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The Western Self and the Arab Other in
Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian*

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Degree in Literature and Civilization

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Dedication

*This work is dedicated to all the souls of the Palestinian
martyrs.*

*To my family and to my friends who shared this journey
with me.*

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ملخص

كانت العلاقة بين الغرب والشرق في حالة توتر مستمر، وبسبب الاختلاف بينهما لم يستطع أي طرف مواكبة الآخر. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، التقدم العلمي قد سمح للغرب بفرض وجوده على الشرق. حيث حاول الشرق حذف وجود هويات أخرى مما أثار مشاكل جدية على المستوى القومي والاجتماعي والفردى. هذه الأطروحة ستبحث في تعقيدات عالم ما بعد الاستعمار، كما ستوضح دور التصور النمطي في بناء الشرق. الباريسي (2019) رواية تحقق في الهوية والانتماء إلى جانب تداعيات الصدام الثقافي بين الغرب والشرق، وقد ناقشت قضايا العنصرية بإتباع خطاها من تجربة المهجر إلى التجربة الاستعمارية مما أهّلها لتكون أساس هذا العمل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التشريق – المهجر -التصور النمطي – الهوية – الاستعمار -العنصرية

Abstract

The relationship between the West and the East has been in a continuous tension. Due to the dissimilarities between them, neither the sides could cope with the other. In addition to that, the scientific progress allowed the West to impose its existence over the East. Furthermore, it attempted to omit the existence of other identities, which evoked serious problems on the national, social and individual level. This dissertation will investigate the complexities of the postcolonial world. It also will illustrate the role of stereotypes and imagery in constructing the Orient. *The Parisian* (2019) is a novel that questions identity and belonging alongside the aftermaths of the cultural clash between the West and the East. It has discussed the issues of racism by following its line from the diasporic to the colonial experience, which qualified it to be the basis of this work.

Key words: Orientalism – Diaspora – Stereotypes – Identity - Colonialism – Racism

Résumé

Les relations entre l'Occident et l'Orient ont été dans une tension continue. En raison des dissemblances entre eux, aucune des parties ne pouvait faire face à l'autre. En plus de cela, les progrès scientifiques ont permis à l'Occident d'imposer son existence à l'Orient. En outre, il a tenté d'omettre l'existence d'autres identités qui soulevaient de graves problèmes au niveau national, social et individuel. Cette thèse examinera les complexités du monde postcolonial. Il illustrera également le rôle des stéréotypes et de l'imagerie dans la construction de l'Orient. *Le Parisien* (2019) est un roman qui interroge l'identité et l'appartenance aux lendemains du choc culturel entre l'Occident et l'Orient. Il a abordé les questions du racisme en suivant sa ligne de l'expérience diasporique à l'expérience coloniale qui l'a qualifié pour être la base de ce travail

Les mots clé : Orientalisme – Diaspora – Stéréotypes – Identité – Colonialisme – Racisme

General Introduction

Throughout history, the relationship between the West and the Orient has been remarked with cultural conflicts. Starting from the Crusades up to the colonial experience, the West has regularly attempted to omit the non-Western cultures and identities. With the postcolonial phenomenon of migration, different kinds of cultures were introduced to the West. However, due to the idea of the white race supremacy, those cultures have been disparaged and treated as others.

This dissertation's interest is to discuss the impact of the clash of cultures on individuals and on nations as well. Furthermore, it questions the postcolonial concept of identity and belonging. Through examining the events, the characters and the language of the novel, this dissertation will answer some question, such as:

1. What is otherness and what is/ are its reason(s)?
2. On what basis is the West claimed as supreme?
3. What are the stereotypes that are made about non-Westerns?
4. Is cultural transmission an access to other civilization or a dismissal to one's civilization?
5. How is the self (personal/ national) linked to the others

Those questions were escorted by some presupposed hypotheses which assume that:

1. Otherness is to let someone feel his/her dissimilarity. The reason behind it may be the desire of one culture to impose its domination over the other.

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2. The West supremacy is a human made notion that aims to spread the Western domination.
3. The stereotypes about the East are that it is backward and uncivilized.
4. Cultural transmission is both beneficial and harmful.

This Academic study, first of all, aims to find a precise meaning of identity and belonging as well as to make a clear distinction between their right meaning and the one that is claimed by the world. Second, it seeks to apply some psychoanalytic studies using Freudian and Lacanian approaches as an attempt to recognize the concepts of the 'Self' and the 'Other'. It, also aims to demonstrate the struggle of the postcolonial subject to maintain its identity. Then, it will explore the features of orientation and cultural occupation through analyzing Hammad's *The Parisian* since it tells the impacts of the confrontation between the West and the East.

The research combines between the postcolonial and the psychoanalytical analyses. It relates the postcolonial reality to the psyche of the postcolonial subject. Edward Said in his works discussed the stereotypes and the prejudices that the East confronts and he revealed their role in the cultural dichotomy. However, some theorists, such as Frantz Fanon and Bhabha, went further to study the psychological aspects of this topic.

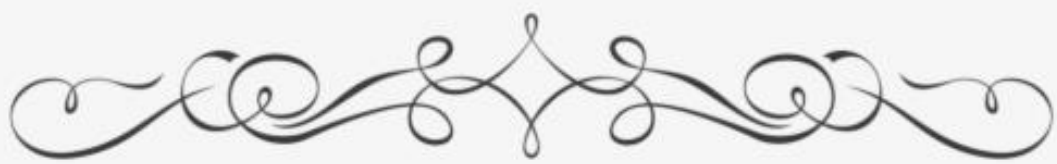
This dissertation includes three chapters. Chapter One contains a literary and theoretical background. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first is the Literature Review that will present the previous works about the topic made by researchers. The second is about the Orientalism. It will illustrate some common concepts in that field, present the most important foundations of it, and will trail the notions of the West-East dichotomy. Under the third title, which is Postcolonial Theory,

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this research will introduce the theory of Postcolonialism. The last part introduces the psychoanalytic approaches that focus on the identity analyses and development, which are required to approach the psyche of *The Parisian*.

Chapter Two consists of two sections. The first analyzes the self and the other within the character of the Parisian using the Freudian and Lacanian approaches. Through the use of the Freudian and the Lacanian method, the researcher will analyze the mindset of some of the characters too. The second section will talk about the complexity of the postcolonial world. It will discuss how the self and the other are constructed and the stereotypes that helped in this. Moreover, it will search the profound connotations of the two expressions through examining the samples from the novel.

Chapter Three has three sections that will highlight how the self (individual/collective) reacts towards the clash of cultures. The first will underscore the effect of cultural conflict on the individual's identity. It will trace the theme of self-occupation in the novel. The second part will undertake the topic of nationalism and the struggle for independence in the novel. Finally, the third section will establish the major findings of the dissertation.



CHAPTER ONE



Introduction

A literary work can be analyzed through the application of the technique of one suitable theory. This dissertation, however, adopts a multi-theoretical combination of postcolonial and psychoanalytic theories. This academic work will involve the theoretical background of such theories since it aims to analyze the historical and cultural West-East dichotomy and to cite its psychological effects on the postcolonial individual. This chapter is meant to introduce these two elements for the reader.

The chapter starts by explaining the most important concepts of the theories, i.e. the most relevant ones to the research and the novel selected. The issues resulting from discrimination are also discussed, thus, this chapter introduces Orientalism as well as postcolonialism, as the study aims to separate the two notions in analyzing the work regarding the disparity between them. Furthermore, the chapter will offer a historical overview about the terms too.

1.1. Literature Review

While tackling the theme of Diaspora and otherness, the research cannot cover the entire research question apart from some particular sections that are related to the research. This research aims to unfold the fact about the stereotypes that are common in the Western society about the non-Westerns. Furthermore, it questions the basic classification according to which communities are constructed. This dissertation, also, will thrash out how dissimilar societies managed to co-exist alongside each other with each one having a pre-existing imagery about the other.

Othering is a characteristic that is usually related to Westerners. According to this concept, the world is divided into two categories: They/Them and We/Us. For that reason, Jean- François Staszak, a French geographer whose works are concerned with relating epistemology and culture to geography depending on Postcolonialist theories, discusses how otherness is merely imaginary, and that the meaning resulting from its imagination depends on a matter of perspective. He stated that “Otherness is a result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group (“Us,” the Self) constructs one or many dominated out-groups (“Them,” Other) by stigmatizing a difference, real or imagined, presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination” (2).

According to Steven Spencer, a psychologist and a researcher about the self, the other is “an alien subjectivity, a being who exhibits characteristics notably different from our own” (8). He also claims that it is a metaphysical concept that represents “an area of consensus, a way of delineating self and the shared values of our culture or subculture” (8). Postcolonial theorists founded orientalism, which is concerned with scrutinizing the relationship between the West and the East.

Before getting into details, it is preferable to define the word ‘orient’ since it is the root from where the term “orientalism” was coined. First, *orient* is a western-based word that is used to indicate what is non- Western. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word “orient” has two meanings. One is the direction of the East or the Far East. The second definition is a verb which means to find out where you are or to be familiar with a place.

In postcolonial studies, the Orient is another side that is separate from the Western being. It is regarded as “the not Europe through which the boundaries between

Europe and what is not Europe are established as a way of locating a distinction between self and other” (Chuh and Shimakawa 7) which indicates the limitations that were set between the two.

