 195).

According to this definition, one needs to understand the process of colonization to better comprehend the concept of post-colonialism. Because colonization never ends with the simple declaration of independence and has no bounds, Ashcroft et al. explain this kind of connection as follows:

It is best used to designate the totality of practices […] which characterize the societies of the postcolonial world from the period of colonization to the present, because

imperialism does not end with the colonial form and continues to be active in several societies. (1995: XV)

Briefly, both post-colonialism and postcolonialism originate from the same afflict and symbolize a continuing of anti-colonialist, even anti-imperialist, process which encompasses both ideology and practice. The principle of resistance and reconstruction for colonized peoples remains unchanged whether a hyphen is present or not in a word. Both discuss how colonization has an impact on societies and cultures.

The term "postcolonialism" refers generally to the representations of race, ethnicity, culture, and human identity in the modern age, after the independence of several colonized nations. However, some opponents use the concept to refer to all imperialism-influenced culture and cultural production through the present day. The goal of postcolonial literature is to describe the exchanges that occurred between European nations and the peoples they colonized. By the middle of the twentieth century, European countries controlled the vast majority of the world.

However, post-colonialism in its theoretical form flourishes with the publication of Said's Orientalism (1978) building on Foucault and Derrida discourse. Said changes the agenda of non-western studies (in culture and literature) and directs it to what is called now postcolonial theory. In this sense, Gandhi emphasizes the task of dialogue and negotiation with and between Derrida and Foucault" (1998: 26-27). Therefore, postcolonial theory devotes appreciable time to answer diverse questions concerning language, displacement, belonging, home, identity, and hybridity. In this line, Innes refers to the main figures contributing in giving postcolonial theory a shape and content. They "show up over and over as scholars who have formed postcolonial theory: Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak" (2007:5)

In early definition of what is postcolonial, Ashcroft, Griffts and Tiffin claims, 'The term postcolonial is used.... 'To encompass all aspects of imperial culture from the colonization period to the present.'' (2004:2).For the aim of making postcolonial theory understood in a a wide sense, Ashcroft et al's basic definition is a good point of departure and provides a good platform from which one can explore the body of work that comprises the theoretical canon. In fact, postcolonial theorists relate the process of understanding

postcolonial theory by connecting it to the question of counter-colonial resistance and revealing its intersection with notions, such as identity, otherness, language and race. Theorists such as Fanon, Said, Bhabha and Spivak thus appear at the center of postcolonial theory.

▪   **Frantz Fanon (1925-1961)**

The colonialist Frantz Fanon is frequently referenced in connection with the decolonization movement. Albert Memmi thinks of him as "A prophet of the Third World, a romantic hero of decolonization" (quoted in Loomba, 2005: 123). Fanon's works: Black Skin, White Masks (1952) and The Wretched of the Earth (1965) are a remarkable analysis of the effect of Europeans imperial power.

Fanonism is referred to as a series of critiques of the colonial traits, as Rabaka Reiland (2010), argues;

When Fanon's critiques of racism, sexism, colonialism, capitalism, and humanism are brought into the ever-widening orbit of Africana critical theory, which is to say that when Fanon's discourse on white supremacy, patriarchy, racial colonization, racial violence, racial exploitation, racial oppression, and what it means to really and truly be and become "human"— though thoroughly racialized and colonized— are analyzed for their contribution to the deepening and ongoing development of the Africana tradition of critical theory, something unprecedented in the annals of Africana intellectual history happens: five distinct forms of Fanonism emerge. (Reiland, 2010: 2)

In Fanon's thinking, black people are commonly seen as inferior. He criticizes the idea that white men are superior to black men, and argues that black males serve as examples of how Western culture is higher. In addition to, Fanon defended the legitimacy of African culture and civilization as well as the migration of educated Africans. He believed that Africans could live free from European rule if the past were restored. He refuted the Western attitude that declares it is acceptable for Africans to be incapable.

▪ **Edward Said (1935- 2003)**

Edward Said focused on how the Orient was portrayed. Said's most significant and controversial work is Orientalism (1978). According to Ashcroft and Ahluwalia (2001), Said's works are regarded as a canonical occasion. He has succeeded in bridging the distinction between academic achievement and popular recognition. This honor recognizes his contribution to modern culture and highlights the increasing importance of the concept of otherness in our assessment of artistic and intellectual efforts. (137)

Said has emphasized that "language and literature together implicated in constructing the binary of a European self and non-European Other, which is a part of the creation of colonial authority." He also provides several insights into Europe's unique methods of depicting the non-west lands (quoted in Looma, 2005: 66).

Said's Orientalism reveals Western dominance questioned the misconception that modern oriental nations could only become civilized by adopting a European way of life. He sees it as a collection of practices that shaped the Orient. The Europeans routinely used this language both during and after colonizing the Orient.

- **Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1942)**

Gayatri Spivak is a renowned postcolonial theorist. Calcutta is where she was born (India). She is a Marxist and a feminist author. She draws a connection between feminism and postcolonialism by emphasizing the dual burden that women suffer. Marxism, feminism, deconstruction, and postcolonial theory are among his theoretical interests. (Morton 2003:1).

"Can the Subaltern Speak?" was her published essay. "He writes history for her." Spivak is completely captivated by the process of othering people. This, she thinks, is the source of the subalterns' tragedy. Spivak considers postcolonial theory to be a forum for colonized people to negotiate for their rights as imperialist thinkers. She views the postcolonial phase as a new era that might bring about changes for postcolonial nations.

- **Homi Bhabha (1949)**

In his book Homi K. Bhabha (2006), David Huddart writes, "Although many of his most influential essays were first published in the 1980s, Bhabha is very much a thinker

for the twenty-first century."(2) Modern critics all around the world recognise Bhabha's contribution. He looked at the predicament of postcolonial people whose culture has been influenced by colonial ideas.

He is informed by Derrida's works, which investigate the binary framework established by Western concepts. Bhabha attempts to demolish dichotomies such as West and Orient, colonizer and colonized, oppressor and oppressed, and self and other. In his investigation of the relationship between these dichotomies, Bhabha also employs Mikhail Bakhtin literary theory. Bhabha, like other theorists, strongly supports the method adopted by postcolonial writers to demolish the colonial way of thinking.

1.1.1 Postcolonial Literature's Key Concepts

1.1.1.1   Colonialism

The hegemonic concentration of power is known as colonialism. However, the difficulty of identifying colonialism comes when compared to imperialism. The difference between them must be made clearly, which are frequently confused. According to Childs and Williams imperialism is "the spread and expansion of trade and commerce under the protection of political, judicial, and military authorities." While colonialism is defined as "the settlement of communities from one country in another, usually in a conquered region." Colonialism has been prevalent throughout history. It elicited a strong reaction from the colonized, who charged with independence and self-assertion ideology.

1.1.1.2   Identity

The word "identity" is frequently employed in postcolonial literature and theory. It is a concept of knowing someone's true character is reflected. According to the second perspective, identity is something that is assimilated through socialization or the adoption of assigned social roles. (Code, 2000: 277). A sense of belonging is shared by people from many status groups, which is related to this. However, the process of developing one's identity is frequently fraught with conflict because not every individual adheres to the same traits, and values, to the same extent. Identity needs to be specifically examined in relation to postcolonial literature. A person's identity develops during his life and is shaped by his surroundings.

An important postcolonial theorist, who investigates the concept of identity in his works. He describes the native's reaction and resistance against the attraction and repulsion at the same time. He redacts many works in an attempt to explore different sides in postcolonial theory, change in culture, contemporary art, and power. His works are fruitful and interesting, and enrich the field with his unique philosophies, such as Nation and Narration, A Global Measure, The Location of Culture, and The Right to Narrate.

Homi Bhabha, a well-known post-colonial thinker, focuses on how ambivalence, imitation, and hybridity are related to what he refers to as colonial identity. Bhabha contrasts sharply with prominent postcolonial theorist and Orientalism author Edward Said, who focuses on the disparities between the colonized and the conqueror. Bhabha instead analyzes the similarities between the two. He believes that white people are meant to be oppressors, whereas non-white people are created to be victims. Both parties are affected by the clash of cultures. Bhabha asserts that both conquerors and colonized people now have conflicted identities. The colonizer's identity, according to him, "provokes a sensation of disturbance, synonymous to a «anxious condition" and the strange state of ambiguity; he says that it is from this state of mind that the hybrid identity emerges." (Childs and Williams, 1997:123)

1.1.1.3   Hybridity

This concept has grown into a cultural concept closely associated with Homi Bhabha. It is most commonly used to describe the blending of two dissimilar civilizations. Ashcroft et al. distinguish various types of hybridity when they write: "Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial, etc." (118) Homi invented the term "hybridity" in its present sense (1980). It has become a vital aspect of the formation of Postcolonial Studies, yet it is vulnerable to harsh criticism.

