MASTER DISSERTATION

Letters and Foreign Languages English Studies

Literature and Civilization

Hybridity in Transnational North African Anglophone Literature: The Cases of Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* and Mohamed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream*

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master Degree in Civilization and Literature

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Academic Year: 2024-2025

Dedication

I am grateful to Allah who gave me patience and strength to dive in this work journey.

I dedicate with pleasure my dissertation to my loving parents whose continuous support and encouragement made it possible for me to do this work.

I dedicate this achievement to who stands the rain with them, when they have a choice to be dry my dear sister, my brothers, and my best friends naming each one of them.

Acknowledgments

I sincerely thank all the teachers who have supported and encouraged me throughout my academic journey, helping shape me as both a student and a researcher. I am especially grateful to my supervisor for his invaluable mentorship and guidance. I have great pleasure in expressing my sincere thanks to my supervisor Mr. Adel Boulegroune. He has been a shining beacon, always guiding me in the right direction. This dissertation was completed under his invaluable guidance and supervision, and his encouragement truly made this work a reality. I am honored to have written this dissertation with his insightful feedback and advice.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Jury members: Ms.Asma Taalah and Dr. Boumaraf Hanane. I am deeply grateful for their invaluable commitment to this work. Their dedication to reading, examining, and engaging in insightful discussions of my dissertation, along with their time and intellectual contributions, are truly appreciated.

Abstract

North African diasporic literature writers are known for their extensive use of both cultural and linguistic hybridity to portray the hybrid fragmented life that their characters live. This dissertation aims to examine the manifestations and implications of cultural and linguistic hybridity in transnational North African diasporic literature of Mohamed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* and Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account*. In doing so, the qualitative and descriptive research methods are grounded in Homi Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity and Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia. The study conducts a detailed textual analysis of the primary texts alongside critical engagement with secondary scholarship on postcolonialism, diasporic identity, and narrative form. Both texts exemplify Bhabha's "third space" as a site of counter discursive production, where dialogic interactions between colonial and indigenous discourses generate new significations. The analysis revealed that both texts exemplify Bhabha's "third space." Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* depicts cultural hybridity through concepts like "unhomeliness", linguistic hybridity through hybrid naming and genre blending. Lalami's *The Moor's Account* illustrates cultural hybridity through dual identity and the bridging of traditions, complemented by linguistic hybridity in multilingualism and polyphonic narratives. Both authors use these tools as a transformative force, enabling characters to redefine identities and navigate postcolonial belonging. This research significantly contributes to scholarship by detailing how hybridity profoundly impacts identity. While insightful, its focus on two authors and specific hybridity forms suggests future research could expand authorial scope, explore other hybridity types, apply new theoretical lenses, or conduct comparative studies across diasporic traditions.

Key Words: Diasporic literature, Cultural, hybridity, Transnational, Heteroglossia, Third space

