



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
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The Quest for Self: Alienation and the Need to Belong in Postcolonial Literature. A Case Study Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Literature and Civilisation

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2017/2018

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to:

Our parents for their tenderess, support and encouragements,

Our beloved sisters, brothers, and relatives who are the light of our small world,

All our teachers,

Our friends, who colour our life with enjoyable moments,

Acknowledgements

Above all, we thank Allah, the Almighty for giving us the necessary courage and patience to undertake and complete this work.

We would like to express our hearty gratitude to our supervisor Miss. BOUHELAI Samira who guided this research and gave us her time and expertise. We thank her not only for her comments and valuable suggestions, but also for her encouragement and understanding.

We also would like to thank the students and teachers of second year Master for their immense contribution by sharing their valuable experience and insights.

All thanks go to our teachers at the Department of Letters and English Language at Tebessa University.

Last but not least, our heartfelt thanks go to all those who supported us by their encouragements and suggestions.

Abstract

This dissertation aims at exploring the Afro-Arabs constant search for identity in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*. The selected novel addresses the existential anxiety of the individuals who find themselves torn between two worlds; suffering from doubleness. Mustapha Sa'eed, a Sudanese character who was deeply affected by his experience in the northern journey, developed a sense of loss due to his fragmented identity. In this multidisciplinary endeavor, we are interested in exhibiting the syndromes of hybridity that plagued and troubled the protagonist's life. The dissertation examines Salih's novel from a thematic angle. The work tries first to shed light on a general background of the field of postcolonialism, and highlighting its relationship with identity. Besides, in the second chapter, we attempt to see how Salih traced the protagonist journey as an alienated Other. The third chapter examines the psychology of the oppressed native, namely the African individual who suffers from in-betweenness in his homeland. The study argues that denying one's past leads to self struggle. Yet getting the best of other cultures and preserving the native roots is crucial for achieving a strong identity. As an African novelist, Salih tries to illustrate the power of acknowledgement of the past in healing the future through exhibiting the impetus of the Western culture and its paramouny in the modern world.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى صبر أغوار الهوية الثابتة الإفريقية العربية كما صوّرها الطبيب صالح في روايته " موسم الهجرة إلى الشمال" تبحث الرواية التي تم اختيارها من طرفنا الهم الوجودي لأفراد وجدوا مقطعين بين عالمين يعانون من ازدواجية الهوية. " مصطفى سعيد" شخصية سودانية تأثرت غاية التأثر بالتجربة التي عاشها مسافرا إلى الشمال ، وعليه تولد لديه إحساس بالضيق بسبب هويته المقطعة والمشتتة وفي هذا العمل المتعدد الأوجه ما يهمنّا هو عرض أعراض الخلل الذي يصيب الشخصية حينما تصاب هويتها بالتمزق.

أما الدراسة فإنّها تفحص الرواية التي كتبها صالح من رواية موضوعية، وتبحث الرواية أولا أن تلقي الضوء على السياق العام الذي حدث في فترة ما بعد الاستعمار وإبراز علاقتها بالهوية بالإضافة إلى ذلك في الفصل الثاني حاولنا أن نرى كيف وضع صالح مسار هوية الخصم باعتباره غريبا في أرض المهجر بينما يعالج الفصل الثالث نفسية المستعمرين المقهورين في شكل الشخص الإفريقي الذي يعاني من الإهمال في وطنه.

وعموما فإن موضوع الدراسة يتمحور حول التنكر للماضي الذي يؤدي إلى صراع نفسي رغم أنه من الممكن أن يستفيد الإنسان من الغير ومن ثقافتهم فإن يحافظ على هويته وقوميته بشكل قوي ومتين.

وبالنسبة للطبيب صالح فإنّه كروائي حاول توضيح وتصوير قوة الاعتراف بالماضي من أجل معالجة أمراض المستقبل وذلك بالارتواء من ثقافته الأصلية ومن الثقافة الأصلية ومن الثقافة الأوروبية ودمجها في عالم جديد.

Resumé

Cette étude vise à explorer la recherche constante d'identité afro-arabe comme établie dans le roman « saison de la migration vers le Nord » de Tayeb Salih. Le roman choisi aborde l'angoisse existentielle des individus qui se trouvent déchirés entre deux mondes; souffrant de la dualité identitaire. Mustapha Saeed, un personnage soudanais qui a été profondément affecté par son expérience dans son voyage vers nord, a développé un sentiment de perte en raison de son identité fragmentée. Dans cette œuvre multidisciplinaire, nous sommes intéressés à exposer les syndromes d'hybridité qui ont tourmenté et troublé la vie du protagoniste. La dissertation examine le roman de Salih sous un angle thématique. L'ouvrage cherche d'abord à faire la lumière sur le contexte général du post colonialisme et à mettre en évidence sa relation avec l'identité. En outre, dans le deuxième chapitre, nous avons essayé de voir comment Salih a tracé le voyage du protagoniste comme un Autre aliéné. Le troisième chapitre examine la psychologie de l'indigène opprimé, à savoir l'individu africain qui souffre de l'indifférence dans sa patrie. L'étude soutient que nier son passé mène à la lutte contre soi. Pourtant, il est essentiel de tirer le meilleur parti des autres cultures et de préserver les racines autochtones pour acquérir une identité forte. En tant que romancier africain, Salih tente d'illustrer le pouvoir de la reconnaissance du passé dans la guérison de l'avenir en exposant l'élan de la culture occidentale et de son élan dans le monde moderne.

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Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that any culture is constructed of the features of other cultures due to the interaction between them. This contact affects the cultural identity and forms new societies built on different traditions and norms. Yet, along with their individual identities, every person bears an identity which is linked to his country and society.

This work will try to stress the notion of identity as depicted in postcolonial literature. Since postcolonial writers went through colonialism and suffered from alienation both in and outside their homelands, the crisis of identity is considered to be the central theme of their literary works.

What need to be taken into consideration are the changes that the colonies undergo before, during and after the colonization. Unlike the postcolonial period, the original culture of the colonized populations in the pre-colonial period was stable and there was no need to be identified somewhere or to prove that their traditions, beliefs and norms are of equal importance of those of the colonizer.

The imperial canon displaced the old traditions and norms and forced its own cultural standards upon the colonies. It offered no second choice but to accept the new cultural aspects and adapt them as a new way of life. This is how the original culture of the colonized was first touched. The colonized needed to learn the language of the colonizer in an attempt to create a way of communication between them. Thus, the colonized found himself gradually mixing his native language with the colonizer's one.

The long standing colonization made the colonized populations incorporate many of its cultural aspects with their own which led to a change in their national identities and a formation of new ones. Besides, colonialism depended on migration and education to

manipulate the minds of the younger generations and deeply integrate the colonial ideologies in them. As a result, the national identities of the coming generations were roaming in the new world between their origins and what they had been learned aboard.

The process of decolonization worked not only on decolonizing the lands but also on freeing and purifying the cultures. After the colonies gained their independence, they became in need, as postcolonial societies to explore again their cultures and to quest for their identities. Thus, as a subject matter, postcolonial writers gave a great importance to the crisis of identity in the postcolonial society and deeply explored it in their works.

Postcolonial literature discusses mainly the period of colonialism and post-colonialism. In the *Empire Writes Back*, the editors analyse postcolonial literature as a result of colonialism and how it was affected by such a cross-cultural environment. Therefore, the postcolonial literary theory came into existence to study this type of literature which depicts the situation of the colonized population as a main interest.

Moreover, postcolonial literature portrays the crisis of identity after the destroying journey of colonialism. It celebrates its value, restores it and draws a relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Postcolonial writers stress these issues through analysing the change in the cultural identity of the postcolonial societies and debating the new formed cross-cultural identity community and literature.

Paying so much attention to the quest for identity is seen by some critics as an obsession. However, it is considered by some others as a corner stone to understand the self and classify it elsewhere. Thus, the characters in postcolonial literature are often put in a struggling position where they try to find a place to fit in between their native community and the imperial world.

The notion of identity has been a key concept in the postcolonial literature. Along with the notions of language, hybridity, ambivalence and otherness, postcolonial literature became a tool to forge and rebuilt an identity.

The postcolonial African novel is a very noticeable illustration in depicting the journey of the quest for identity and self-discovery. And it is undeniable that Tayeb Salih is one of the exceptional African writers who deal with this subject matter in depth. Through his book *Season of Migration to the North*, Salih compiles the most crucial cultural dilemmas such as language, displacement, lost and alienation in an attempt to uncover the genuine authentic African traditions.

Although his fluency in English, Salih chose to write *Season of Migration to the North* in Arabic. He believes that language is a central cultural component which one must stick to in order to find a place to belong both in the native society and the world. However, many other African writers including Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka go against Salih's point of view. They see that the use of the English language is not a weakness. Rather, it is a fighting back against the colonized using his own weapon.

Since the debate over languages continues between authors, some critics argue that each author speaks his own voice and perspectives. On the other hand, some other scholars see that the postcolonial writers depict not only their own experiences of loss and alienation but the journey that any postcolonial society comes across.

