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The work of memory in Exile Narratives: A read in "A Noxious Weed in Paradise" by Haitham Hussein Al-Suri

Le travaille de la mémoire dans les narratives l'exil: une lecture dans «une mauvaise herbe nocive dans le paradis» de Haitham Hussein Al -Suri

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Abstract:

The novel is an imagination text that works to reproduce the past. Because it relies on reality and takes it as a starting point for formulating imaginary events for purely narrative purposes, we find that it employs memory as a technology to reproduce the past given in the context of the private text, by questioning reality and the self together, and this is what was evident in the novel»A Noxious Weed in Paradise», as the novelist returned With his memory while he was in exile to his homeland, to restore his past with its various events in an fiction form, because this latter is nothing but a kind of practice of reality. This practice is in the form of its Reproduce it.

Keywords: novel, imaginary, reality, exile, memory.

Résumé:

Le roman repose essentiellement sur l'imagination en tant que mécanisme artistique capable de reproduire un texte narratif. L'œuvre «Une mauvaise herbe au paradis» s'appuie sur la réalité ou la surpasse pour reprendre les événements imaginaires pris de la mémoire étant une technique seconde de reproduction du passé intégré dans le contexte du texte, et en interrogeant à la fois la réalité et le soi

La présente étude vise à montrer le retour du romancier grâce à ses souvenirs en exil à son pays natal; par la réappropriation du passé avec ses divers événements sous sa forme imaginaire vue que celle-ci n'est rien d'autre qu'une sorte de pratique du réel. Une pratique qui se manifeste par la reproduction ou la transcendance de cette réalité, par la réorganisation de ses relations et leur formulation à nouveau.

Mots- clés: roman, imagination, réalité, exil, mémoire.

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Introduction

The novel is an art form known for its remarkable capacity for transformation, evolution, and diversity, rendering it exceptionally well-suited for portraying a dynamic reality characterized by constant evolution rather than stability.(Ibrahim, 2000, p. 159) Additionally, the novel relies on imagination, which serves to create a fresh, distinct, and unparalleled narrative text. In particular, imagination can be viewed as a form of engaging with reality, involving the reproduction, arrangement, or reformation of it." (Khomri, 2002, p. 43-44) Consequently this phenomenon has paved the way for contemporary novelists, enabling them to utilize their personal experiences and events in their creative endeavors to express their perspectives on specific themes and to achieve a fulfilling creative exploration.

Living in exile, the Syrian novelist drew upon his memory to recollect his past, encompassing its diverse array of events. The literature of exile, " being literature of recovery, cannot be fully encapsulated by any set of hypothetical propositions, given the narrative and novelistic imagination that the Syrian's memory contains regarding his journey into exile…"(Azzam, 2015) and this means that moving away from the homeland and «migrating to a strange place, Where the disconnection from the reference space creates in the individual self a dance on the sides between «here» and «there»"(Abdul Latif, 2015, p.1) and the Kurdish Syrian novelist "Haitham Hussein" revisited his homeland through his memories during his period of exile, particularly as his perspective "emerges when he highlights how the text delves into the idea of homeland and the aspirations that lend a distinct character, setting it apart from any other collective conception of space." (Mustafa, 2012, p. 23) In crafting his novel "A Weed in Paradise" across different locations such as the Emirates, Cairo, Istanbul, and eventually Britain, the author, Haitham Hussein, recaptured the essence of his homeland through both his own memories and those of his protagonists. The heightened sense of suffering experienced during his people's plight coupled with his personal experience of exile, compelled him to employ memory as a tool for articulating the pain and aspirations of the Kurdish community in his hometown. Even after being compelled to leave for Damascus, he perceived this distant city in multiple senses, both geographically and culturally removed from his own.

Concerning the Kurdish community, while in exile, novelist endeavored to recollect the experiences of his people through his memory heavily relying on his imagination. As writing unfolds, the actual distances become blurred influencing the author's perspective during the narration of details. However, as perceived by "Haitham Hussein", geographical distances often offer the novelist a chance to contemplate the circumstances he encountered both at his present location and his homeland. Thus, this study will initiate a series of questions, including: Why did the novelist resort to memory ? Is it the only technology that helps him reveal his suffering in exile ? Or is it a source for bringing the events of the novel ? Can a novelist separate from his identity and transcend it ? What is the dominant theme ? What is the nature of the image of exile that he presented through his narrative text ?