الملخص

تُعرف أعمال كُتاب أدب المهجر في شمال إفريقيا باستخدامهم المكثف للمزج الثقافي واللغوي لتصوير الحياة الهجينة والمُجزأة التي يعيشها شخصياتهم. تهدف هذه الأطروحة، المعنونة بـ ''التهجين في أدب شمال إفريقيا العابر للقوميات باللغة الإنجليزية''، إلى دراسة مظاهر المزج الثقافي واللغوي وتداعياتها في أدب المهجر العابر للحدود لشمال إفريقيا، وذلك من خلال تحليل رواية *حلم آيسلندي* لمحمد مغاني ورواية *حساب المغربي* لليلى لعلامي. تستند المنهجية المتبعة في هذه الدراسة الوصفية والنوعية إلى نظرية الهجنة الثقافية لهومي بابا ومفهوم التهجين اللغوي لميخائيل باختين. تجري الدراسة تحليلات نصية مفصلة للنصوص الأساسية، بالإضافة إلى تناول نقدي للأبحاث الثانوية حول ما بعد الاستعمارية، الهوية الشتاتية، وشكل السرد. يجسد كلا النصين "البينية" لبابا كموقع لإنتاج خطاب مضاد، حيث تولد التفاعلات الحوارية بين الخطابات الاستعمارية والأصلية دلالات جديدة. كشف التحليل أن كلا النصين يجسدان "البينية" لبابا. يُصوِّر كتاب *حلم آيسلندي* لمغاني الهجنة الثقافية من خلال مفاهيم مثل "عدم الانتماء"، بالإضافة إلى الهجنة اللغوية عبر التسمية الهجينة ومزج الأنواع الأدبية. أما *حساب المغربي* للعلامي فتوضح الهجنة الثقافية من خلال الهوية المزدوجة وسد الفجوات بين التقاليد، وتُكمِّلها الهجنة اللغوية في التعددية اللغوية والسرد المتعدد الأصوات. يستخدم كلا الكاتبين هذه الأدوات كقوة تحويلية تمكن الشخصيات من إعادة تعريف هوياتها والتنقل في تعقيدات الانتماء في عالم ما بعد الاستعمار. يساهم هذا البحث بشكل كبير في الدراسات الأكاديمية من خلال تفصيل كيفية تأثير الهجنة العميق على الهوية. وبينما يقدم رؤى مهمة، فإن تركيزه على مؤلفين اثنين وأشكال محددة من الهجنة يشير إلى أن الأبحاث المستقبلية يمكن أن توسع النطاق التأليفي، وتستكشف أنواعًا أخرى من الهجنة، وتطبق نظريات جديدة، أو تجري دراسات مقارنة عبر التقاليد الأدبية المهجرية المختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أدب المهجر، ثقافي، تهجين، عابر للقوميات، تعدد الأصوات، مساحة بينية
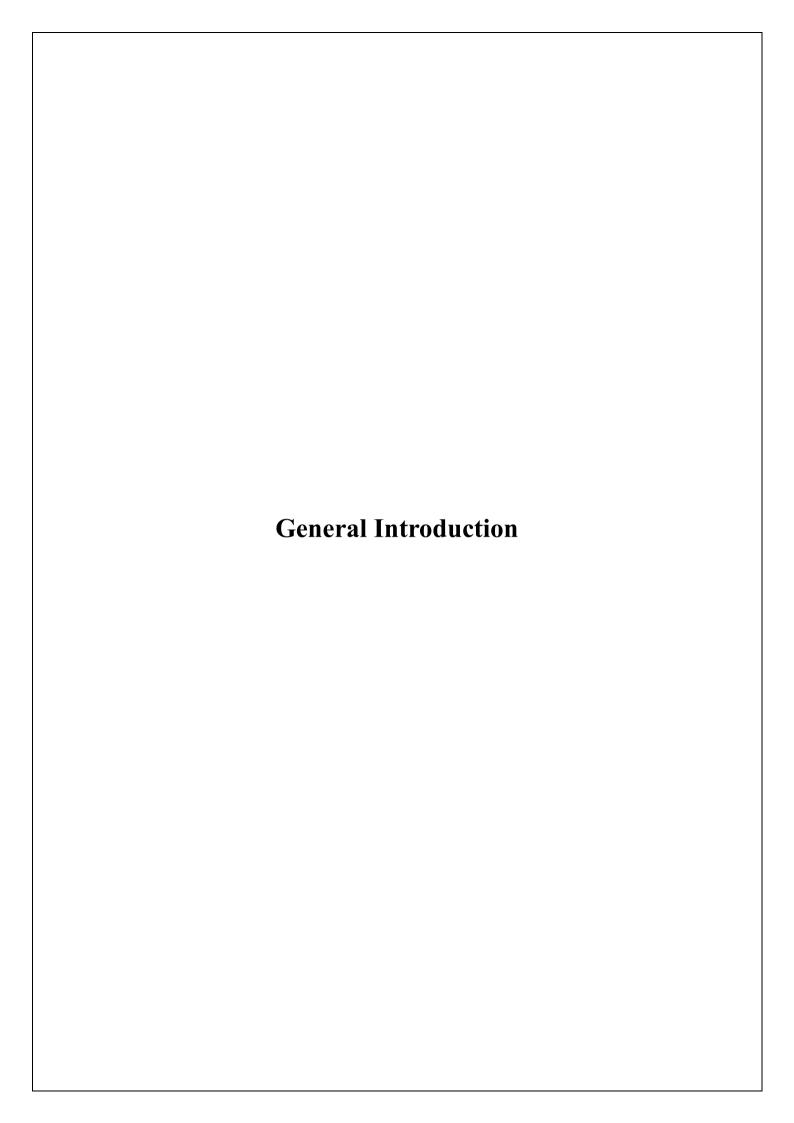
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General Introduction