The term hybridity describes the shared experience of conquered and colonizers. People who live between two cultures find it hard to identify with either. This is referred to as "a Third Space" by Bhabha.

It allows us to think about cultural identities in ways that go beyond the binary distinction of "we/them," "insider/outsider," and "inclusion/exclusion." It also provides for the analysis of cultural diversity in terms that do not exoticize it, because in

such exoticism Bhabha identifies an Othering principle that distances difference and rejects the formation of the Self by the Other. (Childs and Fowler, 2006: 112)

Hybridity has a catastrophic effect on the development of migrant or diasporic identity because it causes a feeling of being "in-between." The vast majority of people in the postcolonial era preferred to assimilate with the cultures of colonizers. They destroyed everything associated with the original cultures. As a result, they experienced an identity crisis, This is what prompted writers to question their identities, and not to feel belonging to the environment in which they live. This is a state of alienation in which the individual does not fully belong to either the homeland or the host nations. Loss of identity results from a lack of association with neither the homeland nor the host country. Throughout the twentieth century, many Anglophone Arab writers, notably Leila Aboulela, raised the problem of in-betweenness in unique ways.

1.1.1.4   Language

Language has emerged as a key issue in postcolonial theory. According to Simon During, "Language is a very significant aspect of a person's identity, indicating a huge amount about them. When the language that is contained in a person's identity fades, a contradictory sense of identity arises." (Quoted in Childs and Williams, 1997:193) Identity issues will certainly arise as a result of studying a new language : "In both literature and politics the post-colonial drive towards identity centers around language … For the postcolonial to speak or write in the imperial tongues is to call forth a problem of identity, to be thrown into mimicry and ambivalence."(Ibid)

During the colonial era, conquerors took away the inhabitants' right to speak their own language and forced their own language on them. Many authors who were forced to study as a result of colonization felt ashamed for speaking their original language. People were urged to promote their original languages by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Some writers, such as Chinua Achebe, see colonial language as a more viable choice for strengthening inter-nation communication and have utilized it in new literary works.

1.1.1.5   Ambivalence

The concept of "Ambivalence" is central to Bhabha's theory. Ambivalence "disrupts the clear-cut authority of colonial rule because it distorts the straightforward link

between colonizer and conquered," according to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2000). Therefore, ambivalence is an uncomfortable component of colonial speech for the colonizer. It illustrates the issue that arises when native values are viewed as inferior to Western standards in many cultures. Ambivalence manifests itself in this strained relationship between Western and indigenous cultures.

1.1.1.6   Place/Displacement

The study of location and displacement continues to be dominated by the issue of identity. This is where the unique post-colonial identity crisis emerges; the goal of establishing or restoring an effective identifying relationship between self and place. The sense of displacement caused by encountering a new environment creates an identity crisis. It is "the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place." (Ashcroft et al., 2000: 8). Post-colonial theory defines "place" as the in-between location when a person feels trapped between two locations. The disparity between geography and language is also discussed.

Absence of contact with the new environment leads to a substantial feeling of alienation. The colonized's behavior in the colonizer's presence is determined by the alienation attitude, which can be "compared to the sensation of displacement that defines the colonizer's encounter with the wilderness of the 'uncivilized' world." (Ibid, 23-24) Forcing displaced people to learn a colonizer's language reduces them to slavery. Their language has been devalued in the alien land. This created a schism between the two cultures.

1.1.1.7   The Other

The "other" satisfies the demand to distance oneself from the other in a way that deviates from social norms. "The presence of others is crucial in defining what is "normal" and in establishing one's own place in the world." (Ashcroft et al. 2000: 154). The domination created a formal distinction between settlers and colonized people, sticking anything uncivilized to one side. The process of "othering" involves subjecting others to identity construction. It   consistently engages in self-negation politics, which ultimately results in identity. The rejection of the other is influenced by disparities in race, geography, ethnicity, economy, or ideology.

1.1.2 Identity construction in postcolonial texts

The Merriam- Webster's Dictionary (2011) defined identity in the following term: "The set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a number of a group". It based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, language and culture people distinguish themselves from other groups and from their understanding and pride in who they are.

In literature, identity may relate to the author's adoption of a new culture and language as a means of expression following relocation from his own nation to another. As a result, the genre of "migrant literature" has emerged, which examines the issues of migration, exile, and the construction of new identities in immigrants. Moreover, it could be related with the deliberate use of pen names by authors as an attempt to conceal their origin or gender. Typically, female writers choose to express themselves under male pseudonyms in order for their works to be published and accepted in society.

Identity has an important role in postcolonial literature, and many imperialist writers explore it in their works. It is also a fertile ground of debate concerning the attempt of postcolonial writers to reconstruct or restore their original identity and that of their peoples through literature elements that either construct identity of a society or effect and reshape it like language , displacement , otherness, and so on are always present in the works of postcolonial writers, and this is the fruit of their personal experience as well as the experience of their society , and their attempt either to decolonize their literature and culture to free themselves from the chains of the imperial powers or to hybridize their discourse and stress their people multicultural atmospheres. Through their works, some writers defended and explored postcolonial identity traits such as language, home, place, hybridity, multiculturalism, and otherness.

Identity construction, also called identity development or identity formation is a complex process in which humans create a clear and distinct perspective of themselves and their identities.

Edward Said regards identity construction having an influence of power, for him, it is the capability to struggle and resist, as so to restore oneself as a postcolonial, anti-imperialist and dependent subject. In other words, the formation of the personal character

necessitates contextualization as identity is formed by what people make themselves rather than by their oppressive discourse (Culture, 112).

However, identity construction has a main type that can be broken down into the following: ethnic identity, and gender identity.

1.1.2.1   Ethnic identity

The word "Ethnicity" is divided from the Greek Word "Ethnos", which means people who have a same distinctive culture. It is a group of people identity in terms of their social, cultural, language, religion or national experience. Ethnicity is the very important to understand a social group and their contribution to the society. When small ethnic groups migrate from one country to another one, they bear their culture and knowledge.

Ethnic identity has been defined by sociologists as part of the individual's sense of belonging to a group. An ethnic group may be defined as a group whose numbers share common history and culture , and who may be identifiable because they share similar physical features and values , and through the process of interacting with each other establishing boundaries with others , they identify themselves as being members of that group .

1.1.2.2   Gender identity

Gender is critical in the formation and identification of difference structures. As a result, any study of the creation of ethnic identities must pay close attention to how they are gendered.   While on the other hand, women have played significant roles in cultural transmission and ethnic identity preservation. Additionally, as Mani points out, there is no sudden displacement of patriarchal dominance from one region to another, and the effects of immigration differ for men and women. (1993, 36)

In order to explain the lived reality of borders, both physical and cultural, in the lives of women who live in several cultural environments, Gloria Anzaldua (1987:3) created the idea of "borderlands." Women are regularly observed blending two or more cultures, taking from each yet identifying with neither. The lives of ethnic women are characterized by several identities that overlap and separate, as well as changing relations of power. Anzaldua describes "The "borderlands" as a region of conflict. It is also a site of violence, resulting from the scraping that occurs when different worlds combine. Women

are frequently stuck in the middle of these struggles, trying hard to make sense of the expectations of several cultures. "Borderlands/La Frontera" has influenced how contemporary scholars look about border concerns, the concept of borders, ethnic/gender/sexual identities, and traditional literary genres.

1.1.3 Feminist discourse

The term "feminism" is the female quest for equal rights and opportunities in society without any kind of discrimination based on gender, believing that biological sex is not a justification for domination or subordination. Feminism aims to make women reach a state of independence economically, politically and socially, which led to the emergence of a feminist political movement that works to gain such equality. The terms "feminism" and "feminist" spread out in the public sphere around the 1970s, though they were already being used in the public speech much earlier. (Walters, 2005).

It is operationally used to present the domination of Western feminism that is officially used to present women all over the world. On the surface, it appears that westerners pay close attention to the plight of repressed women around the world. Nonetheless, the way westerners see feminism and treat issues within its umbrella appeared to give westerners the image of the white savior while excluding Arab and third-world interests, women of color, and Muslim women by ignoring the true root of the problems these women experience. It is broadly defined and often contested term because it holds a different meaning for everyone who uses the term based their positionality, which includes race, gender, ability, and sexual orientation, history, and location----both geographically as well as socio-economically.

1.1.3.1   Western feminism

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earlier. (Walters, 2005) The term is operationally used to present the domination of western feminism that is officially used to present women all over the world. This imposed perspective of Western feminism supposes that the cultures in the East are inherently flawed and conclude that the only truly free culture is a western one. This new interpretive attitude meant that feminists make a concerted effort to communicate with third-world women while taking cultural variations into account.

