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The Quest for Identity

Hybridity in Fadia Faqir's *The Cry of the Dove*

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Dedication

We hereby dedicate this research paper to our lovely parents for their everlasting support and patience. The best parents of all, to whom expressing love and gratitude do not need a special occasion or particular anniversaries but a whole life appreciation instead. we believe that this is the outcome of their constant sacrifices to make our life better alike to what it is today. It is also dedicated to every suppressed woman around the world who suffers both, hybrid identity and patriarchal dominance in two different locations, where none succeeds to be home.

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Abstract

Recently, Arabic Literary novels have become highly topical to researches due to their prone reflection of traditional norms and customs that control the patterns of Arab societies. Undoubtedly, male's domination over women's subjugation is probably the strongest of all. Considerably, the purpose of this study is to subvert these egregious practices and explore how Muslim women's identities stand in the middle and become torn between their authentic self and western's cultural imposition. This research paper derives its significance from the fact that questioning one's own identity is crucial. To explore one's sense of being lies in understanding his/her worth position in the world. Through deconstructing Faqir's *The Cry of the dove(2007)* and using Homi Bhabha's notion of 'Hybridity,' the study hereby brings into focus the examination of the protagonist's Identity. metamorphosis and hybridty.

Key words: Hybridity, Patriarchy, Arab Feminism, Honor killings, Diasporiazed identity, third space.

I. Introduction

Over the last few decades, the narrative of patriarchy's inherent and inalterable oppression of women has been high on the list of topics within Western discourse on Islam and women. Arab world, in the viewpoint of such discourses, is the most society in which patriarchal issues prevail. It suffers a grave crisis of awareness and backwardness due to its patriarchal system, which is a traditional cultural structure hostile to modernity and its fundamental antithesis. In the same pattern, the structure of Middle Eastern families have long been described as mere patriarchal units, and it has been noted that the misinterpretation of Islamic family laws have also served to reinforce patriarchal gender relations and women's subordinate position within the family. However, oppression faced by Arab women in general and Jordanian women in particular is due to gender discrimination and patriarchal dominance, rather than Islamic teachings.

Perhaps, In the Arab world, family is the only societal institution that is conceptualized as essential and natural, and its unit has a macro-significance in society. The anthropologist Suad Joseph contends that therein lies the crux of the issue (Joseph 15). Kinship implies underlying patriarchy and propagates it through all spheres of life. It socially shapes the individual's own identity and their role in the structure of the family and in society as a whole. The household's financial responsibility is always allotted to men and they are the ones who control the wealth of the family. Therefore, the hierarchy of the family accords the father a high authority and recognizes women as second-class members of it. Yet, at the meantime, the marginalized and the

oppressed women escape the male constructed culture that undermines their value and existence for more emancipation and gender equality abroad.

By being forced to leave their dispersed sociocultural milieus, the exiled women are subjected to a process of displacement where they experience a sense of dislocation, alienation or what Homi Bhabha calls 'unhomeliness'. They feel emotionally untied to any home or place. They feel disoriented and unwelcomed by any environment. Unhomeliness, then, indicates the fine line between two homes, cultures and milieus yet none feels home. Moreover, Bhaha argues that unhomeliness does not only touch upon space but it is also a state of mind. He states '' to be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can the 'unhomely' be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and public spheres'' (13). The Marginalized Arab Women are caught between their traumatic fragmented past and their need to forge a new life in a new unusual context. Thus, diasporic women negotiate between two spaces and cultures. However, when none of the environments succeeds to embrace them, they reside a new place in-between where these two cultural spheres are successfully intermingled to forge a hybrid identity. Layla Al Maleh encapsulates this idea in her statement, stating that "the alienating, shadowy experience of 'unhomeliness' and atrophied existence must be lived before one can become a viable hybrid'' (272).

The exile Arab women experience a sociocultural confrontation with a different environment whose elements entirely vary from their own. The newly encountered language, culture, society, and religion situates the diasporic in a challenging stance as they cannot continue to survive in a new context with their original inherent beliefs and language of their mother culture. Thus, Arab women's hybrid identities are bound to be developed under this cross-cultural background. To eliminate the ontological insecurity and the discomfort of self-identification, they forge for themselves an Identity in-between which comprises multicultural aspects. Overall, numerous Arab women have undertaken patriarchal sovereignty and consequently escaped their homes for emancipation only to face more discomfort and estrangement in the west. Their identities experience friction and an ongoing reformation and they feel unwelcomed by both cultures. However, these women's experiences have long been silenced in the Arab world and were not granted much focus.

Consequently, there emerged an abundance of documents that are driven by the feminist agenda to restore women's position in society and repel men's persecution. Many Anglophone women writers have dedicated their books and narratives to voice the 'silenced' woman in the patriarchal societies and to dispel colonialist stereotypes about ex-colonized countries by bringing women writers to the fore. Interestingly, a "significant Anglophone Arab literary revival" has been ongoing for the last decades, playing a "crucial role in disseminating through the wider world their images of hyphenated Arabs and of the Arab people" (Al Maleh x). These literary works, mainly novels and short stories, have brought more recognition and visibility to the Arab Woman whose identity is perceived by the Western readership as being different, peculiar, and complex because of her portrayal in the media and in the books of early orientalists. This kind of literature, which raises familiar issues of belonging, allegiance, and affinity, serves as a cultural mediator and projects the Arab by way of themes and types that negotiate between different cultures.

Accordingly, Fadia Faqir is one of the most successful pioneers among these authors, whose writings are pure Anglophone samples that aspire to transmit aspects of Middle Eastern culture and identity of Arab women to a wider audience, particularly Anglophone readers. It is said of her works to be a "constant attempt to diagnose and understand the problems and issues she had left behind in her country of origin" (Al Maleh 18). While Faqir's earlier novels lay a specific emphasis on the Middle East, her third novel, The Cry of the Dove, offers a dual vision of an Arab Bedouin woman's journey trying to attain her hybrid identity by fighting the patriarchal practices and the oppressions of the Arab and European worlds, which shapes the core of this research paper.

Initially, this study is ostensibly undertaken to provide a thorough understanding of the patriarchal surveillance that rotted the protagonist's life, and its impact on the process of her identity metamorphosis. It begins with a clear theorization to the texts involved on patriarchy, Arab/Islamic feminism and Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity, which are opted for to be proper and relevant literary approaches to examine the issues of the novel. In due analysis of Salma's swaying identity, the intentions were first to identify and subvert the traditional, cultural and patriarchal borders that prevented the heroine from obtaining herself, and to highly concentrate on Salma's crisis of identity throughout these aforementioned circumstances. In an

implicit way, the study aims to explore how a Muslim solid identity can transform in the light of various western temptations though the latter rejected her adoption.