In his turn, Edward Said, a leading pioneer in the field of postcolonial studies, had studied the relationship between the West and the East and referred to it as Orientalism. Through his book *Orientalism*, Said had launched an audacious attack on the Western essence. He states that between the West and the East (the Occident and the Orient) there exists a relationship of power, domination, and a varying level of a complex hegemony. Hence, he highlighted his disdain to the Western claim for superiority over the Orient. According to Said, the Orient is a European invention that “had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (1). Furthermore, he said that, “For the Orient idioms became frequent, and these idioms took firm hold in European discourse” (203). He also added that «beneath the idioms there was a layer of doctrine about the Orient [which] was fashioned out of the experiences of many Europeans, all of them converging upon such essential aspects of the Orient as the Oriental character, Oriental despotism, Oriental sensuality and the like” (203). He even went further to discuss the narrow mindedness of the Eurocentric that consequently, “Every European in what he could say about the Orient was [...] a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric” (204).

The East and the West are separate from each other. Beside the geographical boundaries between them, there are other differences of culture, values and beliefs that reinforce the gap between them. Samuel Huntington, a researcher in international relations, denotes that “the differences between civilizations are not real; they are basic.

Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and, most important, religion. [...] These differences are the product of centuries. They will not soon disappear.” However, there were imagined differences that were established and that formed the base of discrimination and otherness. The West has fancied, fantasized and exaggerated the Orient. The latter has been continually considered by the West as an outsider that has to subdue to the White superiority.

Frantz Fanon, a French West Indian psychoanalyst and social philosopher, distinguishes a symbolic dominance of Westerns over the others, which he asserts to be a new kind of authority that threatens the postcolonial subject. Non-Westerns were exposed to marginalization, objectification and otherness. This is what was illustrated by Fanon when he reported his feeling of shattering, as he described it, when a French boy, pointing to him, shouted out to his mother “Look a negro!” (84)

Fanon was one of the pioneers that verbalized the White ascendancy ideology. He wrote about the gap that existed between the Whites and the Blacks (non-Whites), and he trailed the aftermaths of the White supremacy. His works produced a combination between the historical experiences with Westerns and what resulted from it later from marginalization, discrimination, and alienation of the postcolonial subjects. Fanon also argued that the White colonialism effects were not only physical but also psychological ones.

In his theory of Mimicry, Homi K. Bhabha, an Indian English scholar and a literary and cultural theorist, emphasized on Fanon’s theory by putting more focus on the imitation of the colonized to the colonizer. Mimicry is, subsequently, the result of the affection of the subject to the culture of his colonizer (or former colonizer) by which the subject will develop another identity next to his own. Because of having constructed

a double identity, the subject will suffer alienation and will undergo colonization within itself. Likewise, he will construct an overview about his own culture, which, consequently, will generate self-denial.

In the vein of Fanon's postcolonial prerogative, Homi K. Bhabha, also, stressed on the effect of signs (linguistic or otherwise) on the subject and his contribution in discrimination and racism. Homi K. Bhabha assumes that signs can be an invisible and a tacit superiority of the Whites. He states that, "the very question of identification only emerges in-between disavowal and designation. It is performed in the agonistic struggle between the epistemological, visual demand for a knowledge of the Other and its representation in the act of articulation and enunciation."(Bhabha 50)

In addition to that, Bhabha demonstrated his approval of Fanon's case of the imagined other. Furthermore, he denounced considering the other as the rigid opposite. As can be quoted from him that the other is an inevitable primordial negation of the self. He, also, argued that, "the subject of desire is never simply a Myself, then the Other is never simply an *It-self*, a front of identity, truth or misrecognition." (52)

1.2. Scoping Orientalism

Orientalism investigates the way by which the Orient is being studied and represented by the West. It is the standard by which the West was categorized as the civilized, developed and superior face of the world whereas the East is the ignorant, barbaric and inferior face. Edward Said had distinguished three kinds of Orientalism by which the Western subject can study and be in contact with the Orient:

- General Orientalism, Said claims, is the base on which famous writers set their theories depending on the distinction between the Orient and the Occident.
- Academic Orientalism, according to Said, is any research that studies the Orient or its people.
- Corporate Orientalism is mostly related to the European colonization. It involves how Europe managed to rule, restrict and dominate the Orient through the reviews and notes that were made thereabout.

1.2.1. The other and the Other

The most important and relevant concepts in analyzing the inferiority and superiority between the East and the West are the concepts of the *other* and the *Other*, which have been used by psychoanalysts, orientalists, as well as postcolonial theorists.

These two concepts were used by Lacan to denote two meanings, one of the *other* and the second of the capitalized *Other*. The *other* is part of the Imaginary order. It is the reflection of the ego or the alter ego. In the mirror stage, the subject perceives his *self* as an ideal 'I', which makes its mirror image the 'other'. Its reflection can also be in the people for whom it has a visual likeness. It considers them as an extension to itself. The *Other*, on the other hand, manifests in the Symbolic order. It is dissimilar to the illusory *other*. It includes the individuals that the subject encounters during its life. This concept is associated with language and the social standards.

1.2.2. Otherness and the Natural 'Other'

In her paper entitles "Natures, Postcolonial", Professor Maureen Sioh discusses how colonialism and orientalism generated the dichotomy of the self and the other in

postcolonial era. She argues that, “The Orient exists for the West, and is constructed by, and in relation to, the West. It is a mirror image of what is inferior and alien (‘Other’) to the West” (340). She adds that the stereotypes established by Orientalism create “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and ‘the Occident’” and that this distinction shapes an “image of a typical Oriental [that] is represented as culturally and, ultimately, biologically inferior” (340).

In other words, this otherness convinces the people influenced by this Western notion that the Easterners are *a natural other*, a notion so filled with the Darwinian evolutionist idea that established this racist dichotomy as well. In this respect, Sioh adds that, “Postcolonial nature scholars have analyzed the way nature [...] was conceived as a native-dwelling ‘other’ space [...] and] as the ultimate visible symbol of the difference between European civilization and its wild ‘Other’” (340).

1.2.3. Early Orientalist Notions towards Arabs

Religion has been an effective factor in the conflict between the West and the East. Since most of its inhabitants adhere to Islam, the Arab region became a point of interest to the West. This was discussed by Samuel Huntington in his *Clash of Civilizations* where he stated that the huge spread of Islam was the factual cause of the dichotomy between the West and the East. He said that the West claim for superiority was the reason behind its conflict with other civilizations, especially with Islam and China, since they are dreadfully world-spread. He also mentioned that the survival of the West is related to the unity of Westerns to impose their culture on the non-Westerns, who form a huge threat, for being unique and to *preserve it* (their culture) from foreign distinction (Huntington 20-21).

The early notions of Orientalism aimed exclusively at the religious side. At that point, this interest with religions grew to include nations. Through organizing expeditions towards the Orient, the West had established the essence of Orientalism. Besides, their search for knowledge about the Orient shifted from the translation of Qur'an to the translation of oriental books of history, medicine and philosophy. Due to the scientific, military and industrial domination of the West in the 18th century, scholars' interest in the Orient grew larger. One of those scholars was Ignaz Goldziher, a Hungarian thinker of Jewish descent and scholar on Islamic studies, a Semitic as well as Arabs and Muslims, who argued that the 'Semitic mind' cannot generate science and philosophy. He claims that any achievement that was made by a Muslim figure is due to the western thinking, and that the ideas that were applied at the Islamic regions were only adopted and not pure-Muslim thoughts.

Through including social sciences, Max Weber, a German sociologist and political economist, could convert Orientalism from involving historical analyses of events to the social studies. Most of his works were adept to discuss the social aspects of orient dissimilarity. In his *Collected Essays in the Sociology of Religion*, he zoomed in on the historical context that gave more details about the dichotomy of the West and the Orient.

Accordingly, Weber's works enlarged the gap of misunderstanding between the West and the East. His statements against Islam were the fuel for the West-East dichotomy. Alongside his dualist theory of the 'inner worldly asceticism' versus 'the otherworldly asceticism', Weber accused Islam for being the reason behind the failure of the capitalistic system in the Middle East.

1.2. Postcolonial Theory

After colonization, there was found a wave of multiple changes in the lifestyle of the colonial subject. Due to the economic, political and sociological effects of colonization, literature had to adopt a new theory that can cover the up to date mainstream of events. Subsequently, it generated the postcolonial theory that detected the conditions which individuals were subject to during and after colonization.

Postcolonial era has undergone several upshots of the colonial experience which forms the major themes in the literary works. One of the pioneers of this field of thinking is Edward Said who set his theory of *Orientalism* that spotted the cultural conflict of the West and the East alongside the stereotyping of the Orient. Furthermore, Frantz Fanon dropped the *Decolonization* theory in which he disapproved of the corollary of the colonizer's language on the psyche of the colonized. Bhabha's theory of *Mimicry*, also, is a debatable thrust. He argues that the colonized is, in a way or another, influenced by the colonizer's culture.