1 - A structural approach

Titled "A Noxious Weed in Paradise", the novel is categorized as a medium-sized work spanning approximately two hundred and twenty pages (220), divided into thirty-four chapters, each bearing a distinct title. The chapters display a variety of themes and tones, possibly reflecting the transient and fluctuating nature of the human experience. Such diversity mirrors the unpredictable trajectory of life, where the destination remains elusive. (Fakhri, 2009, p. 14) The novel was further distinguished by its unconventional and unresolved conclusion. The author surprised readers with the open ending's nature, asserting, "…it will not end…". (Haitham, 2017, p. 217)

The word "weed" has been interpreted to mean wet pasture, which is quickly pastured in the spring. (Ibn Manzur, p. 601) In this context, the "weed" symbolizes a delicate, non-woody plant with a detrimental impact, signifying its lack of beneficial attributes. Moreover, the notion of harm stands in direct contrast to benefit, highlighting how an individual may simultaneously cause harm while reaping benefits. Furthermore, "paradise" refers to a lush valley, also recognized as Rawdah in Arabic, often associated with a garden within the concept of Paradise. (Ibn Manzur, p. 603) In the novel, the concept of paradise represents the essence of the life of the Kurdish individual, who perceives their own life and personal realm as their own version of paradise. When external forces intrude, they are akin to harmful weeds, seeking to inflict harm and simultaneously derive benefit. The narrator reflects. "I am not seeking an answer for myself as to whether I am a harmful weed in a deceptive, illusory paradise. Many of those I recall deemed the other as a harmful weed in their paradise, holding them accountable for disrupting the tranquility of their days. Without the constant intrusion, their life would have resembled an endlessly renewing paradise". (Haitham, 2017, p. 10)

Among the prominent figures disturbing the tranquility of the town of Amuda were the first assistant, Osko, Mahjoub, Al-Warda's husband, and others who actively sought to demean the town's inhabitants, marginalize them, sow discord, and strip them of their sense of identity. Throughout the narrative, the author employs a knowledgeable narrator, embodied by a silent impartial female observer, who articulates, "I long to laugh and shout at the top of my lungs, not out of a plea for assistance, but for the sheer joy of expressing myself, to satisfy the yearning for my own voice, which I've yearned for until it became an obsession." This reflects her sense of despair and a realization that she had become voiceless. (Haitham, 2017, p. 8)

In the context of exile, the author endeavored, through the lens of memory, to retrace the footsteps of Syrian Kurds displaced from their far-flung cities and villages in northern Syria to the outskirts of Damascus. This displacement occurred following the Kurdish uprising on March 12, 2004, beginning in Qamishlo and spreading to Amuda, Al-Darbasiyah, and other regions. The tyrannical Baath Party regime, which has held power in Syria, has long perpetrated injustices against the Kurdish populace, adamantly refusing to acknowledge their presence on

their historic land and repeatedly attempting to obliterate the Kurdish identity. (ANF NEWS, 2019)

This historical epoch holds significant sway within the author's imagination, leading him to explore the profound changes in the mindset of the Kurdish individual following these events. The growing sense of alienation after departure is traced through the experiences of characters in a town that remains unnamed, yet bears striking resemblances to the features and geography of his hometown, "Amouda". Through the protagonist's recollections, true exile, as perceived by the novelist, "s gauged by one's detachment from the concerns of the people and by lending support to the oppressor. It is evident that detachment from the people's struggles, as well as the absence of shared pain hopes, dreams, and aspirations, constitutes the most severe form of exile in literature. This form of exile confines literary expression, suffocantes it, détaches it from its context, and strips it of its significance, rendering it estranged from the spirit of the era. It becomes a marginalized entity, deprived and bereft, subsisting on meager remuants and hesitating to delve into the cycles of agony in order to engage in the healing process, discernment, and enlightenment. " (Haitham, 2013, p. 203)

The dedication, "Who will dispel my estrangement and darkness, Nisreen, Hevi, and Rose" poignantly encapsulates the author's sense of isolation and despair in exile, intensifying his poignant longing for the homeland lost due to circumstances beyond his control. In his view, all nations are characterized by hypocrisy, leaving him to find solace solely in his feelings of alienation and darkness. His children, bearers of the Syrian Kurdish identity, play a significant role in alleviating this newfound darkness and detachment.