1.1.3.2   Third World Feminism in western perspectives

Mohanty criticized the prevalent notions regarding to "Third World women" found among prominent Western feminists. She rebuked the categorization of "Third World women" as a homogeneous group and argued that there is no such coherence Through the revolutionary writings of Chandra in the mid-1980s, scholars have adopted her discourse to make the case for generalizations of women in the "Third World" and to represent them as a coherent group. Rather of dividing women into "First World" and "Third World," Mohanty emphasized that we must consider the abundance of societal issues that affect women in various ways. We must also be prepared for some women in Western countries to share their experiences with women in the "Third World." In the last thirty years, the feminist discussion has taken a new turn. However, it is unclear whether and how the Western that claims to represent "Third World women" has adjusted to the shift in the discussion.

The primary focus of the broader field of Western portrayals of "Third World women" is on how Western feminists portray women in developing countries. Scholars such as Narayan, Radcliff, Sandoval, and Kapoor have exposed generalizing and stereotyping images of all "Third World women" as being subjected to some form of "religious tyranny." There is a common belief among Western feminists that Muslim women are mainly victims of Muslim males and a patriarchal faith. (Jamal, 2011).

Third World feminism is central the conception of women as the subject of struggles. While the Western feminists make equality between man and women the center of their struggles, third world feminism "stressed satification of basic material needs as a pressing issue in the context of disadvantageous internal economic order". (Saunders, 2002, p.6)

Here, the situation of women is perceived as the result of unequal gender relations, but as the consequences of wide range of oppressing situations that transcend gender categories and are also related to race, class, and citizenship cleavages.

Spivak also defends Third-World women, stating that they are not victims of patriarchal ideology and that their wives do not oppress them. According to her, Western feminists retain a colonial posture toward Third World women who serve as a category to these privileged Western feminists.

1.1.3.3   Islamic feminism

Islamic feminism is a concept that outlines the language and activities of individuals who advocate for women's rights within the context of an authentic or well-understood Islam. The main thrust of the combination of Islam and feminism was used by Islamic feminist scholars to stand with and on behalf of all Muslim women in challenging the misogyny and control that European nations imposed over third-world cultures, where they see it as essential to the projection of a newly politicized Islam. In the opinion of Fatema Mernissi Islamic feminism is a fundamentalist phenomenon that is reshaping Arab feminism. That is why their call for women's independence from western feminism came as a result of the blurring of Arab women Through applying Arab/ Islamic feminism, Muslim societies have proven their ability to resist, change and seek modernization, and so have called for the evolution of gender equality "s identity, and the non-fulfillment of their needs. This called for an urgent need to reshuffle Muslim women identity. (Mernissi, 2001).

Ahmed (1992), specifically examined women's position in the Muslim world and fought against stereotypes about them in both the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds in her work on gender and Islam. She attempts to define an Arab feminist sensibility and expresses her confusion with Western feminists' presumptions about the Arab world, which are evident in their focus on polygamy, the veil, and female circumcision. These assumptions about Muslim - Arabs are that they are illiterate, backward, irrational, and uncivilized. She argues that, "The peculiar practices of Islam with respect to women had always formed part of the Western narrative of the quintessential otherness and inferiority of Islam". This foggy view of Islam is what Ahmed wanted to change, believing that it is the only image they know of Islam. Her greatest work was the publication of Women and Gender in Islam,

examining the history of gender in the Arab world and its impact on modern Arab feminists. She presented the role of gender in Islam through the balanced understanding of Muslim history, modern day issues of postcolonialism and Arab nationalism. Ahmed introduces us to new prospects of women and Islam by connecting Middle Eastern women's contributions to education, culture, imperialism, social change, industrialization, and feminism have been examined through raising questions about women's veiling from the beginnings of Islam to the present. Premises of Islamist positions on women, the inheritance issues with gender, and how exposure to Western societies influenced Islamic discourse. Finally, she comes to the conclusion, that women's understanding of their role in Islam is not trapped in the boundaries placed on them by Western feminism and Arab nationalism.

Wadud (1999), focuses on helpful Qur'anic hermeneutics for the female experiences in particular so that the female voice could produce greater gender justice to Islamic thought and help achieve that justice in Islamic practice. She examines the position of women in Muslim cultures by adhering to specific criteria that reveals the true intention of Islam for women. She believes that women's issues in society, economy, politics, and spirituality play a vital role in the Muslim objective of modernity by maintaining the past and reaping the benefits of the present.

Wadud kept looking for a continual development in the social order by challenging the fixed readings of the conservative thinkers of Quran who present the statements related to gender as literal and definitive ones regardless of the upcoming developments in society and in the status of women. Wadud added a new layer for the feminist discussion when she focused on the role of subject without agency, asserting that women were excluded from building the ethical, spiritual, social and political basis of Islamic thought because of the social assumptions that the perfect image of a Muslim is normatively presented by the male which completely excluded women and presented them as a subject without agency. For Wadud, what distinguishes her work Qur'an and Woman is the focus on gender as a category of thought not just a subject for discourse.

Mernissi (2001) used one of the most well-known female characters in Arabic literature, Scheherazade, to reflect the image of the strong Arab female who uses her mental ability to seduce and manipulate a man's brain instead of physical attraction, indirectly

drawing attention to the West's tendency to misinterpret women's role in Arab/Muslim societies. In order to show the differences between the two presentations, she focused her research on Islamic sources, etymology, art, religious law, and cultural history. Her goal was to establish two representations for the harem or Scheherazade image, one from the Western perspective and the other from the Arab perspective.

Badran (2002), examined Muslim interpretations of feminism to explain why many Muslims see western feminism as an attack on their culture and drew a contrast between ideologies of Islamic and secular feminists. She is able to present an appealing image of feminism in Islam by delving into western misunderstandings of both feminism and Islam. During her work, Badran explores the development of feminism within the Muslim nation (umma) based on her search for the true reasons for the rejection of Islamic feminism of various dichotomies between east and west.

Ali (2006), addresses the feminist Islamic experiences in the modern world where she focuses on the Islamic traditional values, sexual ethics, and the different interpretations of scholars toward this subject. Attempting to analyze and deconstruct the binaries that imposed the sexual ethics over woman. Ali draws the attention by asking difficult questions about these sexual ethics, that no one has the courage before to ask them. Believing that there were plenty of Islamic texts that gave a basis for the values of equality and justice but no one made an effort to explain why. Ali believes in the justice of Islam, therefore she finds that many Muslim male scholars have misunderstood Islam by presenting it as misogynist or as men's Islam, thus she tends to deal with Quran as the only guide and that each time has its own interpretations and readings which makes it irrational to universalize and eternalize the views of the early jurists and scholars of Islam.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter presented an overview of the emergence of postcolonialism as a reaction to various oppressive acts and brutal abuses committed by colonizers in colonized lands. Then, it shed light on postcolonial through examining diverse examples of theorists and some of their outstanding work. Moreover, this chapter deals with postcolonial feminist discourse and revealed how Third World women struggled and

endured their attitudes. In addition, the end of this chapter introduced the role of Arab feminism and their representation of ideology in the west.

CHAPTER II: The rising of Arab British Anglophone and their relation to Arab immigrants in Britain

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to depict the experience of Arab Muslim women immigrants in Diasporas, as well as their struggle to present their voices, and construct a stable transforming identity, religion, and culture. This study also seeks to demonstrate how Arab female writers defy preconceptions and stereotypes associated with Arab Muslim women and Islam in British context , producing writing that glorifies and portrays Arabs in a highly positive light. Furthermore, this research highlights the emergence of Arab – Anglophone literature.

2.1   Representing Arab voices in Diaspora

Arab Diaspora refers to descendants of Arab emigrants who emigrated from their native regions to non-Arab countries, primarily in Central America, South America, Europe, North America, parts of Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, and West Africa, either voluntarily or as refugees. Emigrants from Arab countries, such as Sudan or the Palestinian territories, form important national communities in the Diaspora.

The use of the term Arab British as a parallel to Arab American that have been adopted by Arab intellectuals, writers and activists in the US. The term was taken up as a sign of a pan-Arab identity that encapsulated a growing political consciousness after the 1967 defeat in the face of hostility, and prejudice that the word 'Arab' generated. First, Arab British literature has recently showed an interest in representing the challenges facing second-generation Arabs. Second, there is a common pattern that one can notice in literature created by Arab British (women) writers that distinguishes them from other writers of Arab ethnicity who write in English or other writers of Arab descent in America. Particularly, the writings of Arab British women writers indicate a desire to interact with different groups in Britain through discussions and debates.