Postcolonial theory has developed some concepts that are related to this era and to the novel as well. Since the events of *The Parisian* are set in the period of colonialization, it is required that the researcher defines some postcolonial concepts that are related to the novel, as the ones defined below:

1.3.1. Colonialism vs. Nationalism

Both terms are related to postcolonial studies. Colonialism means the state of getting or being under the control of somebody. It refers to the expansion of the Western powers to the East in the late four centuries. Colonialism includes the domination and destruction of the identity of the colonized subject. Edward Said has defined it as "the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (8). It is basically linked

to the term *Imperialism*; that Colonialism means the theory whereas Imperialism is its practice. Nationalism, on the other hand, is the assemblage of people under the control of the same government. Orientalists, such as Ernest Renan, said that the term nation is not ‘natural’ being and that it is “something fairly new in history. Antiquity was unfamiliar with [it].” (qtd. in Bhabha 9). Nationalism is the state of being loyal and devoted to the nation and the demand for an independent nation.

1.3.2. Ambivalence vs. Hybridity

Both terms are related to psychoanalytic as well as postcolonial studies. Ambivalence is a psychoanalysis term that indicates the state of having a mixture of opposite opinions about something or somebody. It implies the attraction towards and the repulsion from a certain object or person. This concept is an aspect of colonial discourse. It was tackled by Bhabha when he described the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer. For him, the colonial subject can be categorized into ‘complicit’ and ‘resistant’ which describes how the colonized and the colonizer see each other foreign yet exotic *other*.

Hybridity, on the other hand, is a part of the colonial discourse of racism. It is the mixture of cultures that is formed due to colonization. It is the ‘in between’ culture that is a combination of the colonial and the pre-colonial subject’s identity and the identity inscribed through colonialization. Hybridity can take several forms whether linguistic, political, cultural or racial. Robert O. Young, an American naturopathic practitioner and author of alternative medicine, insists that Hybridity is capable to reverse the central system of the colonial dominance.

1.3.3. Hegemony, Essentialism and Ethnocentricity

Hegemony is the domination of one side on the other through influencing their beliefs. This term relates to *imperialism* that it has an effect on the colonized subject's culture. Gauri Viswanathan, a professor of Humanities and of English and comparative literature at Columbia university, argued that British literature aims to implant spiritual and humanistic values and cultural assumptions that bear social and racial discrimination.

On the other hand, essentialism is the classification of people according to the belief that they are characterized with some features that are innate in them. It is to have a consistent opinion about individuals or a group of people. The colonial discourse adopted this theory to impose the white superiority and highlight other races' inferiority.

Finally, ethnocentricity is the state of being biased to a certain group of people's culture and values that it is considered superior to other group(s). Ethnocentricity is the basic foundation of *Supremacy*. It favors the norms and values of one group over the other. Besides, it can clearly appear under the notions of anthropology, sociology or all the sciences that study the human function and its relation to the world.

1.4. Psychoanalytic Theory

This research discusses the relationship between two different parts of the world (the West and the Orient), and it is thus required that it introduces the origins of the psychoanalytic theory which analyzes the psychological impact of the colonizer on the colonized. Moreover, it is mandatory for the research to recognize the gist of the 'Self' and the 'Other' and their origins and components. The two terms are based on the theoretical studies of the psyche of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan.

Sigmund Freud, the pioneer of psychoanalytical studies, used to take up literary works with his patients as a kind of treatment. For Freud, the literary text is only a representation of the writer's dreams. He, also, generated three elements that, according to him, composed the self (the ID, Ego and Superego) and he called them the *tripartite model*. Besides, he introduced Oedipus complex that elucidates the natural attachment of the child to his mother.

The psychoanalytic theory was the point of interest of many theorists such as Jacques Lacan. When reading Lacan, it appears clearly that he was affected by the Freudian psychoanalysis. Still, the researcher must distinguish between the two psychiatrists' differences in style. In literary psychoanalysis, Freud's interest is on the author and the characters. In contrast, Lacan focuses on the reader and the text. In other words, Lacan concentrated more on the language and the relationship between the signifier and the signified rather than the psyche of the author or the characters as Freud did.

Psychoanalytic Theory studies and analyzes the mindset of individuals and gives assumptions on what may conduct their behaviors. Min Pun, an associate professor at the department of English in Nepal, defined psychoanalysis as "the study of the unconscious mind, especially offering new clues to the inner workings of the mind" (48). The aim of psychoanalysis is to solve the intricate human desires that appear through the literary works. Tucker Max, an American author and a public speaker, said that, "The point of psychoanalysis is really to understand the roots of your behavior. Understand why you are doing things you're doing – and connect your unconscious to your conscious" ("Tucker Max Quotes" Brainy Quotes.com. Brainy Media Inc, 2021). Additionally, Peck and Coyle represented psychoanalysis as "a symptom of the

author who produced it or as analogous to the relationship between the dreamer and his or her dream, as if the work is a symptomatic reproduction of the author's infantile and forbidden wishes" (188).

1.4.1. The Freudian Approach

According to Freud, three elements construct the personal psyche: the ID, Ego and Superego. Each element is an additional contribution to the creation of complex human behaviors.

ID: is a birth characteristic, and it is considered as the primary source of the human psyche. This part of the personality deals with the unconscious. It contains instinctive and primitive behaviors. For Freud, it is the pleasure principle that conducts the infant to ask for desires and needs. Subsequently, if they were not immediately met, it would cause tension in its behaviors. Therefore, the infant would form a mental image of the desired object to satisfy its need, which marks the beginning of primary process thinking.

Ego: is the element of personality that allows people to deal with reality. Freud assures that it controls the impulses of the id and helps out in expressing them in a suitable way that fits the real world. Furthermore, the ego is responsible to settle the tension provoked by the unsatisfied urges. It looks out for items from the real world that are equivalent to the imaginary image formed in the id's primary process of thinking, and it hence, initiates a secondary process.

Superego: is the final element in a developing personality. In this aspect, individuals hold to the social morals and values that they acquired from parents at the first level. It is composed of two elements:

- **The Conscious:** which is the accumulated knowledge about bad and good or right and wrong in the social rules and the punishment or prize for them.
- **The Ideal Ego:** which involves the practices and conventions of behaviors that the ego aspires to.

As soon as the subject separates from the symbiotic oneness with its mother, it undergoes a radical split in its being between the conscious and the unconscious and repressed desires. Therefore, when the ego cannot effectively manage the demands of the id and the superego, it automatically produces several reactions that are named by Freud as 'Defense Mechanisms'. These reactions are:

- **Repression:** the means whereby socially unacceptable wishes and desires manifested by the id are held in check by the ego (Pun 48)
- **Denial:** the subject's refusal to accept reality.
- **Reaction formation:** when the subject expresses an impulse by its reverse.
- **Regression:** the subject's lapses to earlier stages (mostly for children).
- **Rationalization:** when the subject deals with an emotion intellectually to avoid the disturbance.
- **Identification:** when the subject develops behaviors from someone else.
- **Displacement:** satisfying an impulse with an alternate object.
- **Projection:** when the subject ascribes an unconscious impulse, attitude or behavior to other people.

- **Sublimation:** re-conducting an impulse to a socially desirable channel.

1.4.2. The Lacanian Approach

Lacan also has established a psychoanalytic approach for which he has some specified terms. His psychoanalytic approach that is derived from Freud's had renowned him as the 'French Freud'. However, his theory was marked with slight differences and focused more on the inveterate question of the nature and structure of the human self in relation to society. He assumes that in the process of the development of the psyche, there are two stages:

Imaginary Stage: which is the stage where the infant has no sense of the self. In this stage, it cannot make a distinction between the subject and the object. It, likely, establishes an ideal relationship with its mother.

The Mirror Stage: This is the stage when the child is able to distinguish its self in the mirror as 'I'. In addition, it would differentiate between the subject and the object, which sets the first step in constructing the ego. In this stage, the child misrecognizes its mirror image as the whole self, which generates narcissistic fantasies in the subject. Then, it constructs an 'ideal ego' by which it will compensate the lack and loss of the separation from its mother. In other words, the mirror stage is "a formative beginning of a thinking subject although it is a part of the imaginary". (Murfin & Ray 316)

Furthermore, Lacan has coined some terms of his own in psychoanalysis, such as:

The Imaginary Order: This is the early narcissism of the individuals. It is when the subject shifts from the primal needs to what Lacan calls the 'demand'. Though

the needs can be met, the demand is unsatisfiable because it defines the child's desire to annex the other (mother) to itself, which is impossible. Subsequently, it will continue to exist as a reminder of loss and destitution.

The Symbolic Order: it is when the child starts to use language to refer to his desires. Moreover, it is when the child is exposed to socialization. In this stage, it confronts with the other people and is conditioned with the social rules. For Lacan, it is the father who provokes this by ceasing the illusionary connections with the mother that the child had established.

The Real Order: It is the state of nature when there is nothing for the child but its needs. At this level, the child has no connection yet with the language, nor does he have any sense of self-separation from the external world or the others. Therefore, Lacan has named this state as the time of "fullness" or "completeness" that recedes by the acquisition of language. Nevertheless, the *Real* is present in adults' lives that they usually perceive as trauma, which contradicts their reality.

Additionally, Lacan also coined the concept of the *other*. However, he distinguished two types of other, one that is with small 'o' and another one with a capitalized 'O'.