I. Dialectics of Superior/Inferior: Patriarchy in Arab Societies.

Throughout history, women have been subjugated and suppressed all over the world. In societies that prioritize the male, women were often treated inequitably. Accordingly, they were denied many entitlements including; the right to own property, to study, to integrate in public life, or to vote. In the middle of the nineteenth century, feminist movements emerged to challenge the prevailing attitudes toward women. Feminism, in its core, induces all sorts of people to reclaim women's social, political and economic rights. Feminism is not a mere philosophy or ideology, but it is rather a personal, political and social practice. It is also defined as a "system of political, economic and social equality between sexes" (Burnel and Burkett 1). Feminism comprises six schools. Each of which has diverse perspectives yet they share a common goal which is to terminate women's oppression. The main three types are Liberal, Marxist/socialist and radical feminism. Liberal feminists believe in total equality between men and women and they call for the reformation of society as an alternate solution. In contrast, Marxist feminism believes that women's inequality is generated from and reinforced by capitalism; the private property held by men gives rise to stratification in class as well as social and economic discrimination. Unlike liberal and Marxist feminism, radical feminists look upon the differences between men and women. They contend that patriarchy is the cause of women's inequality. Socialist feminism combines both Marxist and radical perspective to denote that capitalism and the roles allotted to women are the cause of their persecution (Hawthorne 540).

1.1 Western Feminism:

The development of Western feminism went through three main waves. The first-wave began in 1848, and it was mainly concerned with promoting women's rights to vote. The second-wave, occurring in the 1960s and 1970s, is called 'women's liberation movement'. It expanded upon every aspect of women's experience. It included a wide spectrum of issues, such as sexuality, family, employment and reproductive rights. This movement focused mainly on issues of equality and discrimination, as well as domestic abuse and marital rape. Finally, the third-wave of feminist activism came as a reaction or continuation of the 'unfinished work ' of the second-

wave. As most postmodernists, the new emerging feminists put into question, as well as deconstructing and reconstructing, many ideas, the connotation of words and media texts that implicitly propagate false notions of sexuality, gender, and femininity (Brunell and Burkett). Ever since, feminists conducted campaigns for women's rights, to speak out against the inferior status of women and to challenge the notion that women are 'irrational creatures' and they exist solely to please men.

1.2 Arab/Islamic Feminism:

During much of its history, most feminist movements and theories were predominantly conducted by middle-class white women from Western societies. However, in 1923 Arab women joined the feminist movements to articulate their own particular experience in the Arab world. Arab feminist movements first emerged in Egypt. Egypt, at that time, experienced a 'double struggle' both from colonization and "the old religious, social and economic orders" left by the Ottman Empire (Al-Hassan Golley 521-536). While being controlled by Western forces, there has been some adaptation of western values and ways of life. Therefore, the privileged upper and middle-class educated women of the nationalist bourgeoisies had the chance to voice themselves and call for women's rights of education, employment, and amendments of the marriage and divorce laws. Simultaneously, Islamic feminism emerged as a movement that calls for women's rights from Islamic standpoints. Islamic feminists call for justice and equality; they proclaim women's political, economic and social rights. Moreover, they attempt to reform Islamic thought by rejecting the patriarchal traditional 'interpretation of the Quran and Islamic laws' and focusing more on rereading Quran and religious texts to render back the powerful position and equality that God bestowed upon women (Coleman). However , Many Arab women in some countries are still struggling to obtain their emancipation from some discriminatory practices, namely gender inequality and patriarchy.

1.3 Gender:

The movements from Western and Arab/Islamic feminism brought about the emergence of feminist theory. It is a theory that directs its attention to the nature of gender inequality and discrimination by exploring women's social roles and their experience in society. It has produced theories in a wide range of disciplines to react to issues concerning gender. The term gender

basically refers to "The state of being male or female as expressed by social or cultural distinctions and differences, rather than biological ones; the collective attributes or traits associated with a particular sex, or determined as a result of one's sex**."**[1] Thus, gender is the categorization of a person as he or she discloses himself or herself as having the status of a woman or a man. In feminist theory, there have been numerous debates concerning gender equality and gender roles, especially those assigned to women. Both men and women have specific roles and acts that are anticipated from them in society. These roles are believed to be portrayed through three determinants; biological differences, culture, and society.

Biologically, there are unalterable attributes that explicitly impact men's and women's gender roles. Women can give birth, men cannot. Men have more Testosterone thus, they are physically stronger than women. Therefore, it is believed that women are assigned to take care of the home 'because of their reproductive role' (*Gender Roles* 33-36) and men are supposed to protect, provide better life conditions because of their strength. Secondly, gender roles differ from one culture to another. The wide known norm is that both boys and girls are injected with inherent concepts of masculinity and femininity. Whereas girls are encouraged to be sensitive, delicate and submissive, boys are tutored to be strong, successful and forceful. However, in other cultures, as 'Tchambuli' in New Guinea, men are more interested in looks, art, and games while women are supposed to fish, manufacture and keep the stability of the economy (34). Thus, culture plays a crucial role in the construction and appropriation of gender roles. Finally, the process of socialization and gender role acquisition starts after birth and continues through children's growth. Parents play with girls more gently while they play roughly with the boys. Moreover, boys are allowed to walk in spaces beyond their home without permission and they are required to control their emotions and not to cry. Society teaches them to not show fear, weakness or vulnerability, while girls' movements are restricted and they are asked to not fight and to not show anger, aggressiveness or disagreement. To conclude, These three constituents highly contribute to the construction of gender roles. Indeed, men adduce these notions to justify their persecution and to maintain gender inequality (34).

[1] Oxford English Dictionary

1.4 Patriarchy:

The term 'patriarchy' refers to the primacy of the male " (literally: rule by the father) and it exists in many variants. Its core hierarchy structures almost include every other form of power, not just the relationship between the genders: the head of the household over his children, maids, and servants; the freeman over slaves; "natives" over immigrants; the "better off" over the "lower classes," and so on (Schrupp 6). It basically designates the dominance of men over women in all spheres of life. It is believed that patriarchy has its deep roots in the family. The father, as the leader and the protector of the family, exercises a high authority on the whole hierarchal structure of the family. The male, as a superior subject, oppresses the female, given her inferior status. Moreover, it transcends family to social relations and institutional hegemony. Patriarchal societies have long existed in different fashions throughout history. Women are excluded and marginalized whereas men have many social, political and economic privileges. Patriarchy or Male dominance occupies a focal position in the feminist theory. It interweaves multiple perspectives including those of radical and Marxist feminists. Sylvia Walby constructed a new theory on gender inequality far from the essentialist and capitalist definition. For her, Patriarchy is a "system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby 20).It involves six overlapping structures that are salient in capturing the maintenance of women's subordination. Firstly, production relations in the household. That is, only women are responsible for housework and childcaring. It is their allocated job. Secondly, patriarchal relations in paid work. Women suffer from inferior positions and lower prices in line with less free time. Thirdly, women are unlikely to have positions of power or representation in the state. The fourth structure deals with male violence. Women are physically abused and raped. However, these practices are simply overlooked and accepted. On account of sexuality, women's sexuality is more likely to be treated negatively as some behaviors are already expected from them. Finally, on cultural institutions, Sylvia argues that media, religion, and education have contributed to the misrepresentation of women and their submission. It is important to note that these interconnected structures take various manifestations in different times and cultures (19-21).