Arab immigration and settlement patterns have developed into very local patterns from all social, political and economic aspects prevalent in the United Kingdom. Despite continuing to be captivated by the specifics of female writers works in English, as well as their experiences of immigration, settlement, citizenship, and cultural hybridity in Britain, which have shaped Arab literary production.

According to Arab authors who live in Britain (or between Britain and the Arab world) or who are of a mixed Arab and British marriage. They focus on the experiences of Arabs in Britain, deal with British colonial history in the Arab world and show an interest in current debates on the power imbalance between Britain and the Arab world. These works also reflect on the discourses of immigration, politics, economics, and cultural exchange. Furthermore, several of Arab writers who live in Britain, and write in English has increased recently due to different social, political and ideological factors, and hence, the expression 'Arab British' can be duly used to refer to this group of writers.

Arab British writers include Ahdaf Soueif, Fadia Faqir, Zeina Ghandour, Leila Aboulela, Sabiha Al Khemir, Tony Hanania, Jamal Mahjoub, and Robin Yassin-Kassab. Another reason I like to focus on the works of Arab women rather than Arab males in Britain is that women outnumber men on this list. Layla Al Maleh characterizes Arab British literature as predominantly female, feminist, diasporic, and political in nature. These writers' fiction focuses on the challenges of an Arab character who moves between Britain and the Arab world, and it engages in a cross-cultural discourse centered on sociopolitical issues such as love, friendship, academic research, work, religion, immigration, and (self) exile. More recently, this literature has started to show an interest in second generation Arabs growing in Britain

Al Maleh's book includes a number of articles on the works of Soueif, Faqir and Aboulela in addition to other Arab writers who use English as a means of expression. Al Maleh's introduction to Arab Voices in Diaspora: Critical Perspectives on Anglophone Arab Literature provides a helpful survey of the literature written in English by Arab writers, and writers of self-identified Arab descent. However, it might have been useful to have some brief background information about the immigration and settlement experiences of these authors or the communal dynamics that shape their works in one way or another. As with Nash, Al Maleh traces the beginning of Anglophone Arab writing to the start of the 20th century, when the first Arab immigrants to the USA had to adapt to the local language and culture.

Arab British novelists have not yet examined in depth the impact of these attacks on Arabs in Britain. In addition to the ideological reasons that influence an author's aesthetic rendition, the localized experiences at the hostel and partly impact an author's decision to implicitly/explicitly represent the post-9/11 events. Moreover, the ambiguous position Arab communities occupy in ethnic and racial discourse in both countries intersects with market and publishing interests and greatly influences how post-9/11 anti-Arab racism is represented. Since Al Maleh concentrates on similarities and commonalities in her approach, it is unsurprising that the collection encourages an undisrupted historical narrative.

The edited collection by Zahia Salhi and Ian Richard Netton presents a thorough analysis of literary works written by Arab writers in the diaspora. In the introduction, Salhi alerts us to the fact that we should make a distinction between the 'various categories of the members of the Arab Diaspora [. . .] exiles, refugees, expatriates, and émigrés'. Exiles, Salhi maintains, 'keep an idealized image of home as a paradise they were forced to flee [. . .], they share feelings of solitude, estrangement, loss, and longing'. Salhi makes some useful observations about the traumatic nature of displacement and dislocation, though she seems to narrowly define the diaspora as an exile, and hence, the selected essays concentrate on the first- generation of Arab writers in diaspora. Instead, I want to argue that examining the works of the children of first- generation exiles and immigrants widens our understanding of the concept of diaspora.

2.1.1 Arab British Community in U.K

The story of Arab British started after World War Two, when Arab immigrants first began to settle in Britain for different reasons, due to the colonial connection, studies, and business. Those immigrants have produced a vast literature that remains relatively unknown outside of specialist circles. Like other ethnic literature, Arab-British writing treats a variety of themes such as the immigrant experience, the lives of minorities, cultural misconception, and the stereotypes. In addition to that, Arab immigrant writing also reveal unique perspectives on complex issues that continue to shape our world today. They argued primarily for the diaspora, as evidenced by their newspapers, which were frequently sectarian, political, and focused on happenings in the Middle East. The role played first by

the British Empire in the region, the representations of Arabs and Arab culture in British societies, the status of Muslim minorities there. Although those issues has required unprecedented urgency, they have preoccupied Arab-British writers since the days of the twentieth century.

Al-Rasheed agrees that in contrast to immigration from Commonwealth nations, 'Arab migration to Britain remained a small-scale operation until the post-second world war period. Additionally, their spatial dispersion and lack of grouping into certain employment categories most likely played a part in halting a trend like that observed in Yemeni and Somali maritime communities. Where it was obvious that ethnic borders were starting to form. El-Solh notes that the 1970s marked a key turning point in the history of Arab settlement in Britain, both in terms of numbers and the expanding diversity of national origins and social standing. The post-war economic boom enabled Arab immigrants to gain access to the British labor market. The importance of making a distinct between "a more or less random and a chain migration" is emphasized by El-Solh. She makes the case that, for instance, the first pattern holds true for educated and semi-skilled Egyptians who came to Britain "as individual economic migrants." Through employment or marriage to British women, some people acquired legal residency or British citizenship. From the other hand, it applies to Moroccans hired from rural areas in northern Morocco for work in the National Health Service and to a lesser extent in the hospitality and catering industries in London.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, they immigrated to Britain with their families, turning what was once intended to be a temporary move into a longer-term abode. An Arab "brain drain as well as a flight of Arab wealth in quest of investment possibilities". By the late 1970s and during the 1980s, the diversity of Arab communities in Britain was further reinforced by 'the increasing influx of refugees fleeing persecution from areas such as Iraq and Somalia. El-Solh notes that the lack of precise quantitative statistics makes it difficult to gather information about Arabs in Britain.

Some Arabs in the United Kingdom have established Arab businesses ranging from real estate and import/export ventures to consultancy and leisure services, travel agency, and small-scale commercial firms. Ghayth Armanazi portrays Arab involvement in

British corporate life as "skin-deep." He claims that Arab business people prefer a modest, almost humiliated approach to any commercial relationships or activities that may have a high profile in British life. Armanazi distinguishes two forms of Arab company in the United Kingdom. The first group includes all retail, service, or light enterprises that are almost totally focused on addressing the requirements of Arabs residing in the United Kingdom and Arab travelers. The second form of Arab company in the UK is represented by a significant number of intermediary firms that manage supplies to the Arab market and provide as a portal to the outside world for Arab commercial and investment interests. However, both groups are "largely separated from the mainstream of the British economic environment and peripheral to British society and culture."

Nevertheless, they find themselves in an assimilationist U.K. framework. The topic of how to respond to such pressures while simultaneously preserving Arab identity was crucial to the early immigrant community: newspapers and journals aired disputes about how to retain Arab identity in British society. Even when dealing with practical issues.

2.2   The Racialization of Arab –British in the U.K

Racialization is a theoretically underdeveloped concept. Although there has been an increased interest in Islamophobia since 9/11, it is very rarely discussed as racial in its nature. The portrayal of Islamic culture and religion as directly responsible for this condition, and Muslim migrants as victims of their own culture, is a significant factor in the transition of this element of the European working class into a backward religious minority.

Muslims are particularly vulnerable to racist attitudes that focused on ancestry, color, religion, gender, and language, making them victims of tyranny and violence. Where they were considered retarded. Despite the challenges and marginalization, they stay committed to their religion, identity, and culture.

For example, Muslim women choose to wear forms of dress such as the hijab that mark them out publicly as Muslims. It was once used to distinguish Muslims as being

insufficiently British and having gendered standards that were 'inferior' to those of the liberal West. Many people perceive the hijab as a sign of difference the intersections of religious, national, and racialized difference are still being constructed and maintained

Arab Muslim "women" endure discrimination and a disproportionately high number of anti-Muslim hate crimes in the United Kingdom. The British labor force recognizes a clear 'Muslim penalty,' with Islamophobic preconceptions about veiling and cultural practices impeding Muslim women from getting job. The majority of hate crimes in the UK target women who are obviously Muslim, such as those who wear the hijab, niqab, or other Islamic coverings (which are more prevalent in Britain). These are serious issues that the UK must deal with through legislation and civil institutions. Despite the fact that there are strong laws in place to prevent discrimination and hate crimes, Muslim women are not always properly protected by these statutes.

This research examines the ways that racism and violence have led addressing everyday injustice against British Muslim women racism against Muslim women has three components: gender discrimination, racial prejudice towards BME (Black and Minority Ethnicity) women, and discrimination based on erroneous and inaccurate perceptions of Islam and Muslims. Moreover, obviously Muslim women are regularly subjected to verbal abuse that might escalate to assault, leaving them more sensitive to prejudice and violence. This paper investigates the various forms of prejudice experienced by Muslim women, as a result of racism and violence in everyday life.