Undeniably, postcolonialism is a complicated notion that has a direct relationship mainly with postcolonial nations. It deals with the period of colonialism and its aftermath. Since we come from a postcolonial background and grew up in a society struggling to determine ourselves somewhere, it is necessary to have knowledge about the postcolonial literature.

What brought the encouragement to deal with this topic is that postcolonial literature allows us to know the difference between a pre and a postcolonial society. In other words, to what extent the imperial process can change society. Moreover, it takes the concept of identity as a crucial subject matter. Postcolonial literature explores both the colonial experience of the writers and their societies through the characters who are usually presented in a struggling situation. Furthermore, through *Season of Migration to the North* which was first written in Arabic, Tayeb Salih wanted to convey that he is the basis of his own world and though his ability to write in English, he chose to write in Arabic in an attempt to restore his identity.

This work will try to focus on the crisis of identity in relation to postcolonial African literature. It will have an attempt to deal with the experience of the postcolonial society which was struggling to get rid of the Western canon and to restore and reconstruct its own identity and culture. Therefore, the central question that this work will try to discuss is, how did Mustafa Sa'eed struggle in a multicultural society? And how does this affect his quest for a personal self-hood. Moreover, in relationship of the colonizer with the colonized, how did postcolonial literature depict the imperial impacts on the colonized societies? And what were the strategies adopted by Tayeb Salih and the post colonial critics to reveal the Occident's oppressing mechanisms? Furthermore, what is the nature of the novel's protagonist Mustafa Sa'eed? Is it hybrid or just mimicry of the Western world?

This work will hold a three-chapter structure. It will have an introduction, a body of three chapters and a conclusion. It will deal with the journey of self-discovery between alienation and the need to belong in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*.

The first chapter, entitled "Key Concepts in Postcolonialism" is devoted to the theoretical background, which necessarily situates our work on central basis. We will deal with various

definitions and explanations linked to postcolonial literature, according to number of critics, to figure out its relationship with identity and nationhood. The quest for identity is a very eminent theme in postcolonial literature. Thus; our main concern is to study the core of this field, its components, and the way it works.

The second chapter will seek to explore the imperialistic cultural, racial and gendered oppressions and how much can these inequalities affect the sense of identity of the colonized. For this, this chapter will approach *Season of Migration to the North* from a psychoanalytical and postcolonial perspectives. Particularly, it will focus on the characters of the protagonist Mustafa Sa'eed and the nameless narrator who represent two different generations and their journey to find a place to fit in between their native origins and the new Western ones. Besides, this chapter will give a special attention to women. It will investigate the authenticity of the representation of the Sudanese and the Arabic culture through the major female characters in the novel.

The third chapter, entitled "The Therapeutic Power of Culture" explores the protagonists' self struggle for belonging. It tends to shed light on the fragmented nature of self that is caused by the colonial past. Next, the chapter suggests how to assert a local national identity and getting the best from the Other.

Chapter One

Theoretical Framework and Key Concepts

In recent decades, the study of postcolonial literature was given a significant attention. Therefore, *Post-colonialism* is widely recognized to be diverse and yet exposed to a thorough criticism. This creates an interest to dig deeper into it and get back to its background. Hence, this chapter is devoted to introduce the theoretical foundation of *Post-colonialism*.

Post-colonialism is a contested term. Thus, it was given a paramount focus by literary figures along with scholars' profound examination. Moreover, *Postcolonial theory* has emerged alongside *Post-colonialism*. As it aims to appraise and analyze the colonizer/ colonized relationship and to determine in which ways the colonized have been influenced by the colonizer.

Therefore, the notion of postcolonial literature which has been emerged from a controversial setting ought to be defined. Nevertheless, determining, appraising, and identifying the major concern of identity in postcolonial literature, pushes the research to investigate and study the literary texts of the postcolonial period thematically and didactically.

Furthermore, this study will inspect the relationship between identity and postcolonial literature through the examination and analysis of the different events of the novel.

1.1. Locating Postcolonialism

It is known that with the appearance of any rational or political movement, its designation process faces harsh discussion; this is due to the naming political

connotation and other different factors. Similarly, the term “postcolonial” created a crucial debate about its definition, since still in the phase of shaping and growth. Nevertheless, its conceptualization is drawn from varied fields and theoretical perspectives. Postcolonialism is not an easy term to define as it has been claimed by many critics who’s questioned its validness in the twenty- first century. However, the origin of postcolonialism is rooted in “historical resistance to colonial occupation and imperial control” (Young 260). Hence, the meaning of colonialism ought to be taken into consideration and given much importance so that one can clarify the obscurity of this term and highlights its meaning.

Thus, *Colonialism* is defined as the “consolidation of imperial power” embodied in the “settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands, often by force”. (Boehmer340). Colonialism is not only a way of having control of the area. Rather, it became more potent when the colonized minorities get infected by the syndromes of the colonizer’s culture such as learning their language and beliefs, performing their spiritual and religious rituals. Hence culture has always been a weapon for ruling and dominating societies.

Besides, the colonizer’s ideology seeks to colonize the indigenous’ minds through digging deeper into their minds. This process aims at implementing psychological issues in the minorities’ minds, such as inferiority complex and low self-esteem under the name of civilization. Hence, this was “the source of trauma for colonized peoples who were taught to look negatively upon their people, their culture and themselves” (McLeod19). Thus, the colonized society has been affected by the colonial ideologies.

One of the most important studies on postcolonialism *The Empire Writes Back*, explains the term ‘post-colonial’ as “all the culture affected by the imperial process

from the moment of colonization to the present day” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2). Nevertheless, this perspective lacks accuracy for those who require earning the term precisely and exactly. They stated that there are others who believe that a nation could not be totally independent without being prevailed by colonialism, and they added modern issues like “globalization” are the reason why there is a progressive dominance of the western countries over the other countries (Ashcroft et al 194). Actually, the eminence of the term postcolonial is due to the ongoing debate over it. So, The Empire Writes Back editors of the second edition redefined Postcolonial as:

Post-colonial is still best employed, as it was in the first edition, to refer to post-colonization. This is process in which colonized societies participate over a long period, through different phases and modes of engagement with the colonizing power, during and after the actual period of direct colonial rule (Ashcroft et al 195).

According to George P. Landow, a professor at Brown University the use of the term post- colonialism has been controversial since virtually all previous eloquent terms discounted many aspects.”Terms like “postcolonial” or “Victorian” are always open-ended: they are never answers, and they never end a discussion, they begin it.” Thus, this term fits the context of considering all that has a relation to the formerly colonized countries. (Why I Use the Term Postcolonial).

Furthermore, Landow adds that postcolonial countries actually have shifted and they separated from the imperial dominance. This would be another topic that should be taken into consideration along with other topics that formed postcolonial studies.

From another perspective, when the colonizer first came under the so-called mission of civilizing the indigenous people, they brought with them their literature and culture. In fact, this was no more than an attempt to totally discard the colonized minorities’ identity. Yet, the spread of intellectual consciousness all over the world after the Second World Wars has weakened the imperial power and made the

formerly colonized nation aware about the progression of the political changes in the coming days.

The purpose of imperialism was not only concerned with the issue of settling the land and taking the wealth of the colonized people. Rather, they wanted also to perpetuate their culture and implement its seeds in the colonized minds. However, the colonizers have never been fully successful in achieving their aim. As soon the intellectual movement spread in the postcolonial world.

In addition, the emergence of the decolonization process altered the colonial authority, pushing the newly colonized people to use their culture and language against the colonizers. As a reaction, the Kenyan novelist Ngugi Wa Thiong'o wrote his books "*Decolonizing the Mind*" and "*Moving the Center*" to enlighten the colonized minds celebrating the ancestral cultural heritage along with demonstrating its significance in history.

The colonizer wanted to take control over the lower and middle class of the natives as Joanne Sharp said in *Geographies of Postcolonialism*. Hence, they created the idea of elitism and spread it among them. Thus, the colonial power introduced new values to those communities such as education and English as the first language of the state. Yet, this has not been successful as they wished their culture to disappear. Therefore, the colonized subjects looked for an alternative which is postcolonial identity.

1.2. Postcolonial Theory

In late years, postcolonial theory has been hugely discussed among scholars and they did not agree upon its inception. In *The Blackwell Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, it is stated that postcolonialism and postmodernism appeared substantially at the same period. Thus, this was the reason why those conditions are confusing; critics suggested

that the postcolonial theory is the “child of postmodernism” (Schwarz and Ray 431). They also give the example of Dirlik’s opinion that postcolonialism is a child of postmodernism. Dirlik also criticized post colonial theorists for their “residual classical Marxism”. In their claim, postcolonial theory does not exist solely in the field of postcolonial studies, but as well in the area of globalization and other areas of study since it is relevant to feminism, ethnicity, and ethnic studies, and henceforward.

Postcolonial theory emerges “from the inability of European theory” to deal with postcolonial writing challenges and its diverse cultural origin. (Ashcroft et al11). Leela Gandhi in her book *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* spared a whole section for the criticism of postcolonial theory. She said:” postcolonial theory is situated somewhere in the interstices between Marxism and postmodernism/poststructuralism” (Gandhi167). She argued that postcolonial theory has emerged thanks to postmodernism and poststructuralism and its link with Marxism. Thus, she criticized it for its focus on politics rather than theory.