Background of the Study

North African literature has undergone a remarkable evolution, particularly in its linguistic choices and cultural representations. Historically, the literary landscape of North Africa was largely shaped by Francophone writers, a testament to the enduring influence of French colonialism that has left an indelible mark on the region's cultural and intellectual fabric. This body of work bridged local traditions with the French language and cultural paradigms, enabling North African authors to engage with worldwide audiences while grappling with the complexities of postcolonial identity. Esteemed figures such as Albert Camus, Assia Djebar, and Tahar Ben Jelloun exemplify this legacy, employing the French language to delve into themes of colonialism, resistance, and the rich tapestry of cultural hybridity.

Yet, a significant transformation has emerged in modern times with the rise of Anglophone literature from North Africa. This new wave captures the voices of a generation of writers who increasingly opt for English as their medium, seeking to reach a broader and more varied readership. By embracing English, these authors tackle themes of identity, migration, and hybridity in ways that resonate with contemporary global issues. This linguistic shift liberates many from the constraints of their colonial past, allowing them to investigate the intricate dynamics of cultural and linguistic fusion. Furthermore, choosing English reflects a conscious effort to engage with global dialogues surrounding migration, displacement, and identity, situating North African literature within a wider transnational context.

This evolution is particularly poignant in our fast-globalizing world, where the lines between local and global, home and foreign, continue to blur. The notion of hybridity provides a compelling framework for understanding these literary shifts. Introduced by Homi Bhabha in his seminal work, The Location of Culture (1994), hybridity highlights the fusion of cultural, linguistic, and historical narratives that arise from the interactions between colonizer and colonized. Bhabha's insights challenge rigid notions of identity, illustrating the fluid and

transformative nature of cultural exchanges. Central to his theory is the concept of the "third space," a realm where conflicting cultural influences converge, facilitating the emergence of new identities. In the realm of diasporic literature, hybridity serves as a powerful catalyst, enabling characters to navigate the tensions between their native and host cultures.

This theme resonates deeply within North African diasporic narratives, where migration and displacement often necessitate a continuous renegotiation of identity. Authors like Laila Lalami and Mohamed Magani harness hybridity to portray their characters' experiences of living in a liminal space, straddling the line between their homeland and their adopted society. Their works illuminate the multifaceted nature of hybrid identities, revealing the diverse experiences of the diaspora. Two notable examples that encapsulate these themes are Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* (2014) and Mohammed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* (1997). In *The Moor's Account*, Lalami introduces Estebanico, a Moroccan slave grappling with identity in colonial America. Through Estebanico's journey, Lalami addresses themes of race, religion, and societal power dynamics, crafting a counter-narrative to dominant Eurocentric histories. His quest to understand his Moroccan heritage amid the challenges of the new world epitomizes the dual struggles of external and internal identity. Similarly, Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* explores the lives of the Algerian community in Iceland, shedding light on their battles with cultural alienation and the quest for belonging.

Magani intricately examines the tensions between the migrants' Algerian roots and their Icelandic environment, underscoring the complexities of cultural assimilation. The novel vividly illustrates hybridity as characters navigate the third space between their origins and their new home, perpetually redefining their identities in response to both. Through the lens of hybridity, Lalami and Magani frame their narratives to elucidate how their characters grapple with identity amid cultural dislocation and conflict. This study aspires to deepen our understanding of hybridity's role in identity formation within North African diasporic literature

by closely analyzing these compelling works. Furthermore, it seeks to underscore the unique contributions of these two authors to the global discourse on hybridity, migration, and identity in an interconnected world.