In the Arab context, patriarchal oppression is believed to be derived from the religious text 'Quran'. Fatima Mernissi (1940), a prominent figure of Islamic Feminism, addresses the issue of

male dominance, gender discrimination, and sexuality and gives the silent woman a voice to articulate her difficulties. Mernissi is critical of the patriarchal ways in which the Quran has been interpreted. She states that such inadequate interpretation of the verses allowed for the subordination of women to proceed. According to her, the 'Quran' never distinguished between the sexes, but rather accorded women their highest positions and preserved their rights. She believes that "Hadiths were contrived and that men took advantage of them as a political weapon to maintain what they saw as vital to them, one of these being the oppression of women" (qtd. In Koc 1). The male supremacy's vantage point has always valorized men over women even before the arising of Islam. Men interpreted religious texts to serve their own agendas to maintain women's subservience. All in All, Mernissi believes that patriarchal dominance and gender discrimination cannot be justified by Islam. In fact, these practices have little connection in respect with Islam. They are, rather, cultural traditions and social constructs which are ingrained in Muslim societies.

1.5 Honor killings :

Patriarchal oppression in Arab countries has taken various forms including; honor killings. In her article "Honor killings and the Construction of Gender in Arab Societies", Lama Abu Odeh defines honor killings as " the killing of a woman by her father or brother for engaging in, or being suspected of engaging in, sexual practices before or outside of marriage" (911). She states that both boys and girls learn their 'gender performance' early in their lives. For girls, they are expected to preserve their virginity from any sexual activity out of wedlock because virginty "gives a woman the stamp of respectability and virtue" (917). However, society displaces virginity from its biological context onto a 'bodily space' where it is associated with the 'female' as a whole and onto the 'social space' that frames and inhibits women's movements in society. If a woman violates the list of regulations and prohibitions she is supposed to not violate, she is to be physically punished and entrapped. For example, if a woman is seen talking to a man or leaving a car of a stranger "In both instances, the woman is seen as having jeopardized not her vaginal hymen but her physical and social one" (918). Even more cruel, if she is caught or suspected of committing adultery, her father, brother, and men of the village have a legitimate right to stone her to death. Boys also learn their gender subjectivity at an early age. A brother is supposed to guard, protect and defend his sister's virginity. The sexual activity of the female

deeply threatens man's masculinity. Therefore, "virginity, in its expanded sense (the vaginal, bodily, and social) is also the locus of his gender" (919). He is seen as a hero if he kills his woman to defend his honor. However, if he fails to dramatically react if his sister or wife shamed him by engaging in sexual acts, he automatically risks diminishing his masculinity and manliness.

II. Dynamics of Identity: Hybridity, Mimicry, and Third Space.

2.1 Identity:

Since the term identity first emerged around the 1950s, it did not contextualize its roots within one certain area. The notion had failed to accurately fall under any categorization that could determine what it really meant. It referred, right then, to "a word designating the sameness of two items or that certain things or aspects of a thing remain unchanged over time." (Department of History of Science and Ideas 1966). It was never used before to identify who one is. In the meantime, the rise of European invasions, mainly civilizing mission, result in the obliteration of the natives' identities and produced in its stead hybrid subjects with states of dilemmas. This brought many critics together to rethink/construct new modernist approaches to question the impurity of their ancestors and construct new identities free from any social, racial, or cultural designations.

Today, identity, in its modern sense, basically refers to "people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others" (Hogg and Abrams 2). It is accordingly all those essential characteristics determining one's being from others and the nature of their social interactions. Besides, digging more into the notion of identity throws the researcher in a vast range of difference and complexity regarding the multiplicity of its components and relations. It is worth noting that identity is presently used in different contexts based on the areas and perspectives it is perceived from. However, as such, it is mostly tied with the level in which the individual recognizes who they are in relation to their group memberships and senses their self-belonging referred to as 'social identity', and the abovementioned level in which a person distinguishes themselves from others is referred to as 'personal identity'.

The distinctive features of the connection between the self and the other have always been the focal point raised by researchers about the identification process. In this regard, self-categorization theory comes to draw a remarkable line between the two and ensures the independency of each category by itself. It affirms the existence of a collective subjective self, totally opposed to something inherently personal or unique, which influences the individual identity and controls its behavior. Particularly, it manifests that, through the personal actions, the

individual can determine the category in which they find themselves in either "more as social groups or less as individual persons, in terms of social identity rather than personal identity" (Turner and Oakes).

On the cultural level, various critics argue over preserving indigenous identity, and question its purity and impurity due to a number of colonial mechanics. The operation of interaction, resettlement, and transculturation happening between people problematizes the concept of identity, and therefore it takes on new fashionable shapes namely, in-betweenness, hybridity, and difference. Stuart Hall, the founder of contemporary cultural studies, specializes in how these differences grow up in the modern communities and beget new forms of identities beyond the existing scope of application. In his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" Hall approaches cultural identity from the perspective that it reflects "the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes (223), which valorizes the similarities amongst a group of people and another related but different perspective affirming that nevertheless the commonalities a certain group shares within, "there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute what we really are" (225). Again, relooking at identification processes explicate that identities are always dynamic and unstable; they are all, in Bhabha's words, blended and "Hybridized".

2.2 Hybridity and third space:

A few decades ago, most of colonial territories constituted a complex ground for casual interaction between colonized and colonizer, who used to live side by side, because of their different cultures. This colonial situation witnessed an ongoing struggle over avoiding the severe effects of the mixture coming out from that social friction upon identity and culture. Both sides, yet, could not repel the unconscious influence one had on the other. Following this pattern, the colonial discourse contained ideological and stereotypical policies to implicitly portray the backwardness of the native culture and colorized the western civilized culture. Above all, it split the two cultures in a way that maintained the colonized values under western subjugation. That is, discrimination occurs "between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles," and never between the self and the other or the mother culture and the alien culture (Bhabha 159). All of these procedures created a profound gap, where identity fading went beyond the colonizer either.

Accidently, the encounter of these various cultural types bring about some sort of cross cultural borders that define their coherent, unitary, cultural identity, and establish an invisible location where the difference becomes noticeable. Within and against these cyclical patterns, Bhabha rejects the existence of a pure distinctive culture and introduces the concept of "cultural Hybridity" (266). Therefore, the aim behind the allusion of declaring the supremacy and the purity of the western culture in colonial discourse was only to justify the material exploitation of colonialism. On this basis, claiming the essence, unity, and singleness of identity, in the continuation of this interconnection and ongoing motion, is obviously radical. At this point, the articulation of the native cultural identity is defied and becomes almost impossible by the different forms of colonial violence be it discrimination, coercion or racism. That is, while the native inhabitants struggle to find an alternative to express themselves and fully function in their sphere, they carve out what Bhabha codes as "third space" (37).