Postcolonial theory has dealt with many issues namely hybridity and ambivalence. These two notions are said to be very controversial. Still, postcolonial theorists have shown interest in the use of these notions because they introduced firm and profound ideas concerning the colonial entity. Another important issue is feminism that is forming a great deal of the postcolonial studies. It has likewise made a productive foundation for the cultural discussion among both postcolonial critics and western critics.

Moreover, there is the issue of race which has also composed a large domain of study and which has been replaced lately by the term “ethnicity”, to include a larger reach of human differences such as social classes and human values, instead of the term “race” which separates human beings according to biological threats. This event

contributes to another important topic which is the representation of the Other. Where the colonial countries create

new principles that allows the individuals to be classified into two groups: “Us” and the “Other”. Consequently, the colonized subjects are marginalized and discriminated.

In fact, postcolonial discourse is much known for its diversity and cultural multiplicity, which made it a real hard task for the European theory to deal with its complexity. As noted in *The Empire Writes Back*, the very reason for the growing intellectual awareness was “identifiable indigenous theories” (204). As a consequence, cultural subjection and the perception of expansion grew up in Europe.

As far as the postcolonial theory is concerned, it has presented a positive result on the ex- colonized people, postcolonial authors aimed at putting their literature and refinement at the same stage as literature created in the colonizer's lands. However, “fears about its homogenizing effects, and of its dominance by metropolitan-based critics have led to a suspicion sometimes erupting into open hostility”(Ashcroft et al 205). So the theory was rejected among critics, which allows it to form a contested discussion in literature.

Hence, there appeared several critiques of postcolonial theory. Ania Loomba is one of the critics who dealt with this topic. She argued that postcolonial theory depends heavily on post- structuralist perspectives. She criticizes it for being reliant on literary and cultural criticism that makes its focus on individuals rather than the whole society (Loomba 28).

Postcolonial theory allows the formerly colonized societies to reclaim their space for justice. In a dislocated culture, postcolonial theory does not declare war on the past, but challenges the consequences of the past that are exploitative.

1.3. Postcolonialism and Literature

Over the past half-century, postcolonial literature attracted the attention of scholars and readers to a great extent. In exploring postcolonial literature, it is vital to form working definitions of it from the beginning. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, postcolonial literature is a category devised to replace and expand upon what was once called Commonwealth Literature. As a label, it thus covers a very wide range of writings from countries that were once colonies or dependencies of the European powers. In *The Black British Literatures: Novels of Transformation*, Post-colonial literatures can be defined as those Europhone literatures that have arisen in the wake of European colonialism” (Stein 201).

In the Empire Writes Back, it is argued that when considering the semantic meaning of the term solely, postcolonial literature concept could be easily misconceived. This means that postcolonial literature will be restricted only to the literature written in the period when colonies obtained their independence. As mentioned in the book, postcolonial literature involves all the literature has been influenced by the process of colonialism, from the moment of colonization to the present day. Regarding what has been said above, the term postcolonial literature is somehow deceptive and taking into account that postcolonial literature field represents literature set during and after colonization (Ashcroft et al 2).

It has been claimed that postcolonial discourse would not be conceivable without the growth of national literature, and its application in approaching cultures at the national level. It is also apparent that the authors of postcolonial writings used national myths and narratives (Ashcroft et al 5).

From another perspective, Commonwealth literature provided a fertile ground for postcolonial literature, which simultaneously grew and prospered. Postcolonial

authors subverted the importance of English. Therefore, Postcolonial literature constantly earned a universal position with English language as a mean of argument. Many postcolonial authors as Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak gained regard as postcolonial critics.

Postcolonial literature has dealt with various themes like language, hybridity, identity, colonialism, and resistance. The conflict between modernization and traditions is also evident. However, postcolonial writers were not able to be totally subversive or express their “anti-imperial potential”. So, their literature was restricted by the imperial limitation that decides whether it is suitable or not (Ashcroft et al 6). Additionally, characters in postcolonial writings are known to be portrayed as blacks who are in search for their identity and cannot fit both in their country and abroad.

In their earliest times, writers such as Achebe were concerned with writing to oppose the colonizer’s reflection towards the colonized minorities. Nevertheless, what comes later in postcolonial literature was somehow different; postcolonial authors started to write about their history and cultural heritage, to perpetuate their ancestral civilization aiming at opposing the colonizer’s deeds and celebrate their identity and origins (Chew and Richards 72-73).

Considering postcolonial literature that history emerged as a vital concern in literature, and that is obvious in its definitions. Postcolonial literature tries to change the claim that it has no history or literature, a feature which is connected to it through the agency of many colonial texts. Likewise, postcolonial literary texts play a crucial role in addressing issues such as identity, gender, class, and agony of societies. These elements made postcolonial literature themes so distinct.

1.4. The Quest for Selfhood in Postcolonial Literature

The question of selfhood is much debated and relevant issue in postcolonial literature since it is the outcome of the process of colonialism; a matter that explains all the arguments and disputations that determine this notion as pointed out earlier. It is the postcolonial history and the predicament which shapes identity. This is the reason why cultural and spatial factors emerged so postcolonial identity and postcolonial writers have been tempted as well (Paolini 51). Post colonialism is a perceptual experience which gives voice to the voiceless postcolonial people; it also comes to emphasize their identity as discrete from the imperial one.

In *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*, it is justified with what the African writer Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o believes that literature plays a huge role in building a "historical consciousness" opposed to the submission of colonialist writers in diminishing the Kenyan identity (162). However, Catherine Lucy Innes, in *A Concise Companion to Postcolonial Literature*, asserts that the postcolonial writers disproved such concepts of "fixed opposition and hierarchies", they appealed for what Edward Glissant termed "Créolité" and so rejecting the idea of "fixed ancestral identity", this way those writers disclose their identities (75-76). Furthermore, as Nayar claims, the literature of diasporas which stresses the identity shaped within different places, cultures, races, languages ...etc. Place and displacement is possibly the most prominent feature that framed the identity of postcolonial society.

Some critics and thinkers consider the term 'identity' as fluid, changing. Namely Homi Bhabha who refused the notion of "original identity" and favored the notion of fluid identity, through literature, those writers of Diaspora literature proves that they are conscious of their fragmented positions (201-203). It is also the case for women

writers who, for Yasmina

Hussain investigate the way women writers from south Asia changed their view to “diasporic identity” and how it is shaped by ethnicity and gender.

Postcolonial authors seem to hold the burden of their societies’ suffering. According to Helen Tiffin, postcolonial novels describe the reality of European oppression over postcolonial subjects. Thus, postcolonial writers want to “deconstruct” European identity and to create their own identities. Hence, postcolonial literature is characterized by the theme of identity crisis, as it discusses the manner a postcolonial country recuperate from years of hardship, postcolonial writers may narrate their stories using the position of a persecuted minor character, so their protagonists are all the time striving to find out an identity in the core of the conflict between the original identity and the foreign dominant one.

In an essay entitled: “*Literature as an Empowerment of Identity*”, Anna Holden Ronning argued that through postcolonial works, the situation of individuals is abstained by inverting the way they are prejudged, she adds postcolonial writing is considered as a “writing back” to which the writers connect history to identity for a prominent perception.

Moreover, the technique of “storytelling” was used by those writers to portray the life of a character was a part of the colonized nation or the inferior group to discuss and compare their cultures and attitudes to the current ones. Thus, by setting the characters usually away of their original homes and in varied places, the writers debate their identities. Among the examples of this fact is the case of Native Americans, who scrutinize this theme.

As stated above, one of those most preeminent features that formed the identity of postcolonial writers is “place and displacement”. This notion of “place and

displacement leads us also to the idea of “home”. This is a vital component in forming the individual’s identity as well as the group identity; Christina Heckman explains this notion:

Traditionally home and belonging can be defined as the place where our ancestors used to live, the place of our origin. Consequently, this definition is dedicated to the past without regard where one lives right now. As a result, it is a very passive and static concept, and home is a fixed place (Heckman2).

According to Heckman, it is due to colonialism that people lost their sense of belonging. The migrant people perceive their homeland as an imaginary construct and an ideal place, they feel dislocated and torn between two worlds. That is the reason why postcolonial literature is concerned with such an issue.

This chapter has underlined the different perceptions of the term post colonialism. We have seen that the concept does not necessarily imply the aftermath of Western colonialism; the term can also denote the argument to reclaim and reconsider the history of people subordinated under different forms of imperialism.

For this reason, postcolonial theory considers how the colonizer dictates predominance on the colonized subjects, which made them feel inferior and lose their self-determination; the reason that pushes postcolonial writers to “write back” to the center and stress their own identity.

Post-colonial literature is a significant way to get in the spirit of the colonized nations’ culture and identity. The literary texts are regarded as the lenses of reading nations’ civilization and history. Most of these literary works focused on the quest for the self discussing hybrid origin and hybrid identity in the modern world, and the way

the indigenous people were integrated and assimilated into the white world.