Statement of the Problem

North African literature emerging from the diaspora frequently delves into the intricate tapestry of cultural and linguistic blending. However, there remains a significant scarcity of research on how this blending impacts the reconstruction of identity within specific diasporic environments. In Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* and Mohammed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream*, the protagonists grapple with a profound dilemma. They strive to cling to their native tongues and traditions while simultaneously navigating the vast and often alien terrains of their new lives. This internal struggle becomes particularly poignant in the context of migration and displacement, where individuals are in a constant quest to redefine who they are. While the field of postcolonial studies has thoroughly investigated the notion of hybridity, the vital contributions of North African diasporic authors to this discourse remain largely uncharted. This analysis aims to fill that void by examining how Lalami and Magani weave the theme of hybridity into the fabric of their characters' identity formations. By concentrating on the crossroads of language, culture, and identity within diasporic frameworks, this research aspires to illuminate the transformative power of hybridity in shaping the experiences of those who find themselves navigating between worlds.

Research Main Question

How do Mohammed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* and Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* depict types of hybridity as a transforming factor in redefining identity within diasporic experiences?

Sub Questions

1. How does hybridity manifest itself in transnational literature?

2. What type(s) of hybridity does Laila Lalami use in her novel *The Moor's Account*?

3. What type(s) of hybridity does Mohammed Magani use in his novel *An Icelandic Dream*?

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative and descriptive research method, drawing on an eclectic theoretical framework that integrates Homi Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity and Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia. This will involve a close reading of Mohamed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* and Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account*. Data will be extracted from all kinds of resources including books, magazines, websites and dissertations. All illustrations, moreover, will be extracted from the collection of short stories of Mohammed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* and Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account*.

Aims of the Research

The present study aims to:

1. To explore how certain types of hybridity shape's identity in Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* and Mohammed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream*.

2. To analyze the ways in which diasporic characters negotiate their identities in the "third space" of hybridity.

3. To contribute to the growing body of scholarship on North African diasporic literature and its engagement with postcolonial theories of hybridity.

4. To manifest the hidden discourses that are used by writers to express issues related to identity and in betweenness.

Scope of the Research

This study focuses on the works of Laila Lalami and Mohammed Magani as representative examples of North African diasporic literature. It examines types of hybridity through the lens of specific characters: Estebanico, a Moroccan slave in colonial America in *The Moor's Account*, Algerian narrator and Khellil the Algerian migrant protagonist in *An Icelandic Dream*.

Structure of the Research

This dissertation is divided into three chapters; one theoretical and two practical. First, the dissertation consists of a general introduction and general conclusion. The first chapter will provide the theoretical framework; introducing essential theories and concepts that support the study. Chapter two is an attempt to analyze Mohammed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* in terms of hybridity. Chapter three provides an analysis of Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* in terms of both cultural and linguistic hybridity. Finally, the general conclusion will integrate the main findings from the second and third practical chapters.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Framework

1.1 Introduction

The diasporic and transnational literature extends beyond lines and moves into the realm of complex intersections of borders, cultures, languages, and narratives. This theoretical study sheds light on the complex interpretive framework with which North African diasporic literature can be analyzed critically, placing hybridity as a central organizing principle that appears in different ways. By addressing the features of transnational and diasporic literature and primary thematic issues such as identity construction, displacement, memorization, and resistance, this chapter has shown how these texts lie within what Homi Bhabha calls the "third space" a border zone amalgam of culture and creation. The varying forms of hybridity studied: narrative, religious, cultural, and linguistic, illustrate the complex diasporic processes of crossing cultural boundaries and redefining cultural expression and identity. Instead, focusing on heteroglossia within Mikhail Bakhtin's framework is crucial to explain linguistic hybridity because it shows how languages and discourses reflecting the consciousness of subjects between worlds coexists in diasporic texts. This blend of theories fulfills the requirements of analyzing hybridity in North African diasporic literature by demonstrating how such works do, rather than only reflecting. But actively construct hybridized identities that go against essentialist ideas about belonging and culture. The theoretical concepts of hybridity and third space, as this chapter has shown, offer beneficial tools for comprehending how North African diasporic literature moves beyond the dichotomous oppositions between East and West, tradition and modernity, and center and periphery to create textual spaces where intricate processes of negotiation, translation, and creative tension give rise to new cultural formations.