Therein this virtual world, which is not geographically located anywhere, the natives could easily articulate and practice their cultural identity. However, most of the productive and useful components of this identity deprived from both spaces thereby a hybrid culture emerged. Hybridity, then, is best described as "the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial et cetera. Hybridity has frequently been used in postcolonial discourse to mean simply cross-cultural exchange" (Ashcroft 135-136). Furthermore, the core of this latter is not precisely placed in-between or has some traces of the extremes of either side of the colonial divide, but as a more ambivalent position, where people can place themselves freely. In other words, the openness to accepting the cultural influence.

2.3 The ambivalence of mimicry:

The colonized adaptation to the cultural multiplicity discloses the colonial desire to create a mimic man who nearly resembles the colonizer, but not quite the same. This operation leads to a colonized subject in a state of ambivalence, where they ambiguously perform the superior culture and simultaneously reject it. It is the description of the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized (Bhabha 13). Moreover, in relation to the colonial terms, the colonizers push the native inhabitants to imitate them in a sort of 'partial repetition' to be similar but not quite the same; for a sample, "not white not quite" (128). The colonial intentions were to produce a subject white in appearance and performance, but did not necessarily have the same rights and privileges the western man had. On the contrary, Bhabha reveals the change of mimicry from a mere policy to disarray the native from their identity into a revolutionary trait, when mimicry becomes mockery.

What the imperial powers failed to anticipate is the foundation of alternatives to the natives' transgression of colonial culture. That is, the effects of ambivalence result in this repetition strengthen the resistant side of the indigenous people and leave a profound gap in the colonial system. Hence, if colonialism stepped forward and prevented the process of mimicry, it automatically diverged on the 'civilizing mission' policy and proved the menace coming out from mimicry. And, on the other hand, if colonialism insisted on following the same strategy, then what Rudyard Kipling said" East is east, and west is west, and never shall the twain meet" crumbled down (Kipling 233-236). The confusion about whether or not to take a certain position increasingly becomes a double track when the colonial system witnesses the inappropriate and double articulation of its imitated culture; mimicry then was performed in various satiric ways that threatened their racial identity and authority.

The actual objective of colonialism had always been to produce a subject of difference and excessiveness through 'mimicking', or to create "a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, and in intellect" (Macaulay 49). This implies that they must not be critically conscious thinking subjects, but rather serve as interpreters between the masters and the colonized. Meanwhile, Bhabha perceives mimicry to be an accurate repetition, rather than a mere representation, having a highly disruptive potency to subvert the foundations of colonialism. It is characterized to be rearticulating those moments of presence and exposing the

colonial desire, which poses a threat to colonialism. Alternatively stated, the colonizer seeks to view mimicry as a feature of progression and civilization of the colonized in comparison to their original culture, whereas it turns to be a feature of disruption and resistance to the colonial assumptions.

In these investigations, the aim was to establish a comprehensive understanding of women's suffering and persecution both in Arab and Western societies and to explore the whirl of identity construction/reconstruction in the contemporary multicultural societies. On the one hand, this study has shown that women undergo moral, verbal, and physical violence. They are suppressed, enslaved and subjugated. Thus, feminist movements and theories came along to ensure women's rights and their integration in society and public life. On the other hand, it strives to reveal that one's identity has gone through several hardships before it becomes the accommodation of two distinctive cultures. In fact, the investigations evoke a state of bewilderment where the basic question of "who am I?" is driven to another level of wondering that is "are there two of me?". So far, however, there has been little discussion about the 'diasporized Muslim Arab women" and their identity formation amidst this complex of patriarchal dominance, cultural confrontation and Western representation. Relying on the above interrogations, we will examine the protagonist's transition from her original identity to a postcolonial multicultural one and the influencing factors to this transformation in Fadia Faqir's *The Cry of the Dove*,

III. The process of Salma's identity formulation.

3.1 About the author

Fadia Faqir is a prominent contemporary diasporic and feminist Anglo-Arab writer. She was born in 1956 in a Muslim society, Amman, Jordan. She got her BA in English Literature from the University of Jordan, then she moved to England to pursue her studies and start her career as a writer. She obtained her MA in creative writing and her Ph.D in critical and creative writing from the University of East Anglia. As being exposed to both Western and Eastern environments, Faqir's novels constantly outline the experiences of young Muslim women living in the diaspora and the issues they bring about as identity dichotomy, hybridity, and Western representation. Faqir is an Arab Muslim woman who was oppressed by her father and she rejected his religious impositions. Therefore, her trajectory is reflected in her novels. She challenges patriarchal orders of Arab societies and opposes any system that undermines women and degrades them. Faqir wrote several novels including; *Nisanit, Pillars of Salt, Willow Trees Don't Weep,* and *My Name is Salma/The Cry of the Dove*.

3.2 Fadia Faqir's *the Cry of the Dove* : an overview

Faqir's semi-autobiographical novel is the story of an unprivileged Arab shepherdess, Salma, who is victimized by her past and enslaved by a dreary present that shows no prospects of hope in the future. The novel is driven by a non-linear form of narration that keeps jumping back and forth to effectively render the thought process of Salma. Salma is forced to leave her village in the Levant because of adultery she has committed and became pregnant out of wedlock. She suddenly finds herself a fugitive on the run from those seeking to restore their honor. Because her brother promised to kill her by shooting a bullet between her eyes, Salma escapes from her village 'Hima', and she is put in a prison cell for her own safety. After giving birth to her daughter, Layla, the infant immediately whisked away from her arms upon arrival even before she could see or nurse her. Finally, Salma could cross the dark dangerous spots that threatened her life when Sister Asher, who gives Salma a new life in a new land under a new identity and a new name, shipped her away to England. From Salma to Sally, the protagonist confronts serious challenges of adaptation as these two latter selves try to establish a new identity and a new sense

of belonging. Years move on and Salma is still crippled by shame and self-loathing. When suddenly her daughter's voice calling for help overwhelms her, Salma goes back to her village to meet the tragic news of her daughter's murder by Mahmoud, the brother-uncle. As Salma hugs the grave the resting place of Layla, she (Salma) is shot by her brother bringing her life to an end on the same soil that saw her grow as a young girl.

3.3 Subverting Patriarchal sovereignty

It is apparent from the first reading of the novel that patriarchal dominance raises striking importance and embodies a focal factor of the protagonist's endeavor for an identity container. The protagonist Salma hails from an Arab country, in a village called Hima. It is a male-centric society par excellence where the father is the head man who controls his surroundings. Salma is constantly under the predominance of her male relatives, namely her father and brother. She is confined under their rules and impositions. As a young girl, she must be obedient, submissive and expected to assist her mother in the housework, whereas her brother has more privileges and enjoys total freedom. In Arab and Islamic societies, patriarchy is a deeply rooted policy. The man, given his vantage position, exercises a high authority on the woman, deprives her of her freedom, and repels her from any rebellious act that would result in diminishing his masculinity. Thus, a man becomes a source of fear and dread for a woman and inflicts great damage on her psyche. The non-linear form of the narrative used by Fadia Faqir allows the reader to examine this damage as the character is constantly swaying between her past and present. The phobic effects remain engraved in Salma's psyche later in her life. When a guy approached her in London, she thought back of her frightening borther and said fearfully : "If my brother Mahmoud sees me talking to strange men, he will tie each leg to a different horse and then get them to run in different directions" (Faqir 19).