Furthermore, postcolonial writers pictured their societies' suffering through their writings, and also aiming at inspecting and delineating the psychological conflicts of minority people. Thus, the representation of identity gained a valuable discussion in postcolonial literature.

Chapter Two

The Outsider Within: Between Binaries

The question of identity has always been the central interest of postcolonial writers. It is commonly known that these writers bear 'both cultures'. Their writings are usually the reflection of not only their own feelings and experiences, but also those of their native communities.

Tayeb Salih is a popular postcolonial writer among the Arab population and even abroad. He is famous of his masterpiece *Season of Migration to the North* which was published ten years after the declaration of the Sudanese independence. The central theme in this literary work is the crisis of identity which every colonized person can come across. Starting from alienation and exile, Tayeb Salih goes through the odyssey of self-discovery from its very beginning to the end.

This chapter will try to focus on the two central characters Mustafa Sa'eed and the unnamed narrator whom they undergo the same experience when they were furthering their studies in England. This chapter will stress the racial and cultural discrimination they experience and the duality which is resulted from their different perception of the cultural encounter. In the same context, it will provide an analysis of two of the significant female characters whom they introduce two different images of the Arab women who is doubly exploited in colonized patriarchal society.

2.1. Interracial Relationships:

Tayeb Salih clearly built his novel on the Mustafa Sa'eed whose mind is powerful in assimilating almost all the topics and sciences and in saving everything he comes across in his educational journey, but also whose emotions and feelings are as cold as ice. Sa'eed suffers from alienation both in his homeland and aboard. He is exiled by his own mother and by his native society as being hybridized seen in a binary view. And later in the heart of the Western society by the English women whom he was involved in sexual relations with.

Before he was born, Sa'eed loses his father who was a wealthy camel trader and experiences a bitter life with his mother who abounds him to live an independent life. He passes a mistreated childhood when he feels no maternal care and love from the side of his mother who is "with something on her face like a mask ... It processed no single color but a multitude, appearing and intermingling" (26). Sa'eed's description of his mother's face implies that her emotions towards him were mysterious. Besides, his relationship with her resembles his relation with his homeland. This justifies the lack of belonging he feels in response to what he received as a child.

The unstable childhood that Mustafa Sa'eed lived and all the events and feelings he experienced had a fateful influence later on his adulthood and his entire life. The German psychiatrist and theorist Alice Miller, who started her studies from the Freudian psychoanalysis, believes that the psychological disarrangements are not innate, but they are derived from the neglect and abuse that the children experience by the adults. Furthermore, she adds that a child's relationship with his mother in particular is crucial in his emotional health when he grows up. As mentioned in the novel in describing the kind of relationship that arranged Sa'eed with his mother, Sa'eed says, "It was as if she were some stranger on the road ... We used not to talk much" (18). So, this sponsors Miller's theory that the relationship

or the lack of relationship with his mother is considered to be an important hint to understand his attitude towards Mrs. Robinson. Besides, it helps to investigate his behaviors towards and the rest of the English women he meets during the years he spent abroad.

Because in Sudan all what Mustafa Sa'eed could achieve is the elementary education, and because he is a brilliant student, he gains a scholarship to Egypt to carry on his secondary education there. As expected, the farewell is emotionless and tearless when his mother just said, "Do as you wish, depart or stay, it is up to you. It is your life and you are free to do with it as you will" (28). As mentioned above, the attitude of his mother also implies a similar one of his homeland as if it cannot provide love and care as long as it cannot provide freedom and dignity.

In Cairo, "The other mountain, larger in size which I would spend a night or two, after which I would continue the journey to yet other destination" (24) Sa'eed meets Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Robinson's wife who takes care of him during the period he stays in Egypt. Then, he has the first sexual awakening towards her when she embraces him. He says:

All of a sudden I felt the woman's arms embracing me and her lips on my cheek. At that moment, as I stood on the station platform amidst a welter of sounds and sensations, with a woman's arms around my neck, her mouth on my cheek, the smell of her body, a strange, European smell tickling my nose, her breast touching my chest, I felt I, a boy of twelve a vague sexual yearning I had never I had never previously experienced. (28)

Sa'eed's relationship with Mrs. Robinson is clearly based on the Freudian Oedipus complex because he often feels a sexual attraction towards her while she treats him like a mother. This, as Alice Miller argues, is the result of the loveless childhood he passed with his mother. Yosif Tarawneh and Joseph add on her theory and say, "The creation of a substitute

mother for Mustafa Sa'eed constitutes ... a variation that is perhaps dictated by the political circumstances surrounding the child's birth and growth." (332).

Two possibilities were set to understand and interpret Sa'eed's attitude towards the women abroad. The first states that the abuse he experienced in his childhood makes him want to get rid of his memories with his mother, culture, and homeland. For, he says that from Mrs. Robinson "I learnt to love Bach's music, Keat's poetry; and from her I heard for the first time about Mark Twain" (32). He confesses the great influence that Mrs. Robinson marks on this upbringing describing how she makes him absorb the English culture and lifestyle.

The second, however, interprets Sa'eed's desire towards the Mrs. Robinson and the other English women as a revengeful reaction to the imperialistic actions practiced by England in Sudan. For this, he said "I felt no feeling of gratitude; I used to take their help as though if it were some duty they were performing for me" (28). He depends on his own intellect and cleverness to reach his achievements and ambitions to gain another scholarship for higher studies in London. In the heart of the white culture teaches him to say "yes in their language" (SMN95), but he used the chance to say "no" (95) in their language too. This indicates Sa'eed's first attempt to step closer to the Western culture and further from his native one or the vice versa.

Mustafa Sa'eed leaves Egypt to England feeling "an overwhelming intimacy with the sea" (26) where he discovered that the native English language is so far from that he had learnt before; he says, "I now heard language for the first time is not like the language I had learnt at school" (32). Yet, he tried to integrate himself in the English society giving up his original cultural and religious heritage, and achieving a very high academic level which allows him to seem even more native than the English people themselves. Eventhough, he discovers that no amount of sophisticated schooling can please the Westerns and prevent them from seeing him

racially as the Other. Therefore, felt the inferiority despite of his accent and high position just because he is black.

Being black in Britain is about a state of 'becoming' (radicalized); a process of Consciousness, when color becomes a defining factor about who you are. Located through your 'otherness' a 'conscious coalition' emerges: a self-consciously constructed space where identity is not inscribed by Identification but political kinship. Now living submerged in whiteness, physical difference issue, a signifier, a mark of whether or not you belong. Thus to be black in Britain is to share a common structural location; a racial location. (qtd. In Weedon 74)

Under the sense of the racial alienation that Sa'eed suffers from in the English society, he tried to find the acceptance through the involvement in sexual relationships with the English women. However, another question will be raised here; why the English women would be involved in such a relationship?

Sa'eed spends the days as a very respected and intellectual figure; he states, "I would read poetry talk of religion and philosophy, and discuss paintings, and say things about the spirituality of the East. I would do everything possible to entice a woman to my bed" (30), and spends the night as an avenger, he recalls: "I came to invade you into your very homes" (95). Sa'eed is interested in the cultured victims more than the others, he says, "The women enticed to my bed included girls from the Salvation Army, Quaker societies and Fabian gatherings. When the liberals, the conservatives, cabour, or the communists, held a meeting, I would saddle my camel and go" (30). He chooses this type of girls because they are more likely to fall in his and the Eastern culture's charm.

From the cultural milieu which is hunted by Mustafa Sa'eed, there is Ann Hammond, one of his students who whispers in his ears saying, " You are beautiful beyond description and the love I have for you is beyond description" (143), and who wants to get rid of the Western culture and convert to Islam or Buddhism. In addition, there are Isabella Seymour and Sheila Greenwood who have the same interest in the Eastern culture. Sa'eed uses this point to not only possess the Western culture, but to sexually conquer it.

His bedroom is like a gallery of a detailed Eastern decoration. To make it more convincing to his victims, he furnished this view with his "lie upon a lie" (146) description about the Eastern historical and cultural beauty. He describes:

The sandalwood and incense; the ostrich feathers and ivory and ebony figurines; the paintings and drawings of forests of palm trees along the shores of the Nile, boats with sails like doves' wings, suns sitting over the mountains of the red sea, camel caravans wending their way long sand dunes on the borders of the Yemen, baobab trees in Kordofan, naked girls from the tribes of the Zandi, the Nuer and Shuluk, fields of banana and coffee on the Equator, old temples in the distinct of Nubia; Arabic books with decorated covers written in ornate Kufic script, Persian carpets, large mirrors on the walls, and colored lights in the corners. (146)

When those girls discover that they are no more than the victims of a revengeful plan and they are deceived by a superstitious description of a world which has nothing to do with reality, they commit suicide. Anna Hammond leaves a message saying "Mr. Sa'eed may God damn you" (34), and Isabella Seymour's saying "My mother would go mad and my father would kill me if they knew that I was in love with a black man" (106). Those messages

indicate that they cannot handle the fact that they stooped this low and being lured in Sa'eed's disingenuous trap.