1.2 Conceptualizing Hybridity and Transnational Literature

The notion of hybridity is not a contemporary construct, as it has its origins in the philosophical traditions of ancient Greece and Rome. In the Greek lexicon, the term hybris or hubris referred to an overstepping of boundaries or arrogance towards the divine, an act

regarded as a grave transgression that could warrant capital punishment under Athenian legal statutes. Aristotle defined it as "a physical or verbal assault inflicted on the victim merely for self-gratification" (Acheraïou 87).

Similarly, the Latin term hybrida, also appearing as hibrida or Irida, originally described the offspring of a domesticated female pig and a wild male boar, or the child of a free man and a slave, which could also include children of a Roman father and a foreign mother. Both Greek and Roman interpretations of biological hybridity often signaled something of little value, associating it with excess and natural or physical outrage (Acheraïou 88). This aligns with the concept of biological hybridity, which has often been perceived as subordinate.

In the 19th century, Charles Darwin's reference to hybridity in 1837 primarily concentrated on its biological dimension, particularly cross-fertilization among plants, suggesting a static essence. Nevertheless, the terminology rapidly garnered significance in both scientific and political debates, becoming intricately associated with racial theories. Throughout the period of Western colonialism, it became irrevocably connected to supremacist racial ideologies, influenced by Darwinian evolutionary frameworks that classified human populations as either superior or inferior. The mingling of whites and nonwhites was seen as leading to racial deterioration, thus perceiving biological hybridity negatively (Acheraïou 89)

Despite this condemnation, a form of "strategic imperial hybridism" emerged. Indigenous systems of governance and cultural practices were intentionally incorporated into colonial structures, illustrating that, despite their negative implications, colonial authorities adapted indigenous political frameworks (Acheraïou 88-89).

The late 20th century heralded a pivotal transformation in the discourse surrounding hybridity, shifting from 19th-century racial paradigms to a more nuanced emphasis on cultural identity. This evolution was significantly shaped by scholars, particularly those originating from formerly colonized regions. As Nyongesa articulates, hybridity in this framework denotes

the migrant's integrative approach towards the cultural practices of another group, whereby certain elements are embraced while preserving one's original identity (19).

Homi Bhabha played a crucial role in conceptualizing the application of hybridity within the realms of literature and culture. In his seminal work, The Location of Culture (1994), he delineates hybridity as the confluence of diverse cultures, which gives rise to the notion of a third space. This third space encapsulates a condition of existence that is neither entirely assimilated nor wholly belonging to a singular culture, but rather inhabiting the interstitial realm between two cultural identities (Acheraïou 90-91).

This contemporary understanding of hybridity differs significantly from its 19th-century interpretations, prioritizing cultural issues over biological determinism (Acheraïou 88). Writers such as Derek Walcott and Salman Rushdie, alongside postcolonial theorists like Homi Bhabha, have significantly reconceptualized the notion of hybridity within contemporary discourse (Acheraïou 88).

Amar Acheraïou elucidates that this transition toward a semiotic, discursive, and cultural framework was profoundly shaped by the contributions of Mikhail Bakhtin, Emile Benveniste, Jacques Lacan, and various poststructuralist and deconstructionist scholars. These theoretical advancements have notably influenced prominent postcolonial intellectuals, including Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Chakravorty Spivak (Acheraïou 89).

Edward Said's seminal work, Orientalism (2003), heavily influenced by Foucault's concepts of power, discourse, and knowledge, critically investigated colonialism's discursive tactics, exposing how the West constructed narratives about the East for imperial purposes (Acheraïou 89). However, Said's analysis, which often presented a binary view of colonial discourse and power, faced criticism for its perceived monolithic nature.

Homi Bhabha was one of the initial critics of Edward Said's perspective, introducing his concept of hybridity as a significant counterargument to Orientalism. In opposition to Said's

focus on a monolithic colonial discourse and its authoritative structures, Bhabha underscores the inherent diversity and contradictions within this discourse, thereby interrogating the binary opposition between colonizer and colonized that is foundational to Orientalism, as well as to the works of Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire. Bhabha's notion of hybridity, particularly the idea of the third space, has become integral to postcolonial and cultural studies, framing culture, discourse, and identity as fluid and multifaceted constructs. For Bhabha, hybridity is the "third space" that "enables other positions to emerge," giving rise to "something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (qtd. in Acheraïou 90-91).