As a feminist writer, Faqir is critical of such practices. She problematizes the nature of Arab families' structure as she states "What's wrong in the Arab world is the structure of the family— it is an oppressive structure, overtly or covertly.[…] The family is a structure with a figurehead, a patriarch who makes all the important decisions and treats everyone as infants" (Moore 3). Therefore, women in a society driven by patriarchal agendas are unlikely to achieve emancipation for they are always under the surveillance of the dominant patriarch. Consequently, through her novels, Faqir aspires to challenge the patriarchal conventions of Arab and Islamic

societies and she, subsequently, attempts to voice the oppressed woman who suffers from domination and violence.

The discourse on women's sexuality is always silenced in the Arab world. A woman's body is the property of her husband or her father; she does not have the right to freely control it. Rather, it is imperative to protect it from any external interferences that might affect its honor. The man, on the other hand, acts with complete freedom in his body without the intrusion of other people or social determinants. This underlying intention of controlling female bodies and hence the maintenance of their subordination is clearly manifested in Salma's statement, "My brother Mahmoud kept an eye on me while brushing his horse; I started hunching my back to hide my breasts, which were the first thing Hamdan had noticed about me," (Faqir 9) and when her father told her in a rigid tone : "Your breasts are like melons, cover them up!" (9). Hence, women's pressure is manifest from various sides of society, even in the slightest rights. That is, the natural right of one's own body. This internalization of women's seductive power implicitly indicates that the body of the female is a site of shame for her and that she is the one to blame for men's 'uncontrolled' sexual practices.

Salma is constantly constrained by men, and this underpins her inferiority. Before meeting Hamdan, Salma was a typical Bedouin girl from a small village who used to play music with her reed pipe and roams in the fields taking care of her goats. The mischievous acts on Hamdan's part to seduce her gradually did not attain a satisfactory outcome at first. She prevented him from approaching her as she is aware of danger. Nevertheless, he eventually accomplished his desires. After her first sexual encounter with him, he claimed her as his property. He said "Salma, you're a woman now ... you are mine, my slave girl" (25). With these statements he sexually objectified her. He regarded her as a mere sex object that exists solely to please him denying by this claim the other components which constitute her sense of being. To examine the nature of this sexual objectification one must look back at the sociocultural environment of both men and women. Szymanski and others contend that "the existence of traditional gender roles in an environment is likely to contribute to attitudes and behaviors that allow for and normalize the SO[2] of women" (21). That is, the acquired gender roles in a given society is the reason why women are being sexually objectified and associated with their sexual

[2] Sexual Objectification

body parts function. The process of socialization shapes men's and women's understanding of masculinity and femininity. Society prompts men to be strong, aggressive, dominant, and to see women as sex objects. On the other hand, women are thought to be obedient, subordinate, and encouraged to take care of their bodies and appearances to please men (Szymanski et al. 21). Hamdan, given the fact that he hails from a male-identified society, only sees Salma as a vessel for his erotic drives, and his statements further enhance this argument. He states "My whore is still here (Fqir 25)." and "You are my courtesan, my slave" (34).

Salma had a similar experience with Hamdan's counterpart in England. Jim is the typical western gentleman whom she met in a pub and had a sexual encounter with. Salma is a Bedouin girl with a different language and a darker skin complexion than western women's. Thus, Jim is fascinated with the female 'Other', the foreigner, and the exotic Salma whom he needs to explore sexually. For him, she is an object of mystery. Unlike Hamdan, Jim was a stranger yet she did not feel regret or intimidation, and she did not feel the need to pray and ask for forgiveness. She said "You would smile because it was supposed to be the morning after the beautiful night before" (54). However, Jim- just like Hamdan- sexually exploited her, deprived her of her innocence and treated her as a prostitute. She says "Jim might be thinking, Sally foreign slapper. Sleeps with everyone and offers them sage tea" (201) . This only emphasizes that sexual objectification, exploitation, and patriarchal dominance are ingrained in both Eastern and Western environments. Moreover, the relationship between Jim and Salma is a relationship between the 'self' and the 'other'. Ella Shohat argues that "It is this process of exposing the female Other, of literally denuding her, which comes to allegorize the Western masculinist power of possession, that she, as a metaphor for her land, becomes available for Western penetration and knowledge" (57). Therefore, Salma is regarded as a foreigner, exotic being that needs to be explored and Jim is the explorer, the conqueror, and the exploiter.

Salma identifies herself with a group of other female characters in the novel who go through similar patriarchal dominance of their societies. Lamaa, a woman whom she met in Islah prison endured mistreatment and segregation from her husband. After pregnancy, her body underwent radical changes. She is no longer appealing to him and he wants to marry another wife. He said to her "you are disgusting" (Faqir 124) regardless of the considerable amount of the sacrifices she made for him, he is still not grateful and treats her as a mere sexual object to

satisfy his gaze. Once her body became sagging, he no longer needs her. This sets forth the mentality of the man who sees a woman only as a body and denies her immense sacrifices and efforts. Another victim of male domination is Salma's best friend Noura. Her husband married a second wife and neglected her. When her son got sick, she had no money to treat him but to take prostitution up. She states "I began taking off my clothes" (136). The irresponsibility of her husband pushes her to prostitution as she has no other option. Thirdly, Salma's roommate in England, Parvin. Her oppressive father imposed on her to marry a man whom she did not love. He took advantage of his position in the structure of the family to maintain control on his inferior and subordinate daughter. However, Parvin rejected his oppression and run away from her country Pakistan to England. This indicates that the hierarchal gendered cultural customs and patriarchal traditions intrigue to sustain women's subordination. Lastly, Salma's landlady Liz. She is a Western rich lady whose social stratification deprived her of marrying her poor Indian lover. Her father is a rich white man who refuses to allow his daughter wed to a poor and black man although she loves him. Fadia Faqir attempts to demonstrate through these peripheral characters that many women in conservative Arab/Islamic countries, as well as Western societies, undertake similar agonies of patriarchal traditions despite their different age, social status, and beliefs. She states " […]Both environments are oppressive, but in different ways. In each case, there are penalties for not conforming. " (Moore 8).