Unlike the mentioned girls, the case is different with Mustafa Sa'eed when it comes to his wife Jean Morris who refuses to be a victim. Rather, she shows insult from the first time she meets him. She tells him that she has never seen a face uglier than his. She also set the Arabic manuscript, prayer rug on fire, and broke his rare vase she asked for in return for sleeping with her. This indicates that she underestimates his culture and religion. Besides, it shows that she succeeds in making him giving up on his roots and belonging.

Tayeb Salih presents the scene of Sa'eed and Jean in the registry office in a very dramatic way when Jean turns from the intensive crying to the high laughter saying "what a farce" (158). This scene explains that the marriage of a Western woman to a Non-Western man is just a fictitious scene which will never be true. Unlike Sa'eed's expectations, even after marriage Jean misses no chance to humiliate him; she refuses any physical contact with him; and flirts with another man in public. This repressed verbal and non-verbal abuse provokes Sa'eed to kill her. Jean means to make Sa'eed end up in this point. He realizes that neither the highly sophisticated education he received nor the satisfying position he earned in the Western society can change the fact that he is no more than an Arabic primitive man.

2.2. Intercultural Confrontations

Season of Migration to the North being a postcolonial Arabic novel deals mainly with Mustafa Sa'eed and the unnamed narrator's dual perception of the East and the West. This is considered as a problem resulted from the clash of cultures that happens in the postcolonial society. In this context, Adam Storlorow in an interview said:

Postcolonial concerns are about the encounter of cultures. As the editors of *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* state in the introduction to their collection, postcolonialism "addresses all aspects of the colonial process from the beginning of colonial contact" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, p.2) So we could say it begins with the cultural encounter of colonization. Repression and resistance, hybridity and difference all have their start here.

Considering Tayeb Salih as a writer who experienced 'both cultures', he is interested in the cultural interrelations between the East and the West. This can be clearly seen in his novel through the characterization of Mustafa Sa'eed who represents the first generation of the Eastern immigrants and the nameless narrator who represents the second generation who has more chance to think about the clash of cultures. For, Edward Said puts in his statement:

The post- imperial writers of the third world ... bear their past within them- as scars of humiliating wounds ... as potentially revised visions of the past tending toward a post-colonial future, in which the formerly silent native speaks and acts on territory reclaimed as part of a general movement of resistance, from the colonist. (44).

It is undoubted that both Sa'eed who belongs to the colonial period and the narrator who is from the period of independence and afterwards show their rejection of the imperial power. This rejection was because the imperial power tries to impose its superiority over them as being the Other and to make them feel racially and culturally inferior. This rejection and striving to survive between the East and the West and between being black and white come from the experience they both went through in England.

From one hand, the two main characters show a strong sense of belonging to their native culture and they express it in different ways. For instance, Mustafa Sa'eed is an active character because he involves himself deeply in the Western society to take revenge for his abused homeland; he expresses "I came to invade you into your very homes" (95). He presents himself as an invader who will exploit their women and destroy their culture with the same psychological weapon they use. However, the unnamed narrator is not as active as Sa'eed since he holds no love or hatred to the West and feels no sense of belonging to them; he states, "I had lived them superficially, neither loving nor hating them. I used to treasure within me the image of this little village, seeing it wherever I went with the eye of my imagination" (49). The attitudes of Mustafa Sa'eed and the narrator towards the West reflect their upbringing and backgrounds. Unlike Sa'eed, the narrator has more willing to resist the clash of cultures because his cultural background is stronger than that of Sa'eed.

On the other hand, they show a sense of displacement and loss between the two conflicting cultures struggling to belong somewhere. The notion of in-betweenness is explained by Woode as follows, "In-betweenness of characters is the result of their having two or more other identities inhabiting their postcolonial subjectivity. The characters are different because they are differently hybridized; their cultural and ideological dualism, their simultaneity ... is dialogized" (Woode 2001, 74). This explains that Mustafa Sa'eed and the narrator find themselves roaming between their native origins and the new Western ideas and perspectives.

Mustafa sa'eed is a central character whose in-betweenness was symbolically reflected through his sexual relations with the English women who presented the Western culture. Those relations can either be understood as a revengeful reaction to the colonizing actions in his motherland or as a key to the Western world because he is the first Sudanese who gets

access to the West and to their women. He wants to be seen as an invader, a murderer, and a westerner all at once. For, in his trial for killing his wife Jean Morris when his professor says that this crime was a result of the clash of civilization he has been through, he declares, "This is untrue, a fabrication. It was I who killed them. I am the desert thirst. I am no Othello. I am a lie" (9). This declaration signifies that he is not the result of two struggling cultures. Rather, an eastern who failed to assimilate himself abroad through mimics.

With the opening of the novel, the narrator whose character goes in parallel with that of Sa'eed sets a slight difference between the Eastern and the Western cultures when the villagers ask about the people abroad; he states, "They were surprised when I told them that Europeans were, with minor differences, exactly like them, marrying and bringing up their children in accordance with principles and traditions, that they had good morals and were in general good people ... just like us" (5). This indicates that the narrator finds the stability during the years he stayed in England. Whereas, the narrator says "For seven years I had longed for them, had dreamed of them, and it was an extraordinary moment when I at last found myself standing among them" (3). In this position, the narrator shows his comfort and love towards his motherland and his native roots.

Mustafa Sa'eed and the narrator are both viewed as the Other and treated with disdain and inferiority. Edward Said argues that the West made this orientalist way of thinking to distinguish themselves for the dark, mysterious and dangerous East; thus "everything the orient weren't the occident were". Besides, this outlook was used to rationalize the imperial agenda.

2.3. The Psychology of the Colonized: Double-consciousness

In his books *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon mainly deals with the notion of double consciousness which a person with a dual identity,

soul and thought can face. He writes, "The colonized intellectual, at the very moment when he undertakes a work of art, fails to realize he is using techniques and a language borrowed from the occupier. The colonized intellectual who returns to his people through works of art behaves in fact like a foreigner" (*The Wretched of the Earth* 160). In *Season of Migration to the North*, Tayeb Salih stresses the sense of duality through attaching the unnamed narrator who bears two identities to Mustafa Sa'eed in either being his double or the id who needs to be adjusted to his native society again.

The unnamed narrator was presented in some scenes in the novel as the *ulter ego* or the double of Sa'eed. For, Patricia Gessey states in this context, "the narrator is so obsessed with Sa'eed's past and distracted by Sa'eed's legacy that he can barely distinguish from his own identity and that of Sa'eed" (129). However in some others, due to the fact of their belonging to two different generations and to their having different psychological backgrounds, the narrator seems as Sa'eed's id or rival.

To empower her point of view, Patricia Gessey argues that the narrator's sense of doubleness towards Sa'eed was the result of their shared journey aboard. The narrator in describing the indistinguishable experiences of his and Sa'eed says, "was it like what happened to Mustafa Sa'eed could have happened to me? He said that he was a lie, so was I also a lie? I am from here. Is not this reality enough" (1). They leave Sudan to England for seven years, speak English and learn poetry. Besides, the narrator suggests that he metaphorically undergo the prison experience exactly as Sa'eed is physically imprisoned.

Moreover, the narrator confesses that Sa'eed "had become an obsession that was the ever with me in my comings and goings" (61). Mohammed Siddiq says that the narrator's attraction to Sa'eed is among the "characteristics of the double" (86). For, the narrator does not see Sa'eed's silence and smiles mysterious when he speaks about the cultural differences

between Sudan and England. In reverse, this attitude of Sa'eed indicated that he has no objections on whatever the narrator says to the villagers.

Furthermore, after Sa'eed's death, the narrator takes his territory, loves his widow and provides his kids, and when he enters the room in which Sa'eed collects the secrets of his life he sees Sa'eed's reflection on the mirror for a moments instead of his. All those factors together prove the idea that the narrator is the double of Mustafa Sa'eed. The narrator recollects:

The light exploded on my eyes and out of the darkness there emerged a frowning face with pursed lips that I knew but could not place. I moved towards it with hate in my heart. It was my adversary Mustafa Sa'eed. The face grew a neck, the neck two shoulders and a chest, then a tunk and two legs, and I found myself standing face to face with myself. This is not Mustafa Sa'eed. It is a picture of me frowning at my face from the mirror. (135)

This recollection signifies that though the narrator's strong attraction to Sa'eed, he sometimes hates and fears him as a rival or an id. On the page 135 the narrator considers Mustafa as his adversary, the word that indicates that there many confrontations in their points of view. Sa'eed sees no point behind the narrator's study of poetry because Sudan does not need it. Rather, it needs "agriculture, engineering or medicine" (9). Besides, the narrator and his grandfather refer to Sa'eed as not as local as they are.

Another scene that shows the external conflict between them is the narrator disagreement with Sa'eed's egocentrism. Tarawneh and Joseph argue that this attitude can be seen from Freud's concept of narcissism because he "takes himself as an object" and behaves "as though it were in love with itself" (331). What proves Sa'eed's egocentric attitude is when he states, "this is a fact in my life: the way chance had placed in my path people who gave me a helping

hand at every stage, people for whom I have no feeling of gratitude. I used to take their help as though it were some duty they were performing for me" (23). And adds, "I was wrapped up in myself and paid no attention to the love they showered upon me" (26). This portrays Sa'eed's rigid emotions towards all the people he came across throughout his journey.