We can deduct from the inaugural chapter the novelist's apprehension, particularly regarding "the author's voice... his presence in all instances remains prominently visible, concurrently concealed, whether he delves into the mind of a character or withdraws from it, whether in alignment with or divergent from their perspectives. "As he shifts his viewpoint, he invariably lingers in the background, observing the scenes from a distance, with the image of the author (often implicit) persistently woven throughout the text." (Muhammad, 2006, p. 238) The novelist, Haitham Hussein, remained positioned behind the scenes, distant from the narrator, posing questions to her: Will any of them comprehend that they are, in some way, dismantling my being...? Did I truly live a day somewhere ? Where was my existence cent ered? How did I navigate through life ? Where will I bring this cycle of absurdity to a close and how ? Is this submersion a reflection of revelation ? Concealed elements of my being: Does the instant of liberation align with the instant of metamorphosis into the chronic role of the hunted ?.

All, of these inquiries indicate the bewilderment and unrest experienced by the novelist in his exile, as articulated through the words of one of his characters, who themselves exist in a state of internal exile, akin to the exile experienced within his own country. This sentiment is captured by the character's statement, "I was in Syria and yet did not feel I was living in my homeland" This sentiment prompted the author, during his own exile, to hark back to his local environment through his memory, crafting a novel that epitomizes a Syrian-Kurdish identity,

distinct from that of others. Consequently, this suffering impelled him to articulate the plight of the Kurdish individual, whether exiled from their land or marginalized within it, a bitterness only truly understood by those who have lived through it. Enduring the agony of separation and isolation, the novelist's soul remains engulfed by a profound sense of alienation. Despite the geographical distance from his homeland, he found within his recollections another form of exile, one that the Kurdish individual expe "A Noxious Weed in Paradise" serves as a bridge, connecting the exiled self, as the author's spiritual essence remains intertwined with the plight of the exiled group within the homeland. This is evident in the way his memories of his people, living in exile within their own nation, stripped of their rights, freedom, and identity, lingered vividly in his mind.

2- Memory and cultural identity

Cultural identity encompasses the intricate amalgamation of memories, perspectives, values, symbols, artistic expressions, and aspirations that safeguard the unique essence of a human collective, comprising a nation. This cultural identity persists within the context of the group's evolutionary dynamics, its capacity for interaction, and its propensity for exchange and mutual influence. (Muhammad, 1998, p. 14) Hence, cultural identity encapsulates all facets intertwined with the social, cultural, and political dimensions. Delving into the events within his novel, the author revisits his memories to illustrate how oppression fosters a deeper attachment to the Syrian Kurdish identity. Consequently, the novel's distinctiveness emanates from the Kurdish culture that the author both carries and embraces. Within the narrative, he delineates the distinctiveness of this cultural identity, showcasing its manifestation across social, cultural, and political dimensions.

The social dimension is palpable in the author's depiction of Kurdish individuals and families, focusing on their positions, occupations, and societal standing. In parallel, the cultural facet is evident in the portrayal of Kurdish society, its customs, and traditions. Additionally, the political aspect is underscored by the author's exploration of the Kurdish community's right to integration within the Syrian state and the right to citizenship. This society, born out of friction and sustained intermarriage across successive generations, is epitomized by the narrator's reflection: "Abu Mamoun advocated intermarriage between the Manara people, displaced from Quneitra and the Golan, and others displaced from the Kurdish regions... This represents the sole method to foster the development of a new identity that alleviates the simmering grievances between the two factions… ." (Haitham, 2017, p. 116) The narrator delved into her memories of the past to portray the authentic fusion between the various Syrian Kurdish communities, emphasizing the indispensable role of the Kurdish identity within the fabric of Syria. Consequently, this identity remains inseparable from its existence, impervious to alterations or distortions. Despite composing the novel while in exile, the author steadfastly maintained his allegiance to his Syrian Kurdish identity, resisting the adoption of a new persona. Utilizing his memories in exile to pen this novel underscores the author's incapacity to detach himself from his identity and transcend it into a new one.