After her continuous meetings with Hamdan, Salma became pregnant out of wedlock. She was sexually abused and mistreated as she states "I was betrayed and ambushed" (Faqir 98). Salma brought shame and disgrace to her family by having premarital sex with Hamdan. This practice is regarded as a disgrace and an abominable act especially in a patriarchal village like Hima. Her mother states : "You smeared our name with tar. Your brother will shoot you between the eyes" (25). Fatima Mernissi argues that virginity is problematic in Arab societies. Arabs are preoccupied with worshiping virginity because, by hook or by crook, it affects men's reputation and status in society. Therefore, virginity becomes an issue discussed and controlled by men while women are mere intermediates. Men restrict the movements of their women and monitor them so as not to violate certain regulations that will result in degrading their position.

Furthermore, she was hoping to marry him as she is really in love with him. However, the turn of the events was tragic. He denied the child in her womb and treated her as a prostitute.

"Hamdan refused to marry me and disappeared. He said that I was a slut, cheap, `damaged goods' " (201). After he fulfilled his sexual desires with her, Salma is of no significance for him anymore. He accused her of being a prostitute who succumbed to his sexual desires. In the *Pillars Of Salt*, another crucial novel by Fadia Faqir, A female character, Nasra, has been raped and the justification of the rapist was as follows: "—She asked for it. Whenever she set her greedy eye on me...she tempted me" (*Pillars* 12). This implies that not only women are seen as sex objects but they are also held accountable for male violence such as rape, wife-beating, and sexual assault. By the same token, Salma, as a Bedouin girl is the one to blame for this sexual act. Mernissi posits that men implicitly fear the hidden power of women thus they regard sexual acts as ‘’a mechanism for establishing a hierarchy and enforcing power, domination and therefore dehumanization’’ (Mernissi 186). The deflowered virgin is guilty and falls in a whirl of fear and intimidation. The man on the other hand, albeit an accomplice in the sexual encounter, is seen as a hero for deflowering a virgin and he is, therefore, more respected (186).

This sexual experience with Hamdan was a turning point for Salma. It resulted in constant regret and a lifelong tragedy. With her act, Salma is considered as defiant to her patriarchal father and other relative men, and broke the code of honor of the family. Thus, she was threatened to be killed by her father, brother, and all the men of the tribe. "My tribe had decided to kill me, they had spilt my blood among them and all the young men were sniffing the earth" (Faqir 36). Hima’s men are free to feed their sexual desires but women are most certainly not. After Salma gave birth to her daughter Laila in prison, she is forced into exile to save her life from death; nonetheless, she always longs for her daughter whom she left in Hima. When she travels back to Hima years later she finds out that her daughter is killed by her uncle because she is a product of unwanted and stigmatized premarital sex. He threw her in the well and states "Like mother, like daughter" (225). Eventually, Salma is also shot between her eyes. Like many Arab women, Salma is a victim of patriarchal violence ; Honor killings. It comes from the stigma that must be cleansed by blood. Since Salma is an individual in a family, her sexual activity is considered as a disgrace that reflects the whole family. She broke the regulations and prohibitions set by her society. Her brother Mahmoud thus affirms his gender performance and his masculinity by killing her and cleanse the family’s reputation with her blood. The conceptualization of violence is internalized in men as power and force. They are raised to be harsh, dominant, and violent on their female relatives because it demonstrates their power and

supremacy and thereby women's fear and submission. Therefore, honor killing is one form, among others, of male violence that underlines certain maintenance of patriarchal dominance and propagation of men's power at the expense of women's weakness and subordination.

Fadia Faqir implicitly propagates that these brutal practices are generated from Islamic thought. Arguebaly ,however, it is by no means prudent to think that 'Quran' has prioritized men at the expense of women but it is rather the misinterpretation of religious texts that resulted in Muslim women's subordination to men. In fact, just as God commanded women to be pious, he commanded men concurrently. As Asma Barlas states "as the Qur'an describes it, humans, though biologically different, are ethically/morally the same/similar inasmuch as both women and men are originated in a single self, have been endowed with the same natures, and make up two halves of a single pair" (Barlas 133). Therefore, Allah did not distinguish between the sexes but rather accorded them both equal responsibilty. This argument is reinforced by the following verse from the Quran 'Women impure are for men impure and men impure for women impure and women of purity are for men of purity.'[3] That is, both men and women who commited a vice are equally accountable. For Barlas, both men and women have a sexual drive which is an integral part of human nature. They can both be sexually pure or impure. Yet in Arab societies, women are held accountable for their bodies and sexual practices while men are not, but on the contrary, they justify their practices by women's fatally seductive nature. Thus the aformentioned *Ayah*[4] breaks the inherent notion of 'the association of purity (typically defined as virginity) only with women,' and reinforces that women also have the right to marry chaste husbands who are not sexually corrupt (Barlas 154).

The abovementioned investigation was undertaken to recount and analyze the protagonist's hardships and misery in her patriarchal village Hima. A village that deprives women of their rights and freedom and grants it to men instead. Salma as a Bedouin girl is controlled by her father. Her movements are restricted, censurable and her faults are unforgivable. Once she got pregnant out of wedlock, she was sentenced by the lens of society to death. Moreover, She was more culpable than her male accomplice and her daughter was taken from her forcibly. As a resistant response, she fled to England and tried to adapt to the western

[3] *The Qur'an* Surat al – Nur 26.
[4] A verse from the Quran

lifestyle, thereby, one can say that patriarchy is indeed the prominent factor of Salma's identity metamorphosis. Indeed, Salma reflects the trajectory of many Arab women around the world who undergo similar hardships and do not dare to repel men's coercion and defend themselves robustly. Therefore, Fadia Faqir, through her novel, has given the weak a voice to rise and become powerful and protest against such exceedingly brutal practices.

3.4 Salma and/or Sally, Identity Crisis

The novel under investigation pictures, with high focus, the protagonist's source of identification on a bridge, flying between the special sentiments of nostalgia for the past and her gradual assimilation to the western thoughts and behaviors. It emerges as quite a special sense capturing Salma's swaying Identity amidst her former traditional origins and the newly impressive forms of life that, originally, are not her racial makeup. A sense looming in the horizons of the story a grievous past that grew feelings of losing hope inside her and a future that carries with it the secrets of mystery and obscurity one cannot ultimately predict. In the pursuit of rebelling against these miserable upheavals and the need for more liberation, the shepherdess Salma diggs more into her belonging-self that she could find neither in Hima nor in London. These different adventures Salma takes beyond her free will in just one journey bring her cultural conservativeness and her radical revolutions into a constant struggle, which raises the possibility of a transformation to evolve her indigenous Identity in the construction of a new one.