There are various disadvantages that affect British Muslim women. Women have fewer top positions in the corporate sector than men, whereas they are more prevalent in the public and philanthropic sectors. Therefore, austerity and funding cuts have a greater negative impact on women than males in retaining these senior positions. Women from ethnic minorities frequently receive lower pay than white women with equivalent qualifications, a phenomenon known as the "ethnic penalty" by many scholars. There are also signs of name racism, with Muslims or those with ethnic names receiving less interviews and consideration from potential employers. When compared to white women, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women appear to experience the most severe penalties in terms of unemployment and over qualification. There is proof that these penalties are motivated by

preconceptions about Muslim women's cultural differences. Finally, some finding suggest that specific penalties in the labor market are reducible to ethno-religious identity, with Muslims bearing the brunt of the discrimination.

Moreover, Muslim women experience considerable levels of racism, intimidation, abuse, and, in some cases, violence as a result of their religious identity. Racism against Muslim women is exacerbated by pre-existing prejudice against British women of all ethnicities. The decision to wear a veil can exacerbate the problems that Muslim women face. Anti-Muslim hate crimes are classified as both racially and religiously motivated by police departments. According to crime statistics, South Asians encounter more hate crimes than any other ethnic group in the United Kingdom. Muslims and people of "other" religions are the most likely to be victims of hate crimes against people and property people of 'other' religions, such as Sikhs and Jews, are victims of hate crimes at a lower incidence than Muslims, indicating that Muslims are the most common victims of hate crimes. Racist attacks typically happen in urban settings, including on public transportation. Women who identify as Muslims are more likely to be attacked because of the symbolic nature of their clothing.

2.3 Diasporic literature and Arab immigration to U.K

The issue of diaspora has been a persistent concern in postcolonial writing. It is frequently used to describe the experience of displacement faced by national groups residing outside their homeland. Diaspora, according to Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin (1999), relates to "voluntary or forcible movements of the people from their homelands into new regions." Diaspora literature consists primarily of works published by authors who live outside of their native country. Diaspora or Anglophone Arab writing "has recently caught the attention of readers worldwide as a medium through which they can obtain a deeper understanding of the intellectual and spiritual make-up of Arabs," (Al Maleh 2009: 10) Arab Anglophone literature is linked with postcolonial literatures because its authors are haunted by postcolonial concepts like 'hybrid,' 'exilic,' 'displacement,' and 'diasporic. In addition to, issues of belonging, loyalty, identity, affinity and dreams of return which are recognized and dealt with in various works in Arab literature.

Several postcolonial Arab authors attempted to establish their names among other rising world literatures that employ English as a medium of literary writing by authoring diasporic literature. Such as, Fadia Faqir, Ahdaf Soueif, Leila Aboulela, Ghada Karmi, and many others who present the British-Arab experience of diaspora. Other Arab writers like:" Gibran Khalil Gibran, Leila Ahmed, Mohja Kahf, Amin Rihani, and Edward Said, who present the Arab-British experiences.

British Arabs are citizens or residents of Arab ethnic, cultural, and linguistic ancestry or identity from various Arab countries. The majorities of British Arabs resides in the British capital of London, and have come largely from the Arab countries of Egypt, Morocco, Palestine, Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, and the Gulf States.

Arab immigrants departed the Arab world for political, economic, and cultural issues between the nineteenth and third decades of the twentieth centuries. (Elad-Bouskila, 2006: 41). These emigrants' literature became known as diaspora literature or "Adab al-Mahjar." (Ibid). More Arab migrants left the Arab world for Western nations in the 1950s for similar reasons and as a result of rising dissatisfaction with the lack of freedom in their own countries. For instance, the Lebanese diaspora developed during the two migrant phases. 100,000 Lebanese people left the state of Lebanon between 1898 and 1914 during the first wave. A later stage saw the relocation of 274,000 Lebanese nationals to other nations during the civil war from 1975 and 1990. There was constant movement back and forth between the two primary stages. (Humphrey, 2004: 35). Today "some of Lebanon's most influential literary figures [are known to have] lived their adult lives and produced most of their works outside their native land" (Manganaro, 1994: 374). The two major waves of migration from the Arab Middle East. They were brought on by the 1948 Palestinian Nakbah and the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq, in addition to the substantial Lebanese immigrant population. (Marfleet, 2007: 397). As a result of the invasion, more than four million Iraqis were compelled to leave. (Sadek, 2010: 43), and the situation in Iraq does not make return a viable option (Amos, 2010), while over half of the Palestinian population was forced to flee after 1948. (Peteet, 1995: 168). The writers from Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq who are represented in this collection decided to leave these three

countries in the wake of their own national experiences. In this research, a few works by Arab authors who left their home countries due to various personal and political reasons are collected.

2.3.1 The Rise of Arab-Anglophone Literature

The literary corpus created in English by authors of Arab ancestry in many countries, including America, Britain, Canada, and Australia, is referred to as Anglophone Arab literature. It originally appeared at the beginning of the 20th century with the publication of Arab authors' works in America, such as The Prophet by Gibran Kahlil Gibran, Ameen Rihani, and Mikhail Naimy, as well as A Far Journey by Abraham Mitrie Rihbany (1914). (Al Maleh 2-3). The Mahjar, as it is also known. " However, The Skeleton of Anglophone Arab literature is British Anglophone Arab literature. It became apparent in the mid-twentieth century due to the elite from Middle Eastern nations moving to Britain in greater numbers in order to improve their studies or find employment (Al Maleh, 6). The critic Layla Al Maleh defined it as: "mostly female, feminist, diasporic in awareness, and political in character" (13). On the basis of this quotation, one can comprehend the feminist, hybrid, and transcultural features of British Anglophone Arab writing. The first trend of their creations reflect their desire to be embraced by and integrated into British culture British Anglophone writers are, as Al Maleh described them, the "Europeanized aspirants". They produced writing that is not at all novel and is stylistically identical to British literary tradition. Their literature has no Arabic mark, Al Maleh claims:

"The literature written could hardly be said to constitute a distinctive literary corpus meriting a place on the map of world literature in English or bearing comparison with the more established Anglophone writings from Africa, India or the Caribbean. It was more or less the product of cultural and historical accidents that took the authors in the direction of one culture rather than another "(7).

Rima Alamuddin, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, Waguish Ghalli, and Edward Atiyah addressed issues such as identity, politics, hybridity, and social and psychological isolation. (Al Maleh 8).

The main subject of this study, the second trend of British Anglophone writers, is depicted as a trend with "the more recent hybrids, hyphenated, transcultural, exilic/diasporic writers" (11). For instance, the writers of this trend are mainly female, such as Ahdaf Soueif, Fadia Faqir, Leila Aboulela, Zeina Ghandour, and Ghada Karmi, in addition to Jamal Mahjoub and Hisham Matar (11). Unlike the writers of the first trend, these writers had no intention to settle in Britain, they are there only for the pursuit of their education. They found in Diaspora a space where they can express themselves freely, raise their voices and discuss all what is forbidden to be discussed back home (14). This literary corpus is innovative thematically and stylistically speaking. For instance, Aboulela used Arabic phrases, expressions, and Islamic symbolism in her novels to boost Islamic cultural adjuration (Abdullah 159). They used their diasporic experiences as a ground for their literature, as they portrayed the daily life struggles of diasporic Arab Muslims. More importantly, they challenged the misconceptions and stereotypical images made about Islam, and Muslims especially women. In her article "Hybrid and Hyphenated Arab Women's English Narratives as a New Coming-of Age Literature", Dalal Sarnou states that: "literary works written by Arab Anglophone women writers –mainly novels and short stories –brought more recognition and visibility to the Arab Woman and defy the orientalist representation that was promoted since the nineteenth century in Western literature, media and art" (52). This literary form received widespread attention; it drew a diverse audience as well as literary critics and scholars, particularly following the 9/11 attacks, which can be seen as a historic moment for Anglophone Arab writing in general, and particularly British Anglophone Arab literature.

Despite the fact that Arab-British literature has been in the United Kingdom for over a century, it has only just come to be recognized as part of the ethnic landscape of literary Britain. This literary blossoming reflects, in part, the altering historical, social, and political conditions that have pushed Arab-British voices to the foreground, generating both new venues for their voices and new urgencies of expression, as well as the writers' growing creativity.

Arab-British literature has emerged as literature in its own right, with younger writers able to take for granted the existence of a community, both ethnic and literary. However, the

forces which situated Arab-British as anomalies in the U.K context and which made it difficult for Arab-British writers to engage with their identity with comfort and directness are still at play. During the first decades of the century, Arab-British confronts a cultural, political, and social context that is fraught with tension. Instead of courts excluding Arabs based on race, popular racism now targets Arabs on the basis of skin color, dress, name, accent, and other characteristics.