3 **- Memory and language**

Language serves as a pivotal element through which exile literature is perceived, encapsulating not only mere letters but also ideas and emotions that the author endeavors to communicate to the discerning reader, facilitating an understanding of their thoughts and perspectives. Language stands as a creative tool that aids the novelist in conveying their narrative to the reader. Haitham Hussein, a Syrian Kurd living in exile in Britain, exists in an environment dominated by the English language, yet remains deeply rooted in the preservative power of the Arabic language. Consequently, "A Noxious Weed in Paradise" was penned in Arabic, reflecting the author's upbringing and formative years in Syria. Writing a novel in a foreign language demands a significant endeavor,"as the novel represents a challenging literary genre that necessitates not only technical linguistic proficiency but also a nuanced linguistic capacity that is cultivated and honed from early childhood. While a critic may compose articles or prepare research akin to scientific theses, crafting a novel in a foreign language presents a distinct challenge, not solely attributable to a lack of options available to the exiled novelist but also to the potential limitations in linguistic ability and the absence of a linguistic repertoire that qualifies them to write novels in an alternate language".(Latifa, 2020)

Therefore, the novel authored by "Haitham Hussein" is affiliated with the Syrian Kurdish identity, intricately intertwined with memory. Given that Arabic serves as the official language in Syria and the novelist himself is of Syrian Kurdish descent, the form of the novel is Arabic while its essence remains inherently Kurdish. Consequently, the novel belongs to the realm of Kurdish literature, authored by a Kurdish novelist yet expressed in the Arabic language.

4- **The first memory and exile**

Exile, whether internal or external, stands as the central theme permeating the novel, serving as the cornerstone for the narrative's approach. The author relied on the mechanism of memory to evoke the plight of his people. In the author's view, the Kurds endured the agony of displacement multiple times, compelled by circumstances beyond their control. The novel chronicles their coerced expulsion from their homeland, both within the country itself and beyond its borders, as a consequence of the harrowing conditions they faced in their province. They grappled with indignity and impoverishment, stripped of official documents verifying their affiliation, while internal divisions and fragmentation plagued the Kurdish community. As the Syrian Kurdish individuals increasingly felt like a stranger in their own land, the author traced the lives of marginalized characters in the town, enduring poverty and societal alienation. This was particularly evident in the depiction of the character "Moroi" as exemplified by the following excerpt: "...he was impoverished and disregarded, without anyone showing him respect. His caustic tongue somewhat shielded him from being the subject of ridicule, yet it failed to secure him any protection or regard. Despite his harshness, the abrupt insults he hurled ensured that mouths remained shut regarding his life story and the narrative of those preceding him". (Haitham, 2017, p. 200)

Perhaps this poverty prompted some families to practice prostitution, and this was evident in the Warda family, As the narrator says: "...he remained obsessed with the younger one more than her other two sisters, who had many relationships and regular clients", (Haitham, 2017, p. 35) and the narrator means "Brendar" and his relationship with Warda and her daughters, and how he divided his time between them to have sexual intercourse with the mother and her daughters.

Moreover, some resorted to smuggling, including "Brendar", operating discreetly under the protection of the first assistant. The narrator remarks, "Brendar would accompany the first assistant during his nightly ventures, with the latter halting patrols at the town's western entry point as Brendar facilitated the transport and exchange of his contraband and merchandise." (Haitham, 2017, p. 43) Similarly, the first assistant, "Al-Nisnas", exploited his position within the postal unit to surveil and document communications, subsequently leveraging this information for purposes of extortion and intimidation. He meticulously preserved these reports, gradually exacerbating the town's moral degradation and steering its inhabitants toward licentiousness for everyone to find themselves in the quagmire of the forbidden pleasures. (Haitham, 2017, p 65) Furthermore, the regime methodically targeted the Kurds, surveilling even their Friday sermons, and exploiting certain Kurdish attributes, such as their perceived obstinacy, deeming it a lucrative opportunity. These circumstances culminated in the Kurds' departure, leading them towards Damascus, a city geographically and culturally distant from their Kurdish society, intensifying their sense of compounded alienation.