In order for Salma to protect her life and guarantee the birth of her illegal daughter coming out of wedlock, she bravely decides to insinuate and see off the village of Hima with all its tough and tender memories. It is the first step, I believe, that pushes Salma to consider the amount of suppression and cruelty she has been exposed to from her patriarchal father, brother, and the exploitative Hamadan. It indicates her total opposition with the threat of being killed because of violating religious and cultural codes. Salma's search for identity comes and goes under a lifetime journey from the East Levant to the West England, which is always appealing to be governed with different, religious, and cultural boundaries. In this respect, Salma's exile forces her to rethink/reconsider her state of being, maintains her personal safety, and questions her society that is under the patriarchal dominance of the man. Her newfound avenue is juxtaposed in Lamming's quote," to be exile is to be alive" (12). This is clearly stated to the reader at the opening pages of the novel when Salma begins tasting the absolute freedom she never enjoyed in Hima. She says, "Now I stood shaking my head and rubbing the big fake yellow stone on my ring with my smooth hands, which were always covered with cocoa butter, and sighed" (Faqir 7).

The narrative flow of events shifts back and forth, and drives Salma to England on board the ship, Hellena, with strong conservative beliefs in Islamic religion and Levant culture. Mrs.

Asher, who helped Salma to travel abroad, starts teaching her English language on the ship and invites her to drink alcohol and eat pork. However, Salma completely refuses to have them and further construes their illegality in Islam by saying “It’s forbidden in Islam. You lose control and make all kinds of sins” (129). At first, Salma shows solid wisdom towards the western temptations and sacred loyalty not to cross the dos and don’ts of her religion. Her rejection implicitly reveals the struggle of two distinct cultures in the process of trying to sustain one’s self. Here, Salma’s identity is being defied little by little by all that surrounds her, and finally surrenders to host the western lifestyles in a kind of will and compulsion. By saying this, there are always moments of swaying and yearning for the mother culture. Moreover, when Mrs. Asher adopts Salma legally and gives her the name of Sally Asher instead of Salma Ibrahim Mousa, Salma’s identity becomes obvious in the way it changes from one culture to another, which falls under what Bhabha categorized as “Hybrid identity” (37).

Since her name changed, a set of radical rigid shifts begin taking place around her entire life, starting with her relocation and her showing of the desire to adhere to western life patterns. Salma expresses the value and happiness her given name carries to the extent of denying her racial roots. When David asks her where she is from, she responds saying, “If I told him that I was a Muslim Bedouin Arab woman from the desert on the run he would spit out his tea. `I am originally Spanish, 'I lied" (Faqir 20). The fact that renaming a person and guiding them based on a bunch of orientations is likely to deprive them of their modeled identity. Though Salma expresses an obsession towards her Arab name and the metaphorical meaning it symbolizes as ’safe’, the name Mrs. Asher gives to her, as we critically read the novel, equals the membership, the job, and better living conditions in England. It is as if Salma breaks down her real cultural boundaries to assimilate newly constructed ones for her so that she can coexist with the community. It is factually genuine that the quality of names we live up to identify our belonging to the community. That is, Salma’s alternative name is a crucial factor in developing her sense of belonging, and carries part of her Arab identity [Sal]. As far as I understand, Mrs. Asher’s help, which has ideological and personal features beneath, was similar to that of colonial discourse [civilizing mission] in internalizing its ways of thinking and erasing the native ones. To simplify, Identity is not merely who you are currently, but also who you are called to be eternally.

Here, the stream moves forward to Salma's conflict trying to combine and assimilate two different worlds together. This process renders Salma as a dove who cries out in a world deprived of mercy and justice. In England, the new name and the new set up of life encourage the protagonist to consider overtly establishing a new identity and manners of integration. In so doing, she easily accepts the evening job's offer at the bar and she partially succeeds to learn about the English table manners and ways of starting conversations with the clients in order not to hurt their sensibilities. She states "I would wear my classiest dress, keep my mouth shut, put little make-up on, tie my frizzy hair tight, and if I spoke I would speak slowly and carefully in order to sound as English as possible" (106). This demonstrates Salma's necessity to pass for an English woman and therefore suppress her Arab terms. Thus, her friction with these people and their weird looks directed to her estrangement and raise feelings of alienation in her psyche. Such gazes imply the amount of racism and ego-ethnic attitudes against others, particularly against those who come from "Somewhere in the Middle East. Fucking A-rabic! She rode a camel all the way from Arabia to this dump in Exter" (10). As a reaction to this, and in order to be accepted within the western mainstream, Salma decides to look like an English rose who is white, confident with an elegant English accent, and a pony; she ends up unveiling her hair under the midnight sun of London. In other words, an Arab Bedouin Subject in race embodying western English actions.

The veil continues to function in Salma's life as a sign of awkwardness, nakedness, and incompleteness before she decides to take it off. It manifests the deep roots of her mother's culture and religious conservatism. Salma, as a Muslim migrant, insists on wearing her veil since it carries her religion, culture and covers her hair from others' looks. When Sister Asher asks Salma why she wears this scarf, she answers her by asserting, "I cannot take off veil, Sister. My country, my language, my daughter. No piece of cloth. Feel naked, me" (130). For Salma, unveiling her 'aura'[5] automatically means obliterating her identity and becoming a sinful person. However, this discipline lasts shortly after leaving her country, and in order to fit with modernity, Salma does not only uncover her hair but her whole body parts as well. Her roommate, Parvin, further encourages Salma to discard the veil if she wants to stand a better chance of employment in the new Western English Society. Yet, the unveiling process for Salma

[5] A subtle body of a person under their clothing.

was not easy but a traumatic task, and it has further accentuated her feeling of guilt:"...white veil, I slid it off, folded it and placed it on the bed. ...It felt as if my head was covered with raw sores and I had taken off the bandages. I felt dirty as a whore...a sinner who would never see paradise and drink from its rivers of milk and honey" (88). Herein, the veil is obviously a part of a Muslim sensibility with which the novel abounds. Salma in the meantime has to create for herself an attitude of unveiled fashionable women outside, which ensures that the transformation happening to Salma is physical and mental. In this regard, the psychiatrist Fanon argues that wearing a veil is a form of cultural resistance against the colonial efforts to unveil women by bringing them over to the side of modernity and liberalism (55).

It is almost obvious that the reason why Salma lives up in struggle with her hybrid identity is to avoid Western discrimination she desperately confronts and their English aggressive sights. Although Salma becomes a version of An English woman in appearances, she never tastes the feelings of belonging, but only alienation. She is emotionally going through the sense of alienation and loneliness in both cultures: the first, in a traditional patriarchal society where the more flesh you hide, the more acceptable you are, and second, in a racist individual society where the more flesh you show, the more you are recognized. Salma's constant endeavors reveal her desires to imitate what the western thought embodies for her to be part of the community, yet she is always being an 'other' to them, which means that she is not English in terms of rights, color and superiority. Her condition as an immigrant clearly fits into Miriam Cook's definition of Emigration as a mode where one ―instead of being caught in one place,... is trapped in two places, each of which is home, and is at the same time not home. Emigration means that wherever one is, one always longs to be in the other place (Faqir 24). Salma thus explores the western legacies of creating a 'mimic subject' who is not quite the same as English people. In this sense, Said points out in his book, *Culture and Imperialism*, to the prejudice of the West, ""they" are not like „us" (xii), revealing the fact that westerners look at Easterners as inferior people who need their help to be superior.