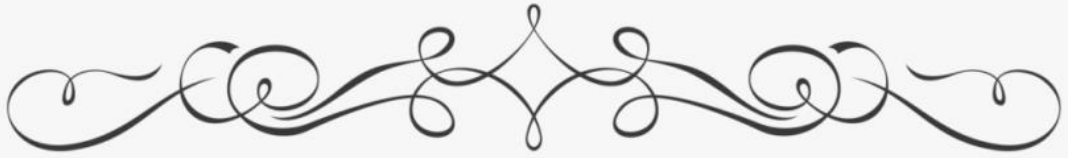
- **The Differences and Similarities between Freudian and Lacanian Approaches:**

It can be deduced that both approaches do psychoanalyses by putting more focus on the unconscious which they consider to be the mental process that influences the daily life of individuals. However, even though they seem similar, there are remarkable disparities in their application or criticism. First, the Freudian approach deals only with the human

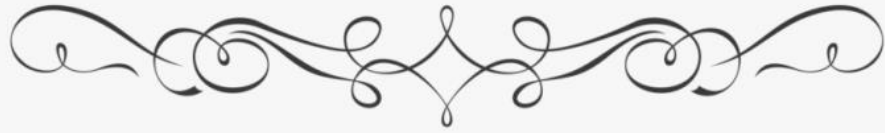
mind whereas the Lacanian approach is interested in the inner workings of the language. Second, Freud focuses on the individual psyche while Lacan emphasizes the social one. Finally, Freud scrutinizes the author and the characters whereas Lacan's interest is for the text and the reader.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, it can be said that the postcolonial theory is used to explore the result of colonialism through analyzing the postcolonial world regime. Mainly, Colonialism did not end by taking independence and its remnants are extended to the present. Therefore, the postcolonial theory has established some concepts that characterized this era. Orientalism is a term that is concerned with the Western discrimination to the Orient. It studies the relationship between the two in an attempt to solve the issues of racism towards the Orient. However, colonialism did not affect the world system only, but also the psyche of the postcolonial subject. Therefore, the Psychoanalytic theory is, in a way or another, necessary for understanding the postcolonial reality. It helps in tracing what effect has the colonial experience left on the psyche of the (ex) colonized through getting into the mind of the characters. Furthermore, demonstrates the basis of the *self* and the *other* which help also in outlining the superiority and inferiority complex that was the fuel force of this West-East dichotomy.



CHAPTER TWO



Introduction

Immigration is a postcolonial phenomenon that has evoked several issues. One of its results is that it enlarged the gap between the West and the East. Due to the poor contact with other cultures, the West has created a mistaken view about the Orient and vice versa. Therefore, this chapter will tackle the misunderstood stereotypes about each side.

The Parisian (2019) has depicted this issue through the story of Midhat who tried the life in Diaspora. Accordingly, this chapter will trace the features of this phenomenon in the novel and will try to relate this to reality. Moreover, it will trail the stereotypical images about the East and the myths that it believes in about the West in an attempt to figure out the structure of the postcolonial world.

2.1. Recognizing the Self and the Other in *The Parisian*

The postcolonial world has established a universal regime in which certain standards for civilizations are set up. Due to that regime, the West has become the dominant part of the world. Western cultural values have developed into the norm, which claimed it superior over the other non-Western part. In contrast, the East has become a spot for inferiority, discrimination and prejudice. Accordingly, that issue has become the regular discourse in some postcolonial literary works.

The Parisian (2019) is a novel that reports the plight of the postcolonial subject and describes the impact of cultural occupation on their identity. The novel depicts the diasporic experience of an Arab fellow in the early 1900s. Through the different characters in this novel, Isabella Hammed divulges how dissimilarity is considered as a

hint for discrimination and otherness. Before clarifying the details, the research will discuss the psychoanalyses of the major characters of the novel in order to understand their mindset.

2.1.1. A Freudian Scrutiny of the Self in *The Parisian*

Freudian criticism can be applied on *the Parisian* through trailing the ‘Defense Mechanisms’ made by some characters. The first character that should be analyzed is the protagonist of this novel – Midhat. There are several cases where his reactions can be translated into psychological issues. One of these cases was his deep-rooted anger towards his father.

Although he denied these negative emotions, after his father got married to another woman and left Nablus, Midhat developed an unseated anger towards his father. He did not accept the fact that his father had forgotten his mother very fast, and that may be seen as *Repression*. When he discovered that his father had known about Jeannette’s letter and that he did not tell him about it, he put the blame on him for whatever things that happened after that. It was clarified that, “No explanation, however convincing, could entirely close the wound that, unvisited, remained untended and lay as one of several open sores at the back of his mind” (Hammad 448).

The gap in the father-son relationship was enlarged when Midhat was sent to France. Moreover, his experience in Diaspora could engross that friction and develop it into a Freudian Oedipus complex in him. In earlier events, it is mentioned that Midhat imagined himself being married to his stepmother which, in a way or another, gives hint to the Oedipus complex. Mainly, the Hellenistic myth of king Oedipus was employed by Freud to highlight the child’s tense relation to his father. The myth speaks about

Oedipus who killed his father in order to marry his mother unaware of the social taboo he had broken. It is mentioned in the novel that Midhat dreamt of being married to Leila though, even she is not his biological mother, she is his stepmother and it is prohibited by the social and the religious law that he desires that. Therefore, it is remarkable that Midhat's reaction can be translated as a kind of craving victory over his father.

Freudian criticism is symbolized in other forms in the novel. *Denial* is a defense mechanism that expresses itself through Midhat's refusal to accept reality. Despite the fact that he was awoken to his otherness in the Molineus, he kept believing himself to be European and he maintained his love for being referred to as the Parisian. He neglected that he was an Arab and wanted to be, or at least to look like French. He sought to escape the fact that he was humiliated for being an Arab through the pretended French identity. "Midhat would smoke one of Adel's cigarillos, his double-lined robe de chambre flowing open, around his neck one of the printed scarves he had imported from France heavily scented with his farina Gegenüber cologne." (Hammad 419)

Moreover, his refusal to admit that he was discriminated in that way was also expressed when he assumed that he had seen Mr. Molineu in Nablus. Despite his broken self, Midhat felt glad when he imagined that Mr. Molineu came in search for him. After what he had undergone in the Molineus, he still waited for an apology – as if what happened there was merely a mistake that was made unconsciously. Thus, his ego was blocked from understanding that the people about whom he was weaving dreams did not perceive him as a human being.

As a final reading through the Freudian criticism, it should be mentioned that when Midhat had that experience of discrimination in the Molineus, he abandoned his

studies in medicine to take up with history. This reaction can be taken in as the Freudian term of *Regression*. Medicine, with its developments and inventions, may refer to the future whereas history, in itself, is the study of the past. This, obliquely, suggests the time lapses that individuals could have backward earlier events as a defense mechanism.

Mainly, *Regression* enables the individual to cope with distressful events through reverting himself towards earlier secured stages. Therefore, it may be assumed that Midhat had chosen to study History because he wanted to travel back in time, to the time when the Muslim Civilization was in its climax of the golden ages. This can also be taken as a kind of consolation for Midhat when he restores that his culture was once far progressed than the one that had excluded him, especially that the novel brought back the achievements of the Muslim through referring to the Muslim scientists such as Ibn-Sienna and Ibn- Rushd.

2.1.2. A Lacanian Scrutiny of the Self in *The Parisian*

The Lacanian term of the *other* expresses itself clearly in the novel. Since *The Parisian* reports a diasporic experience, it articulates how one culture is made inferior when encountering another one. In this sense, the novel depicted how the Arab-Muslim culture is prejudged to be substandard by the West. According to Lacan, *other* is always a subject of comparison to the *self*. Furthermore, he stated that the first contact with the *other* is at the symbolic stage when the individual subject is acquainted with the social rules and acquires the language.

Therefore, it is preferable to remark that language is a basic component of identity, and any differences between the individual's language and that one of the people around him is presumed as a limitation to his identity. In the novel, the Molineus

and their milieu did not accept Midhat and treated him with otherness because of his foreign language. In addition, Mr. Molineu had combined in his treatise between philology and anthropology in order to support his theory regarding the linkage of language to identity. He considered Midhat's Arabic language as a reflection of his unrefined cultural background. In his conversation with Mr. Nolin, Frederic Molineu bounded language to the progress of civilizations. He claimed that the Islamic civilization was a deviation from the onward progression. Therefore, he was eager to let Midhat know about their civilization and to get information about him. Moreover, it was the same for Sylvain who kept insulting Midhat through his racist statements about the Arabs and who did not miss any chance to introduce him to their Western *superior culture*.

According to Mr. Molineu, Midhat's dissimilarity was a deviation that should be recuperated through acquiring the French culture, especially the French language. His assumptions were established according to German Oriental scholarships which believed that meanings of words could be acquired alongside the word itself. In other words, Mr. Molineu believed that language is the basic component according to which identity is constructed. Moreover, he considered that philology was the life of words that "led the one back to the life of humans with fresh paradigms" (Hammad 95). Therefore, he assumed that when he allowed Midhat to the French language, he, surely, allowed him to be civilized too.

The notion of the *other* can also be traced in the second part of the novel where the events are set in Nablus. Père Antoine, being a scholarly French priest, did studies about Nablus that were driven by the curiosity to discover and to know the *other*. He accumulated too much information about the social life in that region through the notes

that he had summed from his chats with people. Accordingly, the British authorities asked his help to set control over people and to maintain order in that city. They claimed that the Arabs were barbaric and unruly. They said “on the Jewish side we all know who’s who. The Arabs are a bit different” (Hammad 324) and therefore, they needed him as a spy.