Arab-British writers force even as they explore both ethnic affirmation, and diasporan sensibilities. They wanted to prove their identity, their language and their faith through free poems and novels. Some writers used nostalgia as a way to retrieve ethnic identity; other authors probed the boundaries of patriarchy and insisted on exploring new visions for the future.

2.3.2 Aboulela's Style of Writing

The characterization, narration, symbolism, and formation all helped in presenting an integrated text. Even though the writers shared a few similar points in the creation of their novels, yet they presented them through different writing techniques. Each writer tends to choose a particular technique depending on what serves their major themes. Aboulela's writing techniques attract the reader's attention because of the accurate and voluble style. She succeeded in transforming ordinary life events into something profound, major and meaningful. She makes the reader believe that the events as well as the characters are real so that he/she can interact with them.

She presents a well written text depending on the realist school in reflecting all of the novel's characteristics. Her style fluency and dexterity in expression allows the reader to comprehend and connect a group of the hardest critical movements like deconstruction, feminism and post-colonialism all together, where her literary production contributed to the simplification and dissemination of the Islamic feminist movement. She managed to connect the simple everyday elements with sophisticated and advanced criticism of society, by using realistic characters to enter into the world of critical analysis

of the political and religious discourse. Even though it is a short novel, yet it successfully captures the sense of place, time and events by presenting an unusual and originative insight into the emotional and physical experience of Arab/Muslim women in exile.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this assignment aims to represent the emergence of Arab immigrants and their experiences in UK. It also shows how Muslim women in Britain were affected by Islamophobia in the following of 9/11 attack. Moreover, this chapter provides an overview of Arab Anglophone literature.

Chapter III: Mapping Identity in Aboulela's Novel

Introduction

This chapter explores how Arab women experience a sense of in-betweenness in their postcolonial societies to Arab British in the UK. It aims to analyze the struggle of Arab British women in realizing a stable sense of identity, hybridity, gender, language, and religion in the novel *The Translator*, written by the Sudanese female writer Leila Aboulela. Moreover, it sheds light on how the protagonist Sammar succeeds in creating a new religious sense of identity, in Diaspora, after a long time of confusion and struggle.

3.1 Reviews of The Translator

The Translator by Aboulela emphasizes the challenge of navigating and negotiating between the two worlds that the protagonist, a migrant translator, and, indirectly, the bicultural translator-author.   The protagonist Sammar, a Sudanese widow locked in a life of isolation in Aberdeen, and her emergence from the crisis brought on by her husband's death as she discovers new love: love that must overcome significant cultural obstacles. Sammar is a translator for Rae, a Middle Eastern and Islamic history expert. The familiarity and affection that they develop through their job are thwarted by Rae's secularism since Sammar, a devoted Muslim, is unable to wed a non-Muslim.

On two different levels, translation is a theme in the story. Sammar frequently finds it challenging, and perhaps impossible, to appropriately translate political and cultural literature in her line of work. Rae's conversion to Islam is represented metaphorically as a different kind of translation. Wail Hassan (2008) and Nadia Butt (2009) have shown that this shift is linked with Islam's untranslatability. Both reviewers emphasize The Translator's departure from the western conception (or ideal) of multiculturalism, which would equalize the cultural interchange between the West and its non-western counterparts through migration "back and forth," as Aboulela would have it. Hassan views Aboulela's larger literary purpose as a conservative and regressive "reverse-Eurocentrism," abandoning existential freedom and political responsibility in favor of a "fiction of authenticity."' (Hassan 2008: 316).

Movement of structures between the United Kingdom and Sudan Sammar's identity is defined by the Translator. The novel starts in Scotland, a site of isolation for Sammar, four years after the passing of her husband, Sammar finds herself in isolation. The novel's

second half is set in Khartoum. However, migration between the two worlds began much earlier, as Sammar makes three trips from the UK to Sudan and three trips in the opposite direction. Sammar, who was born in the United Kingdom, did not arrive in Sudan, or 'home,' as she refers to it, when she was seven years old:

> *''Not until I was seven.'' These were her words, the word "until" as if she reconcile could not herself to those first seven years of life without [Tarig]. In better times she used to reinvent the beginnings of her life. Make believe that she was born at home in Sudan. (Aboulela 1999: 4)*

Already at this point, "home" is associated with Tarig, her future husband, as well as a specific place. Sammar goes to the United Kingdom for the first time as an adult with him. She makes a second trip to Sudan after Tarig dies in an accident, bringing back his coffin and their little son Amir then she heads back to Scotland alone. The Translator is a novel about migration, yet the narrative's primary crisis is not the loss or absence of a homeland. The loss is, in a sense, much closer to home: the tragic dissolution of family life and a domesticity crisis. Sammar admits that her son Amir "was not the focus of her life, not the center where formerly his father had been" after Tarig dies, so she gives up him in Sudan with his paternal grandmother. (Aboulela.1999, 100)

The Translator includes many topics such as cultural and religious norms and post-colonial Islamic identities. This novel seeks to clarify the image of the Arab/Muslim woman through the characters Sammar, Yasmine, Mahasin, and others to provide an accurate study of cultural issues and restrictions from the religious, cultural and intellectual side.

Even though, the protagonist is a female who is the first declaration of independence to show that women have a guiding voice which is approved by the West, but being a Muslim guiding voice was the revolution in which Aboulela declared her line of argument by presenting a culturally bilingual character that opens the door for building up a hierarchy of binaries determining the power relations and its sides. To serve this interest, Aboulela presented Sammar as a translator, indicating that she is in control of interpreting both cultures depending on her female/ Muslim view. The metaphorical indication of being a translator can sum up the purpose of the novel and draw its guideline because it gave Sammar the leading mission, which means that the western male must follow her lead and

join her where she stands to serve his own benefit and change his life. This image presented a deconstructive insight into the passive stereotypes westerners form about Eastern/ Muslim women.

Aboulela focuses the attention on some striking points in the life of exile, where she puts Sammar in front of endless contradictions till she ends up with an example for the modern Eastern/ Muslim woman, who from the very beginning drives the reader to walk inside her dream to subconsciously present her feelings about exile in Aberdeen describing it as rainy, foggy, dark and lifeless whereas in Khartoum everything had a voice filled with life, things were colorful, bright and spirited. "She dreamt that it rained and she could not go out… she was afraid of rain, of fog and snow which came to this country, afraid of the wind even…watching from the window people doing what she could not do". (1999, p.3)

3.2 Constructing hybrid identities in the novel: to the character "Sammar"

Leila Aboulela, a Sudanese writer, was born in 1964 in Cairo but she was raised in Khartoum where she graduated with a degree in Economics at Khartoum University, and then moved to England to finish her master's degree in Statistics at the London School of Economics. Though there is no doubt in the existence of a very strong relationship between the writer's life and that of her protagonist (Sammar), where both shared the same nationality, suffered from exile, both are Muslims and both wear Hijab, yet the novel is fictional and the events are made up for the purpose of telling the story of The Translator, which is about the character Sammar, (who is a widowed Muslim mother that moved from Sudan to Scotland with her husband before he dies in a car accident).

Leila Aboulela explores the theme of identity in *The Translator* in a way that brings East and West together. She challenges the stereotypical images made about Muslims and Islam by giving counterarguments to the western discourse. The novel is divided into two parts: Sammar's life in Sudan and Sammar's life in Aberdeen. In both cases, the female protagonist negotiates her identity.

In the novel, the Sudanese identity of Sammar, poised between British and Islamic culture, transports the Muslim world, language and knowledge to the West, along with Eastern suitcases, boxes, recipes and accents. Moreover, Aboulela made Sammar the bridge

between cultures and people, and the exposing tool of racism and anti-Muslim sentiment, which involves her into an orientalist discourse; she also offered a moderate Islamic discourse far from coercion that paves the way for controlling the self and shaping identity as an advantage resulting from applying Islamic feminism in the lives of ordinary women. Aboulela successfully exposed some of the most critical issues in literature through her own Muslim worldview. She engaged the West to East relation and at the same time highly differentiated them in an attempt to analyze hybrid characters falling in to a colonial romance, and at the same time to deliver a more compelling argument for how eastern/Muslim women can forge a profound identity outside of western cultural dominance (Alaa, 2014).

Sammar is a hybrid who resides in two different places but does not entirely fit into either. She feels dislocated; we can see her wishing she had been born in Sudan because she longs to be a part of a place to have a sense of belonging. Sudan is a symbol of belonging and an important part of her identity, which she idealizes and defends. As a result, Sudan holds a special place in her heart, whereas Aberdeen represents a foreign land. This is evident when we are told that, "In better times she used to reinvent the beginning of her life. Make believe that she was born at home in Sudan, Africa's largest land, in the Sister's Maternity Hospital, delivered by a nun dressed in white."(Aboulela, p.48). This contributes to the heroine's loss and self- imposed exile in Aberdeen and her displacement in Sudan because although she is Sudanese, she feels that she does not belong to her native land because she was born and has lived outside Sudan.