Furthermore, Salma's dark skin contributes to shaping a set of obstacles between her and Europeans, and she remains an alien other regardless of what she has done to please them. Salma expresses her intentions to whiten the color of her skin to end her psychological sufferings and frustration. She states, "Now Salma the dark black iris of Hima must try to turn into Sally, an

English Rose, white, confident, with an elegant English accent, and a pony" (8). Salma realizes that the lighter her skin color is, the more superior she would be because, in England, the body determines a person's sense of identity rather than their actual one. Salma's skin color still gives a sign of her non-English origin. She can be easily recognized as an "alien." As Salma struggles to hide her identity, she wonders whether "Was it possible to walk out of my skin, my past, my name?" (28). Therefore, Salma's persistent attempts to establish a successful relationship with the western community fail again in most stages of her changing process. In this sense, to my understanding, Salma's all quick assimilation with the English, capitalist, racist society to deliver a superior civilized personality and escape her inferior identity is in itself a source of subjugation and imprisonment. This is because the discrimination occurs "between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles and never between the self and the other" (Bhabha 159), which means that Salma will never grant the same potential and racial equality. As a result, Salma feels fragmented and disembodied, looks to other people for her own sense of self, developing a double consciousness.

Having just arrived in England, the language, which Salma does not master, functions as a focal point in the young protagonist's ongoing estrangement and alienation ever since the first day she has set foot on that foreign land. Salma fully comprehends that in order to successfully survive in the English set up, she must learn how to match her communication chains with one another to defend herself and construct meaningful thoughts. The protagonist's assertion of identity has now reached the stage from which Salma undergoes a quick transformation in language from Arabic to English. Yet, at first, Salma's naivety and lack of mastery of English irritate English people and run their patience out. It is clearly stated in a short dialogue that happens between Salma and the English officer who asks about her name: 'Is this your maiden or Christian name? .. 'Muslim no Christian'. 'Named ? Name ? Izmak?, He said. 'Ismi, Ismi? Saally Ashiir.' 'Christ, he said (Faqir 30). When her limited command of English becomes a source of shame and inferiority, Salma immediately notices the need for English acquisition to gain a voice and easily adopt the European culture, which implies the first glimpses of integration. As a result, she grows wild desires towards the English language and decides to study literature to become like an English lady. She asserts, "No, stories good. Teach you language and how to act like English miss" (126). Being through all these traumatic processes, Faqir seeks to set a portrayal of an Arab Bedouin woman facing multiple struggles to gain a

partial voice 'in-between' (Bhabha 2) two dominant societies. However, her newly adopted home will always consider her as an unwelcomed outsider who does not belong. For this, Faqir gives a voice to an Eastern woman who attempts to articulate the ethnic and racist gap that exists between the West and East fueled by supremacy and prejudices.

So nostalgic and touching are those instances of conservatism and yearning for home that surround Salma after leaving her village. The feelings of estrangement and unbelonging in her new surroundings make her desired home. Salma would sit alone and enjoy evoking how her mother would walk through the hills piling up kindling and long dry sticks and then tying them to her back. She would sit and remember how her mother hands her piece of loaf dripped with butter and honey colored with a beautiful morning smile. Her first step on the ship to England looms inside her feelings of longing and homesickness as she is depositing a life of oppression and lack of dignity towards the mysterious west to attain her new self. Salma experiences the feeling of losing home only a few hours after her departure and reveals a sense of nostalgia to the familiarity of the homeland by saying, "I shall go back one day" (Faqir 57). Salma further expresses, after many years of life in England, the yearn for her mother, saying : "Me miss her horribly" (200). The person to whom Salma owes the most missing and love throughout the whole journey next to her mother is her daughter. She yearns for her daughter, whom in her mind she calls Layla, and is so haunted by the trauma she suffered back home that she has hallucinations of a man who has come to kill her. In the depth of her heart, the cries of her baby daughter still echo. Thus, when she can bear them no longer, she starts to develop an unexplainable urge to meet her daughter and decides to go back to her village to find her. There in Hima Salma discovers that her Brother Mahmoud kills her daughter for the reason of unwilling the girl to grow to be like her mother. Basically, Salma shows a wistful yearning for days gone past and moments irrecoverable that seems to be both intensely human and inexplicably alien. In Salma's journey, there is always a real sense of missing people who formed the fabric of her life and therefore her unforgettable Bedouin identity emerges anew.

Through putting Salma's identity under scrutiny, I intend to escort the process of her hybrid identity emergence in a misogynous world, and to trace the Arab woman fugitive who flees from the so-called backward world to the so-called modern and civilized one. This journey ends with the protagonist caught in a hypocrite society where in each part of it people assume

humanity and coexistence, and in a par excellence patriarchal society where women are under control and surveillance of the man. There somewhere in between, Salma suffers a double marginality that an Arab or Muslim woman confronts from her native society and western racism that denies her voice and influences her construction of a hybrid identity. Hence, she suffers from being both simultaneously as she tries to collect her fragmented traumatic identity between two distant spaces, where she remains in the middle as an ambivalent subject that belongs neither here nor there. In the novel, Salma is portrayed as drifting without a fixed identity whose latter is not static but dynamic because of her multicultural backgrounds. This goes hand in hand with Stuart Hall's claim of identity. He argues that "Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a „production", which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (Hall 222). To make it clear, Hall argues that one's identity is never complete but is a continuous work in a process that is impacted by one's physical and cultural environments, so is Salma's case in the novel in brief.

IV. Conclusion

As we have discussed through the entire analysis of this paper, Salma's forced exile to England impacts the formation of her identity based on the new cultural experiences she undergoes and the new people she encounters no matter how solid, conservative and restrict her original identity was. Salma's Quest for identity formation comes as result of the courageous decision of leaving the patriarchal authoritarian society that deprives her of her rights and freedom by granting it to the man on the contrary. This paper has basically investigated the patriarchal structure of Salma's family and the socially constructed gender roles in Arab societies that play an integral part in degrading the position of women and maintain their subordination. And, in a quite elaborate level, it diagnoses the hybrid constructed identity of the protagonist vis-a-vis the encounter with new English secular culture that alienates and grows feelings of loneliness inside her.

Thus, this project was designed to determine the effects of male's oppression and humiliation on female's identity and emancipation. It also reveals how Salma ultimately challenges the mainstream portrayals of Muslim women as passive despite these cultural traditions. In this operation, it seems, therefore, that an identity, which comprises religious Arab values and principles, can possibly transform in the light of western influences. It is essential, however, to underscore that Salma's attempt to resist repression fails due to the existing system in both spheres. While in her native home patriarchal Arab culture is Salma's main challenge, in the postcolonial English context the novel suggests that Salma's struggle is to manage to catch her fluctuating self between home and exile. That is, the tough times Salma had spent seeking to localize herself set up a liminal space for her, where she remains two at one; neither Salma, nor Sally.

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