The novel, as a profoundly emancipatory literary genre, offers the novelist unrestricted freedom in depicting this theme. It allows for the exploration of exile from various perspectives, be they exotic, realistic, magical, or mythical. Additionally, it facilitates narrative diversions, streams of consciousness, and recollections, while enabling the incorporation of diverse styles and structures from other literary genres. (Muhammad, 1967, p. 39) This approach is notably discernible in the works of the novelist Haitham Hussein. He tackled the theme of exile from a resolutely realistic standpoint, delving into the intricacies of some of his characters' consciousness, unveiling their struggles with oppression and estrangement. Employing the mechanism of memory, he effectively portrays the experiences of his Kurdish people, compelling the reader to grasp the profound extent of their suffering. Simultaneously existing in a state of internal exile, he empathizes with the plight of the exiled individual. Despite being physically present in Syria, he remains detached from a sense of true belonging to his homeland. In the novelist's perception, the Kurdish individual in Syria grapples with a perpetual state of alienation and obscurity.

5- Images of exile in the novel

Exile means expulsion, deportation, exclusion, ostracism, and removal. Exile is the place of exile. (Muhammad, 1967, p. 23) The novelist Haitham Hussein presented in his novel the suffering of the Kurdish people in their homeland, as they were stripped of their identity and

excluded, so the self was forcibly displaced from Place and community in search of safety. Images of exile appeared in the novel, including internal exile and external exile.

1.5 - Internal exile

"The fictional self (the narrator or the main character) may suffer from political pressures that push him to (or be forced to) move between cities within the country itself, or live on the border cities." (Muhammad, 1967, p. 35) In the novel "A Noxious Weed in Paradise," Haitham Hussein vividly depicts the struggles faced by Kurdish families in their town, compelling them to make the difficult decision to depart and seek refuge in Damascus. This sentiment is poignantly conveyed through the narrator's poignant statement, "There is no goodness remaining in this afflicted town". This proclamation epitomizes Moroy's justification for his yearning to migrate to Damascus, where the vast sea of unfamiliar faces allows for the erasure of the past and the commencement of a fresh chapter. In this new environment, one's previous history and origins hold no significance. As depicted in the narrative, Moroi, Bahu, and their two daughters relocated to an address near Nimrudu in the Damascus countryside, seeking solace and a fresh beginning. (Haitham, 2017, p. 110)

And after the arrival of this immigrant family, she settled in the village of "Al-Manara"n Eastern Ghouta, and Morawi was able to secure a house and a shop thanks to Mamoun al-Kurdi. After the massive displacement of Kurdish families, the Kurdish slum neighborhood was later formed and Morawi became his chosen one (Haitham, 2017, p 112-113) "the wave of migration began after the siege that exhausted the region and the drought that affected For several seasons, its people lost many of their livelihoods and sources of income, and they found themselves hungry trapped in their villages and homes, and had no choice but to move to the capital. There are job opportunities for their children who grew up and began looking for ways to prove themselves and change their lives." (Haitham, 2017, p. 113)

Consequently, after the migration, the Kurds endeavored to acclimate to their new circumstances, yet their suffering continued to mount. They found themselves inhabiting haphazardly assembled cardboard houses within the vicinity of their previous neighborhood. Despite the cautionary sign posted about the "Buzuq Lazq" neighborhood, Abu Mamoun opted to display a sign on the corner of Murwi's shop that bore the inscription: "Migrants' Neighborhood" although some referred to it as the "Kurdish Neighborhood." (Haitham, 2017, p.115) "Morwi" also worked on renting tents to new arrivals who could not afford to pay. Renting a house, taking a house on a mortgage, or buying it in installments. Some of them were called "Hajiyat camps", where drivers would go to rest and spend hours of fun and entertainment, and there was a group that traded their women in exchange for money. (Haitham, 2017, p. 117) The plight of Kurdish women within this internal exile was particularly poignant ; lacking the shield of protection for their dignity, they found themselves vulnerable to

the predatory intentions of those who sought to defile their honor. The narrator's account underscores this harrowing reality: "Moroi was acutely aware of the persistent harassment inflicted upon young women by minibus drivers and factory owners. Despite this awareness, he remained obstinate, callously asserting that one of them would inevitably be lured away from her home, alongside other girls, and enticed into laboring in factories.