Sammar's presence in Aberdeen is characterized by discontinuity. She considers her life expectations: 'simple, nothing grand, just to continue and live in the same place, … have babies, grow fat…. But continuity, it seemed, was in itself ambitious' (Aboulela 1999, p.23). A lonely lifestyle in her empty room in Scotland has taken the place of the family life she had imagined for herself in Sudan. There is a chasm between "here" and "there," between her present's dreary "alien British cold" and her past's sunny promise. (Aboulela 1999, p. 57)

3.3   Depicting Islamic Feminism in the Novel

The Translator provides a fruitful forum for discussing some of the most difficult problems pertaining to Islamic feminism, its aspirations, and its guiding principles. The novel was written in such a way that it defies social, political, and religious conventions on all levels, providing the reader a third eye to see reality as it is, within the context of Islamic feminism and postcolonial identifications**.** Aboulela's presents a perspective that aims to clarify the perception of Arab/Muslim women while also probing the assumptions that shape this perception. In order to demonstrate the importance of women's rights in Islam, she creates a very distinctive portrait of Muslim women living in the west who do not embrace Western society but instead look for solace in their strong Islamic identity. She distinctly blends the love of God with the love of man while simultaneously presenting an example of balance and moderation in how these women keep their values by exhibiting a strong, independent, and moderate character of Arab women. By using characters such as Mahasen, Yasmin, Sammar, and others. She offers a thorough examination of the impact of labeling and normalization on the identities and independence of those women, and she acknowledges the contribution of Islamic feminists to the transformation of Arab feminist identity and the dismantling of labels imposed by the West.

The Translator is a well-researched formulation of Islamic feminism that was made possible by the system of power relations that not only allowed for studies of the relationship between Arabs and the west but also provided a foundation for it. Said agrees with Foucault's explanation of power relations: "The relationship between the self and the Other in shaping any kind of relationship is nothing but a scale of strength where everyone possesses control to a certain level." Said is also known for criticizing cultural systems and redefining the Arab/ Muslim feminist identity. The range of forces is created by the difference in control levels, which also gives rise to the programmer and control, where each group is assigned a certain label and function.

The novel discusses the essence of Arab Muslim women by shattering this barrier between their conception and that of the others. By flipping all the conventional scales in this literary environment, the novel gives women in general, Arab women in particular, and the other as a neglected group, a reasonable amount of space to relate their own experiences and speak in their voices.

According to Edward Said's theory of the self and the other, Arab feminists used the opposing presentations of Western and Eastern women as the main concern of Islamic feminism, believing that this weak and deformed image of Eastern women is what damaged their identity. As a result, Islamic feminism tends to preserve their historical legacy and cultural privacy, believing that Arab women have feminist characteristics and that Islam has never been a problem in tying them up, but what placed them in the circle of conflict was their constant attempts to stay within the Religious text while also keeping up with the alien Western culture that, on the surface, appears to show a great deal of concern for the struggles of oppressed people. Furthermore, the way it perceives feminism and approaches issues under its scope seems to cast Westerners in the role of the white savior while disqualifying Arabs, women of color, and Muslim women by neglecting the root causes of their difficulties.

The twin problems of power and identity, which had a significant impact on how Arab and Muslim women identified themselves, were skillfully combined by Aboulela. Sammar expresses her frustration with labels by saying that "In this country [England] everything was labeled, everything had a name." Sammar identifies with this classification in a number of ways, including her work as a translator, her origin as an Arab and Muslim, her gender as a female, and even in her seemingly inappropriate relationship with Rae…." (1999, p. 4).

Sammar is portrayed by Aboulela as an expatriate Muslim woman who wears a hijab and adheres to Islamic doctrines, which brings harmony and moderation into her life and allows her to stay within the bounds of her values, beliefs, and cultural heritage without falling into the trap of having to reinvent herself in accordance with the western model. These aspects from the protagonist's life were carefully chosen by the author to challenge the stereotype of the Arab or Muslim lady as a backward, terrorist, or other.

The author describes Sammar as an intellectually mature woman who can decide her own fate and control her own life regardless of the trio marginalization of being Muslim, female, and subject to cultural colonization. She was meant to overcome all these labels through her identity as an independent Muslim. The author disproved the Western myth that

Arab women are followers of Eastern men who must define their identities for them, provide for them, and restrain their independence.

Aboulela depicts Mahasen as a "woman who had an opinion on everything" through her character. (1999, p. 5) This character is regarded as a qualitative leap in contemporary Arab feminist fiction since the author was able to represent Arab women's sovereignty and power through Mahasen's character, shattering all Western prejudices about Arab women. Sammar remarked, "My aunt is a powerful woman, definitely a leader. (1999, p. 7) Her husband's character is never even mentioned in the text as a sign of her intellectual and personal independence through which the writer broke free from the stereotype labeling of Arab women as obedient and subservient. Mahasen was not a woman ruled by her feelings or a typical housewife, but she took the place of the father and the mother in the home and had an appropriate opinion in everything. Aboulela also makes a straightforward but insightful parallel between her protagonist and Rae's ex-wife on a strictly feminist level because both of these women serve as ambassadors for their respective social, cultural, and religious origins. The writer intended to make this comparison, in which the ex-wife is introduced as a modern, independent, beautiful, and educated woman, whereas Sammar saw herself as a trapped, miserable, weak, and far from civilized person, not because of her character, as a result of what alienation and labeling had done to her.

Sammar and the ex-wife are both single mothers who are raising children and pursuing careers. However, Sammar struggles to maintain her identity, striking a balance between faith, love, and exile, as well as overcoming all the western labels that put additional strain on her and present challenges in her life.

3.4 **Representation of language to the character "Sammar"**

Aboulela's in her novel represents a mixing between the English language, and some Arabic words that allow the reader to smell the Arabness persistent in their language. Indeed, they write in English, but they combine their pieces with the dynamic of traveling between two languages to represent the duality of their identities. Sammar provides the reader with a pleasurable experience by mixing their texts with phrases associated with their Muslim identities "Wuduh" means ablution, or the act of washing the body as a religious practice rite. She also prays the "fajr", which is one of the Islamic prayers conducted at

dawn. For example, Sammar's uses some words such as "Inshaallah" which signifies "if Allah wills it," and "Astaghfir Allah" which stands for "I seek forgiveness from Allah" alludes to her strong link with her religious identity.

Language plays a crucial role in reducing the distance and bridging the gap between her motherland and the receiving country, where translation protects Sammar's daily connection with Islam in a strange world where she feels displaced and isolated - emotionally, culturally, and religiously. Islam is always present in Sammar's life in the West. She transports knowledge from one language to another, although she maintains cultural contact, in spiritual emptiness and sadness produced by emotional exile, as well as religious roots.

Sammar assumes the role of the Quran's original Arabic translator for Rae Isles, a Western scholar of Islam. Rae learns more about Islam through Sammar's perspective and translation. In light of this, she interprets the Muslim perspective on the Quranic scripture. She concurrently introduces Rae to a different, more real perspective of the "other". Actuality, the formal act of conversion is linguistic in nature: it entails reciting the shahadah, a proclamation of faith in God and his prophet Muhammad   Sammar tells him:

"If you say the shahadah

It would be enough.

We could get married.

If you just say the words…"

Through her words, Samar tries to convince Ray to convert to Islam only, if he says "The Shahadah". It is not difficult, but he must be convinced of his decision. And it may also be a solution to their marriage.

Sammar's work during the translation process initially involves understanding the Quran and then discovering the code or rewriting it in English. Thus, whether or not it was intended, *The Translator* would be messing with or altering the translation's meaning. She cannot approach the material objectively since she is a translator and is not only a

transporter or carrier of meaning between the two languages. Furthermore, Spivak describes translation as "one of the ways to get around the confines of one's identity".

3.5   Subaltern Desire in Aboulela's novel *The Translator*

Since any literary author cannot dispense with the notion of "reality" in his or her works, regardless of the amount of flexibility reality may have, any literary depiction of the Muslim diasporic community inevitably contains a certain amount of Islamic and traditional principles, whether the author is friendly or hostile to religious and traditional principles. In so far as Leila Aboulela is concerned, religion, and a tradition play a central, and a crucial role in the lives of the characters in her fictional works.