For Antoine, this *other* was separate from the great movement of the world because he was convinced that Palestinians had different beliefs that he presumed as ignorance. His familiarity with what was being said about the Orient back home in France blocked him from attempting to unfold the truth about that place. However, this view about the *other* was reversed when he saw the fortitude of those people and their consciousness to the fact that they needed freedom from the colonial authorities, and how they stood hand in hand to overcome this crisis.

2.2. Hammad’s Portrayal of the Imagined Communities

For certain aims of hegemony, the postcolonial world has established imagined notions about the West and the East and put rather imagined boundaries between them. According to those imageries, The East was convicted to be the subject of the West. As Sara Ahmed, a British- Australian scholar who is interested in postcolonialism and critical race theory, said, “the making of the “Orient” is an exercise of power: as the Orient is made oriental as a submission to the authority of the Occident” (114). Due to this situation, the two sides were put in the opposition of each other, that all that is ‘ideal’ was related to the West whereas the opposite worked for the East. In other words, the West “gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self” (Said 3). Subsequently, the West-East

cultural antagonism has developed a postcolonial concept of the *other* that shrank only on what is non-Western.

Typically, otherness is the process of neglecting or marginalizing other people that are different. Due to the scientific progress that it achieved alongside its dichotomy with the East, the West is categorized as the superior ‘Self’ whereas the East is the inferior ‘Other’. This otherness is the outcome of the stigmatized differences that were built through emphasizing the exoticism of the West and setting stereotypes about the East. Exoticism is a veiled type of otherness in which the subject under discrimination is convinced of the exceptionality of the Western culture and he is introduced to its *privileges*. In other words, he is either appalled by his otherness or stunned by their culture’s uniqueness.

As colonialism and orientalism are two different sides of the same coin, they both have deconstructive effects on the postcolonial subjects. Like other postcolonial works, *The Parisian* demonstrates the disapproval of the postcolonial situations through bringing up the features of racism and discrimination. By this novel, Isabella Hammad approaches the dimensions of the cultural conflict between the West and the East by illustrating the theme of otherness. The novel also embroils the features of prejudice and stereotyping and entails their results on identity, culture and society.

2.2.1. Hammad’s Portrayal of the Ideal Expectations

While discussing the theme of otherness, the novel also sheds light on the archetypes by which the West is identified. Due to some European studies the West believes that it is superior to other races. The scientific progressing movement of the West is a supporter to these beliefs. Mainly, some concepts such as freedom,

civilization, Utopia and supremacy have been limited exclusively to the West. Furthermore, these assessments were believed by Eastern elements to the extent that they started to flee their homelands in search of these archetypes. One specimen is Midhat Kamal who was haunted by his admiration to be French.

Midhat was occupied by the French milieu and culture from the right beginning. He was impressed by how dissimilar that place was. He was fascinated by the freedom he could get there and by the knowledge he could accumulate. "He loved this country; he loved her lines of rationalism, the sciences that put a veil on the unknowable" (Hammad 179). For him, to be far from Nablus meant to be out of any rule whether it was his father's or the society's.

There were things to look forward in Nablus: his cousins, his grandmother, the family at the diwan. But there would also be boredom, and deference to views not his own. The hours on the ship were therefore a time to meditate on the notion of duty, and on his place in that constellation of purpose and tradition which had for the last five years in France been suspended, when with a freedom born of a strangeness he had bypassed the laws of family and dallied in the alleyways of chance and rapture. (Hammad 204)

Like the typical state of immigrants, he had idealistic dreams about the West. Alongside the doors that would be open for him because of studying medicine, he also had weaved dreams such as marrying a French girl whom he loved and he even dreamt of being a European. He liked how he was valued by the Molineus and that he was asked to express his ideas unlike the restrictions that he had when he was in Nablus. He disdained the fact that his actions should be accompanied by paternal, social or even religious prohibitions.

However, at the end he discovered that all this turned out to be an illusion he was going after. None of his dreams of the future came to be true. Even the interest that he received from Mr. Molineu was, in fact, a part of the inquiry on his subject under study which was him – Midhat the ‘Oriental’. Accordingly, it evoked confusion and shutter in him was the reason why he wanted to be ruptured from reality.

Midhat experienced life with its pleasure, joy, and love and he underwent the loss as well. When he encountered the bad side of France, he only realized that there is no ideal about a certain place. In his last conversation with Père Antoine, he admitted that his desire to be French “was a kind of fantasy of virtue [to which Père Antoine responded that] a place cannot be virtuous. An idea may be virtuous. Not a place” (589). This statement can be taken as evidence that Hammad used for the sake of challenging the Western claims for exceptionalism. It breaks the image of *the ideal community* that the postcolonial subject has constructed about the West and proves it as invalid.

2.2.2. Hammad’s Portrayal of the Orientalist Stereotypes

Stereotypes are a set of beliefs that provide expectations about some group of people, and they are usually negative. The world was occupied by the concept of the West idealism; it has been a hard task for the East to vindicate itself from the stereotypical imagery the West has constructed about it. In his turn, The American philosopher Lewis Gordon advocates that, “White people are universal, and Black people are not” (Gordon 34). According to such statements of supremacy, non-Westerns were subjugated to objectification.

It was remarkable, from the treatment it had that the Orient was presumed as a place for experiments rather than as a human beings’ location. The cases of the Western

intervention in the East – colonialism and orientalism – demonstrated explicitly the position of the West from the East existence. It highlighted the Western beliefs in the White race supremacy and marked further the Western wishes to omit the East through aiming its identity. Regarding that, Sara Ahmed says that “if to be human is to be white, then to be “not” white is to inhabit the negative: it is to be “not”. The pressure of this is another way of describing the social and existential realities about racism.” (139)

The novel trails some of the negative perceptions that the West has established about the East. Isabella Hammad – being of Palestinian origins – presents the way in which Westerns picture Arabs and stands against those claims through depicting the life of pure Arab-Muslim people. Moreover, through the events of the novel, she implicitly denounces the essentialist opinions that relate to discrimination and prejudice.

In an illustration of Foucault’s work, Said referred to the idea of exteriority. He utilized it to argue that the West was objectifying the East through fantasizing it. He said that the West was only concerned in depicting the East without paying any attention whether those pictures were authentic or not. Therefore, Isabella Hammad had set the events of the novel in two different atmospheres in an attempt to reveal the truth about these stereotypes.

Without any entanglement with the Arab- Muslim culture, Mr. Molineu wanted to discover the East only through the experiment that he did on Midhat. This provides that his studies did not search for discovering the truth about the orient, but they rather sought what may support the assumptions that he had already got about it. Said declared that “the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that

a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter” (Said 7)

The study that Mr. Molineu did on Midhat was an insulting event for him. While he was dreaming of marrying Jeannette, Midhat discovered that he was being studied by his supposed-to-be father-in-law because he wanted ‘to humanize him’, as he told him. This statement made by Mr. Molineu indicates that he did not see him as human at all because he was dissimilar and not French. Even the file in which he saved his studies was noted by “the Effect of a New Language Learnt by a Primitive Brain” (142). This note also holds the notions of essentialism and prejudices that imagined the East as backward and uncivilized which were too the pretexts that the colonial forces gave for clearing their picture.

The West claimed itself as the founder civilization and modernity and limited these concepts to itself. Therefore, it was the responsibility of Eastern elements, such as Isabella Hammad, to vindicate themselves and their nations and to invert those statements. Since they co-existed in two environments, the Western Arab writers are equivalent to express this West-East dichotomy. Lisa Majaj assumed that it can help in “creating both new spaces for their voices and new urgencies of expression, as well as the flourishing creativity of these writers” (62)

The notion of Western supremacy was illustrated in other statements and behaviors of some characters. Sylvain, for instance, told Midhat once to describe to him their way of living in Palestine which hinted to his undervalue of the background from which Midhat came. Besides, Laurent, though he was Midhat’s friend, seems to adopt such racist beliefs. In a conversation with Midhat he told him “what one must realize, what we must accommodate, as students of medicine I mean [as if studying medicine is

the only situation that can gather them under the 'We'], is that death is absolutely a part of life" (Hammad 43). Afterward, he told him "as we progress scientifically, as a race [he means the white race], we must overcome those social taboos that relegate death to a separate sphere" (43). That means that he was, in a way or another, swayed by the stereotypes and that he prejudged Midhat for the incapability to progress. Hence, he limited the scientific progress only to the white race and excluded the other races among of which there are Arabs too.

Another stereotype about the East is consistency. It denotes to stick to an opinion without using reasoning to figure out its validity. The novel spoke expansively on that matter. Mr. Molineu imagined the East to be consistent because of the common myths in Nablus that Midhat had told him about. He also found it essential that an Arab such as Midhat has consistency of character. He said, "I think he is consistent [...] yes, I would go so far as to say that is even an unfair question to ask him". (Hammad 57) however, he neglected that his unchangeable opinion about the Arabs whom he knew nothing about was a kind of consistency too. Likely, Mr. Nolin also said "I can't believe your world is so consistent with itself" (105) which means that he had already convicted Midhat and the social background from where he came as being so.