2.4. The Image of the Arab Woman

Most of the in-depth studies and analysis of *Season of Migration to the North* put much emphasis on the English women and how they were treated by Mustafa Sa'eed. However, not enough attention, despite of its importance was paid to the Sudanese women's quest for identity as being a part of an imperial patriarchal Arab community. For, Gayatri Spivak states in her much quoted essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, "between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the 'third-world woman' caught between tradition and modernisation" (102). Spivak in her essay conceptualizes a new theory which is Postcolonial Feminism to give a fair attention to the doubly marginalized third-world-women who cannot make their voices heard.

Spivak's notion of subalternity can be successfully echoed in the character of Hosna Bint Mahmoud, Sa'eed's widow who represents, from one hand the image of the Arab alienated and dehumanized woman. As a woman who lives in a postcolonial patriarchal community, Hosna is caught between the Eastern norms which it is a must to stick to and the Western modern ideas she receives through her husband Musfada Sa'eed; Mahjoub states in describing her change, "All women change after marriage, but she particular underwent an indescribable change. She was as though she were another person ... like a city woman" (101). Though the long standing Western colonization and modernity, her society cannot accept her new way of thinking and harshly criticized her of being a copy of those modern women.

Despite of the Arab woman's weak image represented in the novel, Hosna, on the other hand is introduced as a fatal rebellion against the men's abusive domination and given the image of the modern Arab woman whose fate is between her hands. Thus, she is explicit when she has been beaten by her father and brothers to get married to the womanizer old man Wad Rayyes after the disappearance of Sa'eed. Although she accepts this marriage, she sticks to her decision to not going to any man. She says, "I shall go to no man ... If they force me to marry, I'll kill him and kill myself" (96). Her attitude towards Wad Rayyes which resembles that of Jean Morris towards Mustafa Sa'eed proves the deep affection of Sa'eed's Western perspectives on her personality. Hassan says in this context:

Hosna dares the unthinkable, and for the villagers, the unspeakable. Her retaliation against the abuses of patriarchy, her castration and killing Wad Rayyes, who represents the worst aspects of traditional culture is payback in kind of her own genital mutilation, which until then had been the subject of causal remarks and jokes for the village patriarchs, though a taboo subject in Arabic literature and in public discourse generally. (87)

In response to this tragedy, the villagers blame Hosna and feel no Sympathy towards her and put no blame on Wad Rayyes who violates and provoked her to commit such a reaction. However, Mabrouka, Wad Rayyes's wife has an unexpected point of view as if she is presenting the reader's interpretation. She puts the blame on Wad Rayyes who dehumanized Hosna to react in such a way.

The notion of in-betweenness was explored mainly in two different ways. Hosna represents the image of the modern conservative woman who depends on the Western modern way of thinking to rescue herself from the Eastern social convection. Seeking the same goal, Bint Majzoub, Wad Rayyes's first wife, embodied a hybrid traditional woman who draws no limits

in her Westernized behaviours. Like Hosna, Bint Majzoub is discriminated both for her race by the Westerns and for her gender by the masculine counterparts of her own community.

According to what Homi Bhabha discusses in his book *The Location of Culture*, Bint Majzoub is introduced as a 'mimic', who is "the same as Northerners, but not quite" (89). She smokes, drinks, socializes freely with men and talks about her sexual relations with them in public. She chooses to behave as such for two reasons. Firstly, she tries to escape from this racial alienation because she is neither accepted to be a Northerner nor she looks so; "was a tall woman of charcoal complexion like black velvet" (129). Secondly, she announces her revolution against the Easterns norms and restrictions and the dominance of patriarchy.

Through this chapter we realized that the Western culture affects postcolonial literature and populations. People differ in their perceptions of the cultural clash; some of them resist it while others just assimilate to it. Thus, they find themselves roaming between their origin ideas and the new way of thinking of the colonizer.

Tayeb Salih in depicting the theme of cultural identity and the quest for it, covers both of the perceptions of assimilation which is echoed in Mustafa Sa'eed and resistance adopted by the unnamed narrator. Moreover, he expresses how both of them scroll in between just to try to fit in the Western society and to escape from the cultural and racial alienation.

Furthermore, as far as the Arab colonized communities are concerned, they neglect the position of the woman. They forget the fact that she is already exiled by colonization to doubly discriminate her for her gender. Therefore, Tayeb Salih, through Hosna and Bint Majzoub presents two different images of the Arab woman as a forgotten segment in the society who chooses to revolt against patriarchy through assimilation to the Western culture.

Chapter Three

The Therapeutic Power of Culture

In this chapter, we will consider the relationship between the West and the East. A particular focus will be devoted to the genre of the novel as writing back. This study will show that the conflict with the colonial other serves many aims. Some of which is to construct a negotiation with, or to react against, Western standards of control, by suggesting a rationalistic relationship between the Western colonial legacy and the modernized local identity. Thus, some critics consider the socio-economic damage of colonialism but they claim that both the narrator and Sa'eed use the colonial historical domination as an excuse to hide their personal and moral failures. Sa'eed uses British atrocities in his homeland to justify his crimes in the West, and the narrator, out of his doubt, is about to follow Sa'eed's example. To these critics the two protagonists' personal struggle in *Season of Migration to the North* is caused mainly by Sa'eed's and the narrator's individual failures to confront their intrinsic weaknesses.

In his work, Salih tends to depict the real image of the post-independence Sudan by presenting two different views of Sudan's national identity. The British existence in the country has caused a splitting Sudanese identity; an identity torn between the glamour of modernity and the purity of Arabo-Islamic inheritance. Hence, Salih suggests a hybrid ideology which allows a critical gratitude of the good in all cultures, and a multicultural consciousness among people of all races for peace and affinity in the world.

3.1. The Self Between The Sense of Belonging and The Myths of Nationalism

The novel's concern with issues such as colonial stigma and the question of

national identity reveals the sense of consolidation, which depicts what Fredric Jameson labels, third- world literatures, that is to “[draw] upon the many different indigenous local and hybrid processes of self-determination to defy, erode and sometimes supplant the prodigious power of imperial cultural knowledge” (Aschroft, et al 1). Fredric Jameson thinks that all the writings originated in the former colonies bear the particularity of being national emblems. This view is apparent in the first statements that chronicle the return of native experience from the West. This return allows the character to amend the apprehension between Western standards and Eastern ones:

For seven years I had longed for [my people], had dreamed of them, and it was an extraordinary moment when I at last found myself standing amongst them. They rejoiced at having me back and made a great fuss, and it was not long before I felt as though a piece of ice were melting inside of me, as though I were some frozen substance on which the sun had shone—that life warmth of the tribe which I had lost for a time in a land ‘whose fishes die of the cold. (1)

The narrator’s migration to the north does not only broaden his intellectual competencies, but also educated and introduced him to the culture of the former coloniser. Furthermore, through this northern sojourn he was afforded the opportunity to revise his beliefs about Europeans and to adjust his relationship with his people. From this preamble, it is made evident that the narrator holds no political or religious ideologies towards Europe, and that his northern experience has not “shaken his singular and well-rooted sense of identity” (Geesey 130). He lived among Europeans without loving them or hating them. For seven years he was occupied with one thing, to return back to his small village and embrace his people.

The narrator accomplishes the role of a mediator between his own culture and the

European one. All over the novel, he remains neutral. He never made value judgments or criticises the West as most of his fellow citizens. Furthermore, he insists that the Western culture is like any other culture in the world. It has advantages and disadvantages at the same time and Europeans are, after all, human beings who do not differ that much from the rest of the human kind. They are “with minor differences, exactly like his people marrying and bringing their children in accordance with principles and traditions, that they have good morals and are in general good people” (3). Thus, he did not feel at home in England simply because he wanted to live where he belongs:

I looked through the window at the palm tree standing in the courtyard of our house and I knew that all was still with life. I looked at its strong straight trunk, at its roots that strike down into the ground, at the green branches hanging down into the ground, at the green branches hanging down loosely over its top, and I experienced a feeling of assurance, I felt not like a storm-swept feather but like that palm tree, a being with background, with roots, with a purpose. (2)

In this novel, Salih bears national discourse as an inventive composite. The sense of belonging that kept dwelling the novel’s narrator all along his sojourn abroad or the myths of nationalism, which demolished Mustapha Sa’eed’s life are ungenueine constructs aimed to liberate the self from the strains of the dominion past and the cruelty of the distorted national existence. The narrator’s nationalism “has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which [...] it came into being” (Anderson 12). From the second day of his return, the narrator starts reconsidering the myth of the Sudan’s affability. He begins revising his yearning feelings and romanticized vision of his home village and people. The village that he used to dream

of is no longer there. Rather, a new deformed existence has taken place. In the new village, “pumps” are used in place “of water-wheels, iron ploughs instead of wooden ones,” and “whisky and beer” became the favourite draft of the villagers “instead of arak and millet wine” (100). He observed that his village changed into a place of contradictions and misplayed its quality and eccentricity:

From my position under the tree I saw the village slowly undergo a change: the water-wheels disappeared to be replaced on the bank of the Nile by pumps, each one doing the work of a hundred water-wheels. I saw the bank retreating year after year in front of the thrusting of the water, while on another part it was the water that retreated. Sometimes strange thoughts would come to my mind. Seeing the bank contracting at one place and expanding at another, I would think that such was life: with a hand it gives, with the other it takes (5)

The narrator links the village’s changes with the coming of Mustafa Sa’eed, who represents the cultural clash between East and West including the intensity of British colonialism. Sa’eed’ has a peculiar character which draws the attention of the narrator. Mustafa Sa’eed was among the first people who came to welcome the narrator after his return from England, “a man of medium height, of around fifty or slightly older” (2). Since their first meeting, Mustafa Sa’eed’s mystery evokes the curiosity of the narrator, obviously when he showed no interest in the narrator’s stories about his northern journey:

I do not know what exactly aroused my curiosity but I remembered that the day of my arrival he was silent. Everyone had put questions to me and I to them. They had asked me about Europe [...] But Mustafa had said nothing. He had listened in silence, sometimes smiling; a smile which, I now remember was mysterious, like someone talking to himself (3- 4).