This deplorable practice was encouraged, particularly given that the capital entailed different financial burdens compared to those of the town. (Haitham, 2017, p. 119) Jamila, too, fell victim to the predatory advances of "Abu Ftaisa," who sought to violate her. The narrator poignantly conveys the scene: "Jamila was stricken with horror as she witnessed him transform into a ravenous wolf, intent on consuming her. His saliva dripped from his mouth, his repugnant stench filled the air, and his malevolent gaze pierced through her. Overwhelmed by fear and revulsion, she let out a piercing scream… ." (Haitham, 2017, p. 123)

However, Moroi successfully acclimated to the unfamiliar circumstances and capitalized on his daughter Jamila's beauty, leveraging it alongside his own favor with others. Entrusting her, he orchestrated her marriage to secure not only a home and a shop but also some parcels of land from her suitor. Consequently, this transaction fulfilled his insatiable longing for power, recognition, and all that he coveted yet lacked within the town. In essence, his departure with Bahu and their two daughters symbolized a flight from the torment of hell, though the siege upon him relentlessly intensified with each passing day. (Haitham, 2017, p. 120) Furthermore, Jamila, propelled by her striking beauty, found her way into the realm of art, eventually establishing herself as an actress. Assisted by a fellow actress named Nagham, she was introduced to a director and screenwriter, thus paving her path into the world of acting.

The narrator reflects on this transformation, stating, "The sight of Jamila commanding attention evoked a sense of moral superiority within me. I observed how the men's gazes nearly consumed her... It brought me immense satisfaction to hear Abu Mamoun bemoan his foolishness and mourn the loss of Jamila… ." (Haitham, 2017, p. 21) Consequently, there were individuals who managed to navigate and adjust to the circumstances they faced.

Notably, the character of "Brendar" emerges, opting for emigration subsequent to his arrest and the relentless effort to strip him of "every vestige of attire, principles, and ethics. I desired his complete detachment from all that anchored him to his reality, his town, its inhabitants, and its history… ." (Haitham, 2017, p. 173) Consequently, he resolved to depart, finding solace in Damascus, a refuge sought by Moroi and many others following suit. Additionally, we encounter "Osco," who, after collaborating with the "first assistant", faced expulsion from the neighborhood. He, too, relocated to Damascus, reaching out to Moroi for aid and support. However, their interaction was short-lived, as town demonstrations ensued, inciting profound apprehension within Moroi. He feared the brutal retribution of the regime, citing various punitive measures previously imposed by the authorities, which he viewed as tyrannical and deserving of condemnation for depriving the populace of basic necessities, imposing constraints

on construction and administrative dealings, and subjecting them to collective criminalization. (Haitham, 2017, p. 196)

After Briandar returned from Damascus to Al-Manara, they told him that patrols had passed and opened fire randomly in the street, killing a man and his son. After this incident, the journey of displacement between cities and the isthmus began. (Haitham, 2017, p. 188) Confronted with this novel turn of events, Moroi found himself at a loss. Despite establishing a foothold in the lighthouse, the prospect of departure once again loomed before him. The narrator contemplates, "How could he relinquish his privileges now that he had ascended to a position of leadership within the community, only to find himself subservient to the new masters of the land? The wave of migration lent him support, solidifying his presence and fostering a newfound persona for him... But where could he possibly go? As he observed the displaced individuals diligently packing their possessions and luggage, determined to relocate and seek refuge in distant lands, it became apparent that their destination lay beyond the confines of the borders." (Haitham, 2017, p. 120-121)

Conversely, some opted to return to their original town from which they were initially displaced. Bahu proposed to Moroi that they relocate to one such location and commence anew, particularly since they possessed sufficient funds to establish themselves. However, the prospect of embracing the dilapidated locale loomed before him, with the prospect of the labyrinthine site losing its defining features, its walls caving in from various angles, and his gravest nightmares materializing before his very eyes. (Haitham, 2017, p. 205) Consequently, the Kurds endured a complex series of journeys. Post-events, it became evident that another form of displacement transpired, whether it entailed a return to the original sites where they encountered a distinct form of estrangement or sought refuge beyond the confines of their homeland, transcending the borders. This theme was palpable in the experiences of characters such as Brendar, Hasko, and Jarek Vizi.