The distance between the West and the East made the Arabs to be portrayed and stereotyped in several forms. Mainly, the developed West "was foreshadowed by an imagined east that remained forever culturally static and inferior." (Spencer 124) For the West, Arabs are "a race of men that live in the manner of the Middle Ages. Before the Middle Ages, even" (Hammad 183). Or else, as Père Antoine said when he elucidated the Palestine Oriental Society position towards Arabs that "[they claim that]

the Arabs have no public opinion. They picture them as a crowd of morons ruled by their elites” (Hammad 478).

These prejudices about the East are just assumptions that are established on the count of a sample of people – they are mere essentialism. Due to how far away the East is, the West envisions it through the brought-to-home Eastern other. As it was the case with Midhat, a whole community was identified and imagined through a member of it. However, *The Parisian*, in its turn, does not only illustrate how the East is imagined, but also vindicates it from these imaginations. Furthermore, it opposes these allegations by introducing the fact about their frailty.

Between the folds of this novel, some features of modernity show themselves explicitly such as the timepieces and the telephone. This indicates that Nablus is not detached from the great movement of the world as it was depicted. Furthermore, the freedom – of expression – by which Midhat was impressed during his settlement in France, was embodied back home too. The contribution of the female element in politics - as it was the case with Sahar and Fatima Hammad– is an unequivocal evident that Hammad utilizes to hint to the civilization of the Arabs and to denounce what have been said about them.

The Arab world is perceived as a place for patriarchy and rigidness. The Arab woman is regarded as a domestic woman that does not have the right to express her ideas. Furthermore, the case of the abused Arab woman was used by the Western supremacy defenders to justify their desire in controlling the East. They used it as a testimony to the barbarity of the Arabs that *needs* to be stopped by the West civilization. Susan M. Darraj, a Palestinian American writer who is a great supporter of the feminist

movement, states that “Arab and Muslim women continue to be used as a means of justifying the ‘spreading of liberty’ doctrine across the Middle East.” (159)

However, the novel introduced a powerful role that the Palestinian woman had in the society. Unlike the stereotypical pity-worthy Arab woman, the women in the novel had a strong character. Alongside her husband, Sahar was leading the woman force in the country. She gave speeches about the right of the national independence in an attempt to annex more people to the movement. On the other hand, there was also Fatima Hammad who had reasonable and revolutionary thoughts that she used to share with her father. Although she did not have strong action such as Sahar’s, she helped the *Thuwar* through providing them with arms. Moreover, the novel focused on the female elements through highlighting the life of some women such as Um Tahir, Um Jamil and Mrs. Atwan, who gave a glance on the matriarchic set that this region could establish.

In addition to that, Hammad defended the Arab- Muslim identity by presenting the conversation about consistency of character that Midhat had with Hani Murad as another argument of the Arabs’ flexibility of thinking. Hani affirmed that he would rather prefer consistency, but at the same time, he was convinced that “we shouldn’t be dogmatic at the expense of – possibly changing our minds” (439). He, also, gave examples of some matters that he understood to be taboo and forbidden but later on, he discovered that there is no harm in them – even it might be better to have them – such as the issue of women in politics. He confessed that he thought that the women’s role started and ended behind their door. However, when he was proven wrong, he corrected himself and for that, he started to consider that flexibility in thinking might be a different kind of consistency. This shows that he did not just submit to the social rules

and that he pleaded for change when it was necessary and hence invalidates the stereotypes about the Arab men stiffness.

Moreover, the author approved of the way in which Qassam – the first nationalist who called for the *Intifada* against the moving from one colonizer (British) to the other (Israeli) – could unify people under religion and lead them to ask for their rights though he was not Palestinian in nature. The fact that Qassam is from Syria but worked at the same time for the freedom of Palestine refers back to the solidarity that exists between the Arabs and Muslims. Otherwise, why would a given person endanger himself and sacrifice for something he does not believe in.

In addition, Hammad captured the great strike in which Palestinians challenged the colonial authorities to ask for their independence. The plea for independence was the urge that compelled Père Antoine to change his view about Arabs “the strike itself, the fact that Arabs could undertake a cooperative action so far-reaching and long lasting – it was all completely remarkable and completely beyond the compass of Antoine’s understanding” (Hammad). The solidarity of Palestinians in order to free their land proved that they were not pathetic – they did not need any colonial existence to civilize them because they already had a civilization they wanted to save from extinction. It, also, quashes the colonial claims which assume that ‘Orientals’ did not use logic and were “disposed altogether to ignore” (qtd in Said 36).

Conclusion

In a sum, it is appropriate to say that the ‘Self’ and the ‘other’ are two human-made concepts that set imaginary boundaries between the West and the East. Accordingly, these concepts bare a set of differences that distinguished and favored the Western side over its Eastern opponent. As a result, the East is being subjugated to stereotyping that it was portrayed by the West as the pariah who must be treated with otherness. The stereotypes and the prejudices about the East offered the supremacy of the West and gave it the image of the *universal* and valid. Additionally, they shored up the dominance of the White race that has, consequently, become the typical around which the postcolonial subject is orientated. Lewis Gordon advocates that, “White people are universal, and Black people are not” (Gordon 34). According to such statements of supremacy, non-Westerns were excluded from being human and were put into the line of objects – they were objectified, and that what was remarkable about the cases of the Western intervention in the East – colonialism and orientation. Regarding that, Sara Ahmed says that “if to be human is to be white, then to be “not” white is to inhabit the negative: it is to be “not”. The pressure of this is another way of describing the social and existential realities about racism.” (139)

Just
ONE MORE
chapter



Introduction

The Western existence has several effects on the Arab *self*. However, each self has its own response to this factor. In other words, this can result in different reactions. This chapter focuses on the consequences that the clash of civilizations may have on the Orient, including psychological and cultural consequences.

As a way of expressing power, the West has the East as field for experiments. As a result to that, the self can develop alienation when it is defeated by the Western mental occupation. This alienation happens through so many stages through which the self relapses. Alternatively, the self can, as a national reaction towards the Western antagonism, generate a resistance and a will to fight for maintaining its existence.

3.1. The Clash of Civilizations in *The Parisian*

The West and the East are continuously in conflict with each other because of the dissimilar nature of their foundations. Due to the cultural supremacy that was assumed by the West, many westerners claimed responsibility of spreading its cultural values in the East. Hence, the West tried to knock the Eastern character down. The West has attempted to impose its identity and to omit the colonized's own through colonizing them.

In *Black Skins, White Masks*, Fanon has demonstrated the effect of colonialism and White racialism on the psyche of the colonized. He argued that because of the power that is imposed on the colonized, he might suffer from self-division. As it was illustrated in the previous chapter, the East is being stereotyped by the West as an

exercise of power. Therefore, it is believed that these stereotypes may have psychological influences on the postcolonial subject.

3.1.1. Cultural Occupation in *The Parisian*

Language expresses the first contact of the individual with the world. Franz Fanon argued that it is not only a means of expression but also, it constructs the essence of one's identity. In her process of illustrating the mental effects of discrimination, Isabella Hammad sheds light on the role of language in the colonization of the mind. Moreover, the novel pictured how the detachment from language is the early stage of losing identity.

In France, Midhat was being marginalized because of his poor French language. As for Fanon, the acquisition of a language has the meaning of participating in a given world, but in Midhat's case, he could not play a part in that world. Whenever the Molineus and their community derided his mother language, he, eventually, felt that his language is not sufficient anymore to express himself clearly. Subsequently, he decided to divest himself of Arabic language and he got eager to adopt French to the extent that even "thoughts bloomed in French in his mind" (Hammad 46). This statement indicates that Midhat had already been separated from his ties with his language – and then, with his identity.

Midhat's eagerness to acquire the French language stepped further to the extent that he started to desire the French character. When he turned back home, Midhat was not the same person who left it years ago. He had acquired another identity alongside his own which did not change only his lifestyle, but also his perception of the world. In

other words, he lost his belonging to that place and it felt like he was of them but at the same time he was his own.

According to Bhabha's mimicry theory, the colonized has ambivalence towards his colonizer. He disapproves of his deeds, but at the same time he is impressed by him. This was the case with Midhat Kamal whose fascination with the French culture made him spend efforts to look like a foreigner. Though he was offended by his experience in France, still, he desired to be from it. He was fond of the imitation of the European lifestyle just for the sake of being called *El-Barisi* or *The Parisian*. He was interested in this to the extent that he was not bothered by the actualities in his nation, and all that made him anxious was his after-death charade by which he would be memorized as The Parisian.

This imitation expressed a weakness and in Midhat's character that came as a result of his being exposed to otherness. The moment when Mr. Molineu told him that he wanted to *humanize* him, it has the same influence on the reader as Fanon's experience with the child that shattered his self-image. First, this experience made Midhat subdue to his otherness. Then, he became convinced that he was inferior which was symbolized in his affection for reading Western Oriental verses which «pinned him and his ancestors into effigies of themselves» (Hammad 179).

Furthermore, the desire to be a European was a psychological aftermath that Midhat suffered after he was confronted with his otherness. He constituted a self-hatred toward himself and the society he lived in and, thus, his sense of his own identity was fractured. As Fanon illustrated, self-hatred is a “characteristic of racial conflicts in segregated societies.” (Fanon 310) Moreover, the fact that he could not belong to the Western society made him, subsequently, locked into an inner world as a kind of

escaping his *shame* of being an Arab. According to Fanon, “this self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation” (Fanon 17).