The apprehension regarding hybridity and its associated racial connotations remained a colonial politics throughout the 20th century. Nonetheless, in the final two decades of that century, discourse surrounding hybridity, especially within Western academic contexts, began to shift away from prior considerations of racial intermingling. The voices discussing hybridity also shifted from primarily European leadership to intellectuals from former colonies based in Western universities. Scholars and writers such as Derek Walcott, Salman Rushdie, Assia Djebar, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Edouard Glissant, along with postcolonial thinkers like Homi Bhabha, Paul Gilroy, and Françoise Lionnet, have been instrumental in establishing métissage a term often used interchangeably with hybridity as a significant topic in cultural studies and social sciences (Acheraïou 89).

Modern migration further exemplifies the complexities of hybridity. As Thomas Elliot notes, migrants carry "only one part of the original culture and the new culture," leading to a development "on the new soil [that] is bafflingly both alike and different from the parent culture," resulting in "culture sympathy and culture clash" (qtd. in Nyongesa 84–85).

The concept of hybridity also varies significantly based on geographic context. In colonized regions, women often adopt certain practices while simultaneously asserting their

resistance. For instance, African women have skillfully woven together new identities that blend traditional values and customs with global influences (Amamio 55). Similarly, Margaret Beetham and Ann Heilmann highlight the emergence of mixed identities among women from Western nations, who navigate a balance between their historical roots and contemporary realities, challenging established norms and integrating new rights and ideas influenced by global currents (89).

The ongoing cultural interactions enable the formation of hybrid identities, which are constantly changing due to power dynamics, cultural hegemony, and the pervasive stereotypes propagated by dominant nations. As a result, the discourse on hybridity is in a constant state of transformation, reflecting the dynamic characteristics of human relationships and cultural configurations within a globalized framework. The improving comprehension of hybridity is fundamentally connected to the notion of transnationalism, which significantly influences modern literary discourse.

The term of transnationalism became popular during the 1990s as a tool to illustrate the migrant Diasporas, complicated economic relations, and culturally mixed communities that increasingly characterize the modern world, it refers to the transfer of people, Ideas, technology, and money between nations. (Phillo-notes 00:00:10-44).

Transnationalism during time led to the raise of transfers, connections and relations among the world between individuals and communities as well as institutions across national borders. Therefore, neither activities nor identities are bound to borders of the nation state; instead, they are produced and enacted in transnational frameworks.

It is highly expressed in Phillo-notes, the video, that transnationalism was conceptualized among academics in different ways through time, but there is something common between the definitions such as networks and relationships across boundries. Basch, Vertovec and others define transnationalism as the blurring line between home and host

countries. The immigrants do not fully assimilate or neglect their home country (00-10.33). They live in between simultaneously through maintaining diverse connections such as economic, cultural, and political practices. Therefore, immigrants create networks including mixing of language and traditions, dual citizenship, also physical movements.

According to the video by Melissa Seigel, scholars such as James, Levitt, and Glick Schiller view transnationalism with lenses of not being only material but also constructed identities, social groups, solidarity, cultural values, and the sharing of ideas across borders also as contribution of and to transnationalism (00:00:14-33)

Transnational literature refers to the world that transcend the borders. This literature tackles things that are common to all people of the world to share what is beyond borders to outsiders. In a world that is characterized by globalization politically, socially and economically, which transnational literature transcends geographical and political boundaries, offering a unique lens through which to examine the complexities of an increasingly interconnected world (Rushton).

To Arianna Dagnino, the literary form acknowledges the fluidity of cultures and identities, challenging the traditional notion of literature as confined to national borders and instead embracing a more global perspective (8). It delves into themes that resonate across diverse societies, exploring shared human experiences while also highlighting the nuances of local contexts (Trần and Nghia 100). By examining the movement of people, ideas, and goods across borders, transnational