Sammar could play an active role during her job as a translator within Rae's department at Aberdeen University. Rae is a Scottish secular professor and expert in Middle East Studies**.** Sammar's work includes the translation from Arabic to English of Islamic documents, Quranic texts, and Prophetic hadith for publication in European magazines. In other words, the Translator is the story of a faithful woman who could present a wonderful example that embodied the personality of a woman who traveled from an Eastern Muslim country to a European country where she lived for some years, and worked and mixed with the Europeans. Although she was living alone, she did not stop from being with people, and more importantly she was able to preserve her Eastern identity and did not abandon her values and customs. She not only maintained her identity but also communicated in the best way with a European society and benefited from that culture and traditions. At this point Aboulela was able to question Homi Bhabha's claim that an Oriental person cannot live in the West without undergoing a cultural experience, which cannot happen without abandoning some of his/her customs and values and merging with the Western culture and traditions.

The most striking thing about Sammar's character is that she was brought up in an Islamic cultured family that has given her an ability to distinguish between the right Islamic principles and the distorted form of those traditions and principles. During her work in Rae's office, she explains to him many of the Islamic principles and rules which have been distorted and corrupted by extremists. She conveys two main sources of Islamic principles: The holy Quran and the Prophetic hadith. Sammar successfully presents

a worthy message that says not each Islamic community the professes Islam has the right to embody all Muslims. Islam is a religion of peace that seeks the goodness of its followers and all people, not as some extremists try to depict it.

Sammar's burning desire for the past, as well as her love of Eastern traditions, characterize her as she recalls her childhood and youth in Sudan. Indeed, Sammar's love for her native country and traditions is a part of her identity, but what has brought her back to the West is to escape the problems with her aunt, or it may be the sadness she felt in her homeland after returning alone after losing her spouse in a car accident.

Moreover, Leila Aboulela in The Translator presents some other Muslim figures such as Yasmin, Sammar's only friend and the other employee who works in the same Department with her as Rae's secretary. Yasmin is a committed Muslim woman who retains her Eastern and Islamic identity in diaspora. She continually advises Sammar to keep distant from Rae and not to be too intimate with him because he is a secular man and there is no hope for her to be married to him. Once she asked Sammar, "Are you expecting him to become a Muslim so he could marry you?" (74) Or if she was going to marry someone who's not a Muslim? "Of course not," Sammar answered, "that would be against the sharia". (92)

The writer explained through the characters Sammar and her friend Yasmine about the identity and culture of Islamic women despite their suffering and marginalization in the diaspora. And she also tried to face all the difficulties just to stick to her Islamic religion. So her friend advised her not to marry Mr. Ray because he is a non-Muslim man and that is against Islamic law.

3.6 Gender Otherness in The Translator

In Aberdeen, Sammar experiences both geographical and psychological exile. After her husband's death, she isolates herself from society. She gives up Sudan and travels to Aberdeen without her son in order to forget about Tarig because Sudan reminds her of her husband. This becomes clear when we are told:

"To see again the streets where Tarig had ridden his bike, and she had walked everyday after school him and Hanan… To go to where everything happened, her aunt's house; laughter on their wedding, fire when she brought Tarig's body home." (49)

The heroine is emotionally fragile. As a result, in Aberdeen the heroine keeps herself private. She only knows the people she works with like Rae and Yasmine and people in her own building. Sammar does not personalize her room in Aberdeen to make it feel like her home. This demonstrates that Sammar does not consider Aberdeen to be her home; instead, it is the place where she escapes from reality. After the passing of her husband, she has no priorities.

Sammar was raised as a weak and vulnerable lady, and she believes that she requires a man in her life to help her grow. She is certain that she cannot go on without a man. Therefore, when an elderly man with two wives offers, Ahmed Yaseen she replies to her. However, Sammar's aunt Mahasen becomes angry since she is a smart woman who can live without a man, especially one who is not intelligent and married. Though, Tarig her husband was educated, he went to Aberdeen to specialize in medicine. Throughout the narrative, Sammar fights to feel independent and confident.

When Rae asks Sammar to marry him and move in with him at the end of the novel. She says:

"If I have been someone else, someone strong and independent I would tell you, I don't want to go back with you, I don't want to leave my family, I love my country too much". (51)

This illustrates Sammar's inability to form her own opinions and make her own decisions. Her conflict between what she claims to want and what the reader assumes she already has speaks a lot about her mental health and insecurities.

Sammar experiences conflict between belonging to a community like in Sudan and being an individual like in Aberdeen. Sammar's native nation is a collectivist society in comparison to Scotland, the country that Sammar migrated to which is an individualistic society.

Sammar returns and forth between the two, favoring the one that she misses. When she is not in a place, she idealizes it. For examples, Sammar misses Sudan when she is in Aberdeen. And when she is comparing between her life in Sudan and Aberdeen. Furthermore, Sammar misses eating as one big family with her aunt, brother, nieces, cousin and neighbors. And also she misses her normal life as well, such as, Housework, a social life in the evening, and everyone indoors by eleven o'clock curfew. When a death occurred, visitors or calls were made to give condolences and congratulations when a baby was born. Welcome to those who have arrived from abroad and goodbye to those who are leaving. While in Khartoum, the heroine regrets the characteristics of an independent society in Khartoum, such as the solitude and independence she enjoyed in Aberdeen. There is so little peace in Khartoum that the heroine hunts for a secret area at home simply to read Rae's letter.

Moreover, and regardless of the suspicions she had about his faith, Sammar knew that "*he was not one of them, not modern like them, not impatient like them. He talked to her as if she had not lost anything, as if she were the same Sammar of a past time*", (Aboulela, p.29-30) and by Rae's conversion, she translated Islam into faith and changed the passive image of Muslim women in to a productive one.

The writer used female supporting figures in her narrative. These supporting figures are used to fill the gaps in the lives of both heroines and to share some diversity of female characters, in an attempt to cover a good percentage of Arab women characteristics, problems, and to deal with women issues in general.

Conclusion

To sum-up, The literary works of Leila Aboulela takes their value from their primary goal of reviving cultural awareness and enlightening Western readers regarding the Islamic religion and its importance in the lives of Arabs in general and Arab women in particular. She presented a novel full of female characters that live within the Islamic framework in an attempt to tackle a wide audience of nonprofessional readers who represent the public opinion about Islam. Through seeking to correct the wrong thinking that linked Arabs and Islam to terrorism especially after the events of 9/11. She tackled some major issues in the lives of Muslim women in particular and migrants in general to raise awareness

and to share their Arab/Muslim views about their own lives and problems. Therefore, she expressed   their Islamic womanhood through multiple discourses and multiple speaking positions. Through Sammar developed characters, she plans the cultural, geographical and sexual boundaries, to redefine and renew these elements. The author draw portraits of Muslim women who show the necessity of discussing categories of identity, women's role, religion, political influences and cultural differences to show that women can empower themselves through Islam whether in their homeland or in exile.

Most importantly, she opens the door for new feminist analysis taken from the emergence of Arab writers in fiction, that empowered Muslim women's identities, gave them the space they need to speak out, and resist the western stereotypical discourses about them.

General conclusion

Literature is a reflection of society. It simulates the outside world and talks about the important difficulties that it faces. Anglophone Arab literature highlights the daily lives of Arabs and Muslims in the West. In terms of concepts, literature is exploring vivid, engaging, and contemporary topics such as Diaspora, hybridity, the experience of being in-between, displacement, identity, cultural clash, and stereotypes.

The aim of this research around Arab Muslims' feelings of the sense of in-betweeness in their postcolonial society and in the West and how their identities are formed and negotiated in a context. It also sheds light on the struggle of Arab Muslim women to create a stable sense of identity and how they find solace and peace in Islam in Diaspora. Finally, this dissertation provides the way for other researchers to explore more interesting, vivid, bright and absorbing themes in Leila Aboulela novel "The *Translator"* in relation to Muslims in British societies.

In addition to, Aboulela's novel focuses on the image of Arab Muslim women experiences in post-colonial British societies. It also emphasizes the difficulty immigrants have defining themselves Prove their identity and religion in Britain. For example in *The Translator,* the female protagonist Sammar views herself as unsettled, unsteady, fractured, and confused, which makes her to distrust what she truly is. Moreover, Leila Aboulela shows how Sammar experiences a sense of in-betweenness in her homeland Sudan, and the struggle that she goes through in order to achieve a religious stable sense of identity in Scotland.

Through my analysis, I can sum-up that Leila Aboulela draws a positive image of Muslim in general and Arab women in particular. Throughout the heroine of the novel, Samar, who was a symbol of the Arab Muslim lady that retained her religion, identity and culture.

The biggest difficulty that confronted this research was the lack of information and resources concerning the specification of the theme. Due to that, the information was somewhat limited and general in most of the sources, which made

it hard to gather specific ideas about the research as whole. In matter of fact, most of the information was related to "Arab - American literature".

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