As Midhat thought that he knew everything about France, he turned to know nothing but delusions, which caused him a trauma. In *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed discussed that issue when she said that loss evokes *moments of existential crisis*. She stated that, “we expect to find ‘it’ there, as an expectation that directs an action, and if “it” is not there, we might even worry that we are losing our minds along with our possessions.” (Ahmed 110). In other words, if the subject’s expectations turn to be out of order, it may cause him rapture from reality. Midhat lost his expectations in realizing his dreams in France. Accordingly, when nothing came true, he got *neurosis* to relinquish his reality, and hence, the struggle for the great dream for any Palestinian at that time – the dream of independence.

3.1.2. Inferiority Complex in *The Parisian*

The colonized subject, Fanon argues, develops a weakness in his character that is inculcated because of the violence exercised on them, whether physical or verbal. By time, this weakness would grow to be an inferiority complex towards the white race in which the colored people constitute a state of subjugation to their ex-colonizer. Then, they start, as it was demonstrated, to copy their oppressors, who will subsequently lead them to find themselves alienated.

Midhat’s imitation of the Western lifestyle blinded his eyes to the extent that he was being “locked in an old colonial formula where subjects imitated masters as if in the seams of their old garments they hoped to find some dust of power left trapped” (Hammad 543). His experience with the Molineus, eventually, enslaved him under the

notions of freedom and civilization, which is also the case of the postcolonial world. This cultural affection has implicitly paved the way towards colonialism. According to Edward Said, “imperial domination can be applied mechanically and deterministically to such complex matters as culture and ideas” (Said 12).

The Algerian thinker, Malek Bennabi, also tackled the themes of identity and its fate under the colonial and the postcolonial conditions. He said that the inferiority of the former colonized might jeopardize the survival of its identity through the destruction of its cultural foundations. He also referred to the transfer of the colonial statue *I am better than you* to the postcolonial statue *My culture, my language, my identity are better than yours*. Thus, the world would have been moved from a racial supremacy to cultural one.

3.2. Nationalism vs. Colonialism in *The Parisian*

Alongside otherness and orientation, *The Parisian* approaches the theme of nationalism and belonging. Through developing a set of subversive events, Isabella Hammad could question the connotations of identity and belonging of the postcolonial society. She trailed the Palestinian anti-colonial nationalist movement that sought the nation’s independence. According to Fanon, colonialism is a violent act that can be reversed only through violence. He stated that, “at the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force, it frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self- respect (94).

Due to the circumstances that the colonized passes through, he develops a desire to violence. Furthermore, he acquires a revolutionist sense that compels him to make sacrifices for the sake of freedom. The colonial force has exposed the colonized

subjects into brutal kinds of torture. The novel brought about some of the features of colonialism in Palestine, and it illustrated how they affected the colonized.

3.2.1. Colonial Coercion in *The Parisian*

The novel was set in a period when Nablus or Palestine, in general, was passing through an occupation towards another one. Therefore, the author did not hesitate to report some features of oppression that were practiced on the natives because of their refusal to the control over them. The British authorities were “flogging student protesters on their bare buttocks in a line outside the mayor’s office. Peasant women being searched for arms on the road side and lewdly gestured at. A house demolished, the family holding their belongings beside the soldiers on the hillock, forced to watch as their home exploded” (Hammad 539).

The act of violence did not affect only those ones who were exposed to it, but also those who witnessed the results. Ghada Kamal, though she was still a little child, she suffered from the events that were going around too. Her love for funerals was unusual. While children at her age should normally sneak to play outside with their friends, she was sneaking to follow funerals of the Palestinians who died during colonial attacks. This is another way in which Isabella Hammad could report the influences of colonialism on the human psyche.

Furthermore, the Nebi Musa Riot in Jerusalem is the main turning event in the novel. It was according to this occasion that Jamil and Midhat constructed their next-to-come life. Jamil saw people being killed and he was stained by their blood. This can be related to his desire to be a nationalist. It was written that “ever since first he saw death at the Nebi Musa riots sixteen years earlier, Jamil had longed to be doing” (Hammad

538). However, that happening could affect Midhat differently. Since he escaped that day, he was condemned to be escaping for his whole life from his own self. Thus, Jamil and Midhat may be taken as a representation of how the self can react to colonialism which is either by self-occupation or self-decolonization.

3.2.2. Nationalism as a Reaction to Violence in *The Parisian*

Nationalism requires at the first stage to have a nation. However, the anti-colonial nationalism is an act of overcoming the state of inferiority that was imposed on the colonized subjects. It was illustrated in *The Wretched of the Earth* that “the most elementary, most savage, and the most undifferentiated nationalism is the fervent and efficient means of defending national culture” (Fanon 242).

The novel entails some revolutionary moments which marked the path of the nationalist movement in Palestine. Jamil’s sense of responsibility towards his nationhood changed since the Nebi Musa happening. When he bore a dead Arab aloft to find himself wet with his blood, he took it for a duty to alter this atrocity in his nation. Jamil and his nationalist companions put the priority to independence even over their own selves. As Père Antoine remarked in the hospital “a dozen men sloped into the balcony. Bandaged arms, bandaged legs, plenty crutches, one man with a head wound, another apparently with a hand” (Hammad 480). However, they were not defeated instead they set chatting about the movement updates.

The act of nationalism was not restricted to a precise number of people. It included the whole nation, among whom were women and children as well. This was present in Sahar’s words when she said, “if to want a nation is a crime [...] we are all criminals”, and in her wishes that her coming child be a fighter (Hammad 517). It was

also, traced in the little Khaled's enthusiasm when he met the rebels. The Nabulsi nationalist people struggled for freedom and independence because they realized that what was taken by force could not be restored except through force. Accordingly, it is preferable to say that, "Violence is embedded in the colonial reality, violence becomes less a matter of what you do and more a part of your being. [It] is not exactly a method or a tool that can be picked or withdrawn at will when it is embedded in one's environment and in oneself as such" (Correm 27).

Fanon, also, emphasized this when he said that the condition for any nation's existence is "national liberation and the renaissance of the state" (Fanon 244). Therefore, to revolt against the colonial authorities was essential to restore freedom. Moreover, it cannot be achieved without violence; it is, as Fanon said, the cleansing force that frees the native from his inferiority complex, his self-disdain and from his motionlessness (Fanon 94). The novel stressed that the most category of people that joined up to the nationalist movement were the poor farmers since colonialism deprived them from their identity essence, which is their lands.

3.2.3. The Quest of Belonging in *The Parisian*

To be national meant to preserve the ties of belonging to a certain nation. However, what does nationalism mean for people who are about to lose their nation? By raising this issue, Isabella Hammad questioned how the colonial existence altered the standards of identity and changed the real meaning of belonging. Moreover, she argued that postcolonialism has altered the connotations of concepts such as violence. Violence is a fundamental element in the colonial regime. According to Fanon, it "will only yield when confronted with greater violence" (61).

The novel contained two parallel characters. Each of them reflected a separate belonging from his own people. Although Midhat thought that he belonged to France as much as he belonged to Palestine, he came at the end to discover his non-belonging even in his homeland, as he was from them but he was not one of them. On the other hand, there was Père Antoine who did not feel that he belonged to France. Instead, he discovered later that Jerusalem was a home despite its strangeness. Those paradoxes in their characters, as was stated in a review of the novel, highlight “the degree to which one might know a foreign culture or language and about the uses to which that knowledge might be put” (Creswell 4). In other words, this denies the way in which the nations are classified without any attachment or understanding to their constructions.

In a dialogue of some characters in the novel, it was mentioned that, “language is not the source of nationhood, that there are other things that make a person’s origin and nature” (Hammad 180) which seems to be a matter of focus by the author. This expresses Hammad’s attention to reveal how fragile are the national belongings that are based only on the racial or linguistic acquisitions of the individual. Furthermore, this relates back to the essentialist thoughts that were mentioned in chapter two of this dissertation.

In addition, the novel questioned the concept of belonging through evoking the subjects of *who are we?* In addition to *who are they?* It was stated clearly that Palestinians were uncertain about their position in their own land. They searched the deep meaning of being an Arab and a Palestinian. They, also, recalled when Christians and Jews were classified as part of the nation too whereas currently the state was reversed, and it was the nation that had to belong either to the Palestinian being or to the

Jewish one. That demonstrates, precisely, how the postcolonial connotation of *nation* was inverted.

Isabella Hammad utilized these nuances to contradict the postcolonial understanding of nationalism. The common definition of nationalism is the love of the nation and the desire of its benefits over the others and the preservation of its cultural heritage. Bhabha demonstrated that “to fight for national culture, first of all, means fighting for the liberation of the nation, the tangible matrix from which culture can grow. One cannot divorce the combat for culture from the people’s struggle for liberation” (100). However, what the author argued is that the meaning of a national belonging cannot be limited. Furthermore, she illustrated that except for a nation, individuals may have loyalties towards other sources of belonging.