Mustafa Sa’eed can be regarded as symbol of the failure of British “enlightening”

and enslaving mission. After seducing and killing the English women, he struggles very hard with the court so that it offers him death, but as a national hero not as an individual. Sa'eed considers his murder of Jean Morris as a political act, an act of revenge that he must

accomplish on the side of his people. Thus, Mustapha Sa'eed believes that as an individual, he is a "lie" on account of his participation in the political and the national endeavour to free his country and Africa as a whole. Hence, his act is an expression of the collective desire of his people. He is not offered his desire; instead the court viewed his act as individualistic extent, "a noble person whose mind was able to absorb Western civilisation but it broke his heart" (95). He emerges as a victim as his advocate utters it.

The death of Jean Morris and the seven –year confinement constitute an axis in Mustapha Sa'eed's life. His desire to return to his country after years of roaming the world is an implicit disclosure of his shift from being an individual whose acts embodies the collective will of his people, to an individual who sustains a personal crisis. After the murder of Jean Morris he recognized that he has failed in controlling her totally, as he did with Ann Hammond, Sheila Greenwood, or Isabella Seymour."He has merely played the role of the conqueror on a stage in which all his actions is essentially child's play and in the manner of make believe".(El Nagar 211). Hence, his shift from having an interpersonal struggle to a personal one is doubly appealing, since he cannot be fully accepted by his Western culture nor he identifies with his own peoples' culture, for he knows little about it. Mustapha's conceit of life, his values and the way in which he perceives the world are not the same as his people. Therefore, even as an individual he is a "lie" since he is not living his own culture, in which he asserts that he, is engaged in a national resistance.

3.2. The Dream of Home: The Process of Self-Fulfillment

Rosemary George in her book *The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth Century Fiction* argues: “the word “home” immediately connotes the private sphere of patriarchal hierarchy, gendered self-identity, shelter, comfort, nurture and protection” (1). This discussion moves away from what George calls “patriarchal hierarchy”, whereas in the African quest for identity is of necessity a rejection of the “father figure” that has been created by the colonial paradigm of the colonialists, they consider the colonised as “children” or as subhuman. But home will also mean a search for comfort, for fulfillment. It is pertinent for this discussion that we see home as what she calls “a “private” space from which the individual travels into the larger arenas of life and to which he returns at the end of the day (11).

After his release from prison his “wanderlust” took him to different places , “from Paris to Copenhagen, to Delhi, to Bangkok”(69), preventing him from having roots, from building up a home, thus having no chance to construct what he could not have as a child. Then Mustafa returned to Sudan, not as a bringer of light from England but as a pilgrim in quest of a “home” which he had denied.

Mustapha Sa’eed’s quest for his own cultural roots is a “genuine one” (El Nagar193).After he eventually realizes his cold and devastating nature; he seeks retrieval in a small village in rural Sudan. Therefore, the village in the novel appears as an asylum, a place of real Sudanese ancestry where “one can reflect on the value of life and human understanding, where one can attempt to come to peace with his life by examining it, by coming face to face with his human imperfections and accepting them”(Siddiq103). This purpose cannot take place in the seductive nature of the city where there is no room for understanding the meaning and values of life. Mustapha Sa’eed gently settles into his new sphere with a real intention to be educated and enlightened in a natural milieu where people practice their daily life affairs without

any outside agency. He found no difficulty as he mingles with the people; he buys a parcel of a land and works among them as a farmer. He marries a native woman Hosna Bint Mahmoud, and he bears two sons from his union. He also starts contributing to cooperative activities of the Agricultural Project Committee. Mustapha Sa'eed introduces new ideas in the field of agriculture. The narrator's grandfather acknowledges that Mustafa "regularly attended the mosque for Friday prayers," and that he was "always ready to give of his labour and his means in glad times and sad" (100). Thus, the economy of the village increases and its life conditions enhances. They consider him as "the man who deserves to be a minister in the government" (101) His effective contribution earns him a good reputation and respect among the villagers.

Nevertheless, the most appreciated contribution Mustapha Sa'eed offers to the village is the definite transformation he generates in the lifetime of one of the villagers, his wife Hosna. She is born and raised in the framework of an authentic Sudanese environment, where she totally grasps her ancestral beliefs and principles, like any normal villager. It was Mustapha Sa'eed who strengthens her ancestral nurture with a new different way of perceiving life. Hence, everyone in the village notice that Hosna is now a new woman. On this light Salih wrote:

It's true that Mahmoud's daughter changed after her marriage to Mustapha Sa'eed. All women change after marriage, but she in particular underwent an indescribable change. It was as though she were another person. Even we who were her contemporaries and used to play with her in the village look at her today and see her as something new –like a city women, if you know what I mean (113).

The shift in Hosna's personality is not only approved but also greeted by her people. She obviously condemns for particular traditional practices that need to be

transformed. Hosna is conscious that change in values and principles requires time. Thus, when Wad Rayyes asks Hosna to marry him and her family accepts, she demands help from the narrator's grandfather, then his friend Mahjoub to appeal for her marriage from the narrator in order to be protected from Wad Rayyes's unfair old practices. The narrator speaks of this:

I pictured Hosna Bint Mahmoud, Mustafa Sa'eed's widow, a woman in her thirties, weeping under seventy-year-old Wad Rayyes. Her weeping would be made the subject of Was Rayyes's famous stories about his many women with which he regales the men of the village (86-87).

Mustapha Sa'eed's life in the village is considered as being a psychologically and culturally valuable experience. He shows great respect for the people and the village values, as he seeks to fulfil his yearning for cultural serenity. In Wad Hamid, Mustapha discovers the villagers' wisdom and depth concerning the real meaning of life, and it is from the narrator's grandfather and Wad Rayyes that he tries to learn more about how to undertake his psychological and cultural confusion. Thus, after Sa'eed's demise the narrator is stunned to find eight drawings for Wad Rayyes. Therefore, to the narrator Wad Rayyes embodies the negative traditional social conventions, when in fact to Mustapha Sa'eed, Wad Rayyes stands for the person who has profound cultural roots and certainly uninfected by the European culture. Yet Mustapha Sa'eed is not unconscious of the weakness in the village tradition. He chooses the narrator to protect his wife and two sons, for he has the insight required to spare his family with "the pangs of wanderlust" (98). He considers the narrator as a person who has roots, as a product of the village and an extension of his grandfather.

Even after Mustapha Sa'eed's tranquillity and peaceful life the village, he battles intense inner conflicts. By the day, he works in his land like any villager, but by night,

he removes his mask and returns to his Western life style. This secret life accompanies Mustafa Sa'eed to the village, where his private room is always closed and no one is allowed to enter it. Inside the room, which is full of English books, in an Arab-Muslim village, there is "not a single Arabic book." (137) Even the Koran is in English. The English books, the English women present through photographs and stories, the "Victorian chairs" seem to stand like a lonely England in an alien land. Although homecoming is supposed to be "a condition of reconciliation and understanding" (Dickman ix), his taking a house in an obscure village, marrying and having children could not silence the distant call "ringing in his ears" (67).

Hence, he has two different lives, and thus he changes to a person with two personalities; a happy, satisfied external personality and a disturbed hidden one that is "haunted by his murder to of Jean Morris in England" (Siddiq 101). Even his Sudanese Wife Hosna notices his continuous mention of Jean Morris in his dreams: "He kept repeating words in his sleep, like Jeena Jeeny — I don't know" (91). Hence, Mustafa Sa'eed, like many returning expatriates of his generation, could not overcome his desire for the Western civilization and chooses to combine both his native identity and the one he acquired in the West.

Besides, Mustapha Sa'eed instinctive feeling of his death induces him to trust the narrator with his wife and two sons. He chooses the narrator to be the guide and the protector to his sons and to "spare them the pangs of wanderlust". He wants them to be raised in a natural environment with strong roots among their loving people:

if they grow up imbued with the air of this village, its smells and colors and history, the faces of the inhabitants and the memories of its floods and harvestings and sowings, then my life will its true perspective as something meaningful alongside many other meanings of deeper significance...(66).