2.5- External exile

This pattern is achieved when “the fictional self (the narrator or the character) suffers pressures...that push him to leave the homeland and wander in various exiles”. (Muhammad, 1967, p. 36) Indeed, this theme resonates profoundly within the novel. The character of Brendar, following his displacement to Damascus and subsequent events, chooses to depart once more, opting not to return to his hometown but to another distant locale. He articulates his inner turmoil, expressing, "I now await the vessel to transport me to another wound, where I may become a captive of my own name, identity, and appearance... Do you witness me unburdening myself and unearthing my confessions here on journey to the other side, seeking the shores of sorrow, defeat, and shattered spirits, in preparation for my solace for my wounds and respite for my grief ?"(Haitham, 2017, p. 190)

So Brindar crossed the border and moved to Beirut ; He confesses by saying : “I could not bear to be in Beirut if it were not for those necessary visits. I would have been suffocated by its atmosphere. Everything in it is electric, tense, and vulnerable to forming a spark that ignites an

endless war. People are lurking around each other for the slightest slip or omission...". (Haitham, 2017, p. 67)

This admission reflects a profound sense of unease. Brendar, currently residing in Beirut, grapples with considerable distress and tension. Similarly, the character of Hasko also journeys to Beirut subsequent to his departure from Damascus. Additionally, we encounter the character of Jarak Fizi, known as Abu Al-Habash, who left his hometown to evade the persecution inflicted upon him by the agents of the regime. He embarked on this journey in search of employment to support his family. Jarak consistently depicted Beirut as "a city of generosity befitting our merits... a realm of opportunities and aspirations...He dutifully sent money to his family, sustaining a modest existence with an air of lavishness and pride." (Haitham, 2017, p. 73-74) Consequently, Fifizi embraces the reality of his current exile, seeking safety, security, and a life devoid of oppression or indignity. Ultimately, it becomes evident that the geographical distance provided the novelist with an opportunity for introspection and reassessment of his experiences in his native country prior to his choice of exile. Consequently, he embarked on a figurative return through his working memory while in exile, allowing him to reflect on the tribulations faced by his Syrian-Kurdish compatriots within their homeland. Despite being estranged from his homeland, his present, and his memories, the people he left behind experienced intricate journeys in the wake of the revolution.

Conclusion

The events within the novel underscore the fact that despite his physical exile in Britain, the author remained unable to sever ties with his memories, perhaps due to a reluctance to assimilate into a new cultural context. The novelist's persona remained intricately linked to his homeland and community, as evidenced by the persistent stirrings within his working memory, conjuring vivid depictions of his compatriots enduring a form of exile within their own country, Syria. Their rights, freedoms, and identities had been ruthlessly stripped away.

Alienation continued to pervade the novelist's soul, despite the physical distance from his homeland. He delved into the notion that exile, whether from a place or within it, prompts an individual to seek out their own paradise, fiercely defending it against any perceived threats, wherein anyone who encroaches upon it is considered a harmful weed to be resisted.

The novel effectively depicts the profound bitterness of the sentiment of alienation, mirroring the enduring struggles faced by the Kurdish individual who grapples with a pervasive sense of detachment within their homeland. This internal alienation engenders a profound sense of distress, foreboding, bitterness, and oppression.

The novel further portrays various images of exile, including instances of internal displacement, evidenced in characters who were compelled by harsh circumstances to relocate to different cities within the same country, such as the Kurds who were forced to depart for the geographically and culturally distant city of Damascus. External exile, on the other hand, manifests in characters who departed their homeland for other countries following the recent

upheavals, as they sought refuge in Beirut. Notable examples include Brendar, Hasko, and Jarek Vezi, all seeking solace and stability in foreign lands.

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