As the characters in the novel were deprived from their nationhood, they were set in a struggle to maintain what relates them to their belonging. For most of the Palestinians, to belong meant to get married and to establish a family. As it was the case for Midhat – who experienced a self-perplexity. He came to discover the truth that he belonged to his family and that he had responsibilities towards them. On the other hand, there was Père Antoine who fought his essentialist thoughts about Palestine, as being divided from civilization, to admit at the end that he, in fact, belonged there. He also realized that it was one of his duties to support the nationalist movement even if he kept their plans hidden only. Jamil also with his rage and his revolutionary sense, found that as long as he belonged to Palestine his place should be definitely in the battlefields too.

3.4. Major Findings

Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian* discussed several themes amongst which there were the effects of the Western existence on the Arab other. This dissertation tackled some of these effects through the examination of orientation and colonialism. Moreover, it generated some results that can help in answering the preliminary questions of this research. These results include:

1. The West and the East are two concepts that are from the invention of the human being. They were imagined and stereotyped in order to achieve hegemonic aims. However, they developed theoretical notions that favored the West and claimed it as superior over the East. Besides, they set standards that depicted the West as the modern, civilized and ideal region whereas the East, automatically, conveyed the opposite.

2. Otherness is a way of reflecting the supremacy of the western culture. It is based on excluding a member from a certain society because he belongs to a different culture. In addition, otherness may be classified as a means of colonialism due to the influences that it has on the excluded member. The latter may suffer from an inferiority complex that makes him subdue to the Western character, which serves the same goal as colonialism.

3. The postcolonial subject may be the victim of multiculturalism. He acquires multiple cultures next to his own and he has to know how to manipulate them otherwise, he would suffer from self-division. Furthermore, when he loses the control over these cultures, he will be detached from his own culture and from his identity. Thus, he may be alienated from reality.

4. Stereotypes that were stigmatized about the East have made it a target for imagination. They allow the non-eastern people to construct essentialist views. It

will be regularly perceived as a constant entity. Thus, it prevents the outsiders to uncover the truth about it and keep it unfold.

5. The Western claims for being the source of civilization contradict their deeds. To be civilized implies the skill in solving any issue peacefully. However, the colonial regime bears the reverse of it. Due to the traumatic acts that the colonizers practiced on the colonized, they are merely classified as savages whereas the perception towards the colonized should be re-esteemed.

6. Nationalism is a natural sense that can be improved under colonialism. As a collective self, the people of the colonized nations take responsibility upon themselves to revolt against the power imposed on them. This revolution cannot have effectiveness unless it is accompanied with the act of violence. Therefore, violence with its negative connotations will serve the struggle for independence.

Conclusion

The clash of civilizations that occurred between the West and the East has set down several features that characterized the postcolonial era. Some of these features were at the level of the psyche of the postcolonial subject. Due to the cultural mixture that was imposed on the Eastern character, it developed a complicated mindset. As being lost between his native culture and the colonizer's culture, the colonized formed an inferiority complex and a self-hatred. He could not maintain his self, neither could he abandon it, therefore, he had a self-division.

Furthermore, one of the postcolonial aspects is that it perverted the sense of identity and belonging. Under the colonial occupation, the meaning of some concepts had to be changed, and such was the case for nationalism. To have nationalism there should be a nation first. However, what did nationalism mean for a people who were about to lose their nation? It was simply that they had to restore it through fighting for its independence. Thus, postcolonialism altered the connotations of concepts such as violence that according to Fanon "will only yield when confronted with greater violence" (61).

General Conclusion

Throughout history, the West has expressed its supremacy through the discrimination and oppression that it has imposed on the East. This dissertation has shed light on the condition of the relationship between them through the analyses of the characters' plights in Isabella Hammad's *The Parisian*. Some aims could be achieved, amongst which there is investigating the credibility of the postcolonial life which was embodied in the cases of exile and colonialism. These two processes were elucidated further in this research through examining the diasporic experience alongside the colonial one.

Due to the intellectual progress that it achieved, the West has consistently perceived the East as inferior. Moreover, it has compelled it to adopt the western culture assuming that it is the culture of civilization and modernity. However, Isabella Hammad, with her debut novel, challenged this postcolonial system by presenting the effect of this regime on the postcolonial subject. Through her portrayal of an Arab Palestinian characters, she could picture the East-West dichotomy and trail its aspects.

This dissertation could detect the veiled message behind the making of a historical novel. It was said, that, "sometimes the best way to represent the present is to write a historical fiction" (Creswell 9), and that is what Hammad had implied. The novel brings up the early notions of some postcolonial aspects such as racism, essentialism, nationhood and alienation.

The novel, as it was demonstrated in this dissertation, points to the discrimination that was applied on the East. It distinguishes two types of racism that the postcolonial subject had undergone. Although they were different in the way they were

exercised, both the colonial and orientalist kinds of racism aimed to overthrow the non-Western cultures. They deprived individuals from their identities and excluded them from humanity to which the physical and psychological abuses were a witness.

With postcolonialism, the significance of identity had shifted by the intervention of the West into identification which is “structured around a fixed ‘selves’ [the West] which we either are or are not” (Hall 444). The Western culture sought the expansion at the expense of the Eastern one. Therefore, it stereotyped the East and made it seem imaginary while it fascinated other communities through its claimed idealism. The West was seen as the scope of attraction due to its being depicted as scientifically and culturally progressed. On the other hand, the East was labeled as the barbaric consistent spot and, thus, detached from civilization.

Furthermore, the dissertation trailed the influences of the Western existence on the psyche of the postcolonial subject. The example of Midhat’s reaction to otherness helped in explaining the effect of social exclusion on the character of postcolonial fellows. It illustrated how imitation could endanger the identity and threaten the survival of the non-Western culture. In addition, one of the definitions given to postcolonialism is that it is “a condition requiring a cure, and the passage to that cure involves a return to buried memories of colonial trauma” (Nair xi). Therefore, this research showed how colonialism estranged individuals from their instinct regarding the traumatic life they had.

In the end, this dissertation referred to the misunderstandings about the connotation of *belonging*. It clarified that identities are not formed only on the basis of language but they are made of a set of components. It also underlined the need for violence to maintain the national identity. Due to the colonial oppression that they

passed through, natives had to revolt against their situation. Thus, they transformed violence to a conducting power that fueled them in their battle for independence.

As a conclusion, postcolonialism brought about a complexity that impeded the understanding of identity and belonging. Therefore, this work has attempted to bring together the postcolonial and the orientalist theories alongside the psychological theory to approach the theme of the clash of cultures in the novel. It has taken the example of the Palestinian case to indicate to the kinds of oppression that the non-Westerners – especially Muslim Arabs – endure. Since Palestine is still under occupation, this research was meant to reveal that, in this postcolonial world, discrimination and oppression towards the East remain escapable facts as long as the truth about them is still being forged.

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ملخص: كانت العلاقة بين الغرب والشرق في حالة توتر مستمر، وبسبب الاختلاف بينهما لم يستطع أي طرف مواكبة الآخر. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، التقدم العلمي قد سمح للغرب بفرض وجوده على الشرق. حيث حاول الشرق حذف وجود هويات أخرى مما أثار مشاكل جدية على المستوى القومي والاجتماعي والفردية. هذه الأطروحة ستبحث في تعقيدات عالم ما بعد الاستعمار، كما ستوضح دور التصور النمطي في بناء الشرق. الباريسي (2019) رواية تحقق في الهوية والانتماء إلى جانب تداعيات الصدام الثقافي بين الغرب والشرق، وقد ناقشت قضايا العنصرية بإتباع خطاها من تجربة المهجر إلى التجربة الاستعمارية مما أهلها لتكون أساس هذا العمل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التشريق – المهجر -التصور النمطي – الهوية – الاستعمار –العنصرية

Abstract: The relationship between the West and the East has been in a continuous tension. Due to the dissimilarities between them, neither the sides could cope with the other. In addition to that, the scientific progress allowed the West to impose its existence over the East. Furthermore, it attempted to omit the existence of other identities, which evoked serious problems on the national, social and individual level. This dissertation will investigate the complexities of the postcolonial world. It also will illustrate the role of stereotypes and imagery in constructing the Orient. *The Parisian* (2019) is a novel that questions identity and belonging alongside the aftermaths of the cultural clash between the West and the East. It has discussed the issues of racism by following its line from the diasporic to the colonial experience, which qualified it to be the basis of this work.

Key words: Orientalism – Diaspora – Stereotypes – Identity - Colonialism – Racism

Résumé : Les relations entre l'Occident et l'Orient ont été dans une tension continue. En raison des dissemblances entre eux, aucune des parties ne pouvait faire face à l'autre. En plus de cela, les progrès scientifiques ont permis à l'Occident d'imposer son existence à l'Orient. En outre, il a tenté d'omettre l'existence d'autres identités qui soulevaient de graves problèmes au niveau national, social et individuel. Cette thèse examinera les complexités du monde postcolonial. Il illustrera également le rôle des stéréotypes et de l'imagerie dans la construction de l'Orient. *Le Parisien* (2019) est un roman qui interroge l'identité et l'appartenance aux lendemains du choc culturel entre l'Occident et l'Orient. Il a abordé les questions du racisme en suivant sa ligne de l'expérience diasporique à l'expérience coloniale qui l'a qualifié pour être la base de ce travail

Les mots clé : Orientalisme – Diaspora – Stéréotypes – Identité – Colonialisme – Racisme