Therefore, at the flooding season, “spreading his sails”, Mustafa “voyaged off on the ocean in pursuit of a foreign mirage” (93). Thus, Rosemary George claims, never to return home where he had never arrived because all along he was engaged in the politics of movement (30). Despite his exceptional knowledge and academic achievement Mustapha is estranged and there is no place for him to fit in. His rejection to assimilate with the centre in England brings his identity into question. Additionally, upon his return to his homeland he constructs his own center through his secret room, yet he fails again and that leads him to the margins and finally to his death. Mustapha Sa’eed remains unsuccessful to prevent the “destructive and marginalising power of the dominant centre and the need for its abrogation” (Ashcroft et al 115). Neither his sexual affairs nor his academic achievement success could drown his inherited nature.

The narrative in *Season of Migration to the North* intertwines the story of Mustapha Sa’eed who belongs to a generation that took part in the period of colonialism, and the other story considers the life of the narrator who symbolizes the second generation appeared during the period of independence. Mustapha Sa’eed’s life, as discussed above, is bothered and disoriented. On the other hand, the narrator leads a well stable and balanced life. He has a profound Sudanese roots. The narrator sees no harm in human diversity and thus being acquainted with Western culture. In this scene he describes his embrace to his grandfather: “when I embrace my grandfather, I experience a sense of richness as though I am a note, a note in the heartbeats of the very universe” (73). Thus, in Europe, the narrator’s psychological relationship with his village preserved his ancestry.

Throughout the novel, we are told that the narrator acquires wisdom from his grandfather. It is this insight that makes the grandfather adapt to the hard times “despite plague and famine, wars and corruption of rules.”(132). Mustapha Sa’eed,

though his academic intellect lacks the wisdom which is potent in order to live a peaceful and harmonious life. However, the narrator starts asking existential question about the self when he comes to know Mustapha Sa'eed. "Was it likely that what had happened to Mustapha Sa'eed could have happened to me? He had said that he was a lie, so was I also a lie? I am from here—is not this reality enough?"(49) In this scene he appeared wondering for the first time wondering about his cultural existence.

In restraining these feelings of doubt the narrator restores to his homeland as a crucial factor of identity:

... over there is like here, neither better nor worse. But I am from here, just like the date palm standing in the courtyard of our house has grown in ourhouse and not in anyone else's. The fact that they came to our land, I know not why, does that mean that we should poison our present and our future? Sooner or later they will leave our country, just as many people throughout history left many countries. The railways, ships, hospitals, factories and schools will be ours and we'll speak their language without either a sense of guilt or a sense of gratitude (49-50).

The strong sense of cultural equilibrium makes the narrator refuse Mustapha Sa'eed's proposal to spare his two sons with the "pangs of travel", since he believes they would have a natural upbringing allows them to endure life challenges. Thus far, Mustapha Sa'eed's demise awakens new fears inside the narrator. He begins to doubt his primitive cultural beliefs which have for so long been based not on logic but on simplicity and ancestral tendency. Hence, the narrator now suffers from a severe personal conflict aroused basically by his confrontation with Mustapha Sa'eed:

Thus Mustapha Sa'eed has, against my will, become a part of my world, a thought in my brain, a phantom that does not want to take to

take itself off. And thus too I experience a remote feeling of fear, fear that it is just conceivable that simplicity is not everything. Mustapha Sa'eed said that my grandfather knows the secret. 'A tree grows simply and your grandfather has lived and will die simply'. Just like that. But suppose he was making fun of my simplicity?' (50)

Therefore, the narrator enters in the secret room of Mustapha Sa'eed. The place was a "mausoleum", a "prison" as the Narrator defines it, revealing the kind of man Mustafa was. He was neither fully Arab, nor African, nor English. On the first page of a notebook he had written "My Life Story". Seemingly Mustafa tried to "hold a dialogue" with time which is quite essential for self-realization (Rainwater 56).

That is to say, Mustafa attempted to

confront the stressful events in his past to understand their implications but he never went beyond the dedication: "to those who see with one eye, speak with one tongue, and see things as either black or white, either Eastern or Western" (150). These words may be considered as a letter to the next generations.

The narrator is shocked after this tragic incident, he decides, like Mustapha Sa'eed, to plunge himself into the Nile river at dawn "as naked as when [his] mother bore [him]" (166). The narrator decides to start the healing journey:

I began swimming towards the northern shore. I went on swimming and swimming till the movements of my body settled down into restful harmony with the forces of the river. I was no longer thinking as I moved forward through the water. The impact of my arms as they struck the water, the movement of my legs, the sound of my heavy breathing, the reverberation of the river and the noise of the pump pattering on the shore – these were only noises. I continued swimming and swimming, resolved to make the northern shore. That was the goal

(166-67).

It is this emphasis to attain the northern edge of the river which indicates the narrator's healing process. The river stands for the need to change and features the climax and the resolution of the identity dilemma of the narrator. He recognizes that he must choose both to be like Mustafa Sa'eed and continue his journey to the north and thus to maintain his boundless revenge, or to follow the flow of the river which pushes him to the southern bank, to his roots. The narrator is no longer in-betweeness. At the last moment he chooses to redeem himself in the water of the Nile and restore his relationship with the world: "In myths and dreams the act of crossing a river commonly represents self-transformation, and this usually takes place in the middle of the river" (Siddiq 104). Hence, the narrator chooses to live, which signifies his decision to transcend his cultural restraints and reach out to his people.

The cultural clash between the West and the East, as well as the search for a better way to assert one's local identity framed the focus of Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*. The novel suggests two different attitudes about how to manage the concerns of colonialism and how to deal with the notion of nationalism in a proper and rational way. That is either to forget about the past and compromise or to continue the journey of revenge. It has been argued that Sa'eed's historical hatred of the West and his revenge strategies were doomed to failure and have proved inadequate.

Mustapha Sa'eed's life emphasises the fact that it is impossible to live in two cultures at the same time. Thus, In order for someone to have a stable life and sustain to accept and tolerate the different other cultures, then a strong cultural roots should be developed in a certain atmosphere, and then consider cultural nationalism. In order to live a normal human life, one should completely know and live his own local culture. This way he will afford to create better chances for cultural conformity.

Conclusion

This research tried to briefly explore the field of postcolonial literature, more precisely the post colonial African literature and its transformation throughout the pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods. Moreover, this research dealt particularly with one of the most controversial subject matters tackled by the postcolonial writes which is the crisis of identity and the journey of the quest for it.

Postcolonial literature is the literature produced by the writers who came from a colonial background. They tended to write against the colonial canon and the imperial practices in their societies. Therefore, they revolted in their writings against the Western oppression and all its cultural aspects that forged their identity.

So, the crisis of identity was taken by the postcolonial writers as a central theme. To them, their national identity was just affected by the colonial experience and mixed with the Western one but was never eliminated. That is why they felt that it is a must to regain it. Due to the fact that the writers are culturally hybrid, they find themselves striving between their native identity and the Western one.

So, preserving the original identity and finding a place in the modern world after the harsh experience of colonialism was a difficult task. Thus, it was a priority for the postcolonial writers to find a way to reshape their identities and to determine themselves and their societies somewhere. Therefore, they produced a special kind of literature in which they depicted the most influencing notions to reconstruct both the identity of the individual and the society.

Along with the dilemma of identity, postcolonial literature dealt with two other colonial processes which are migration and globalization. Migration was used as an imperial process

to play with the mind of the colonized and to make him incorporate his own native traditions and norms with those of the Western world. And globalization was the imperial justification to import their culture and life style to the heart of the Eastern societies.

So, *Season of Migration to the North* explores all the elements tackled in the dissertation. Tayeb Salih dealt with the dilemma of identity and portrayed the psychological and cultural odyssey that all the colonized societies share. Through the protagonist and the unnamed narrator, he depicted the struggle of the colonized individual who roams between being alienated both in his homeland and aboard and his need to find a place to fit in.

The theme of alienation was explored at length in *Season of Migration to the North* as a serious problem. The major characters of the novel are multicultural and hybrid either directly or indirectly. They choose to adopt both cultures in order to escape from being exiled and being perceived as the inferior Other by the West. However, alienation is no more a Centre/Other matter because it became integrated in the postcolonial society. In other words, the postcolonial society got rid of the external alienation to be stuck in the shells of the internal one.

By portraying the question of identity, Salih reveals his personal experience with the quest for the selfhood. He expresses his own mind and psyche through his characters and his desire to make a link between him and his native cultures and origins. He argues that there is no point from embracing the Western civilization and from pretending the belonging to them. At the same time, he does not deny the difficult task of the cultural purification in the new world order.

The field of postcolonialism and postcolonial literature in particular was left wide open for further investigations. One way which can be fruitful in going deeper in this

field of study comparing and contrasting literatures from different postcolonial societies. This can widen the horizon of understanding the different perceptions this vague notion of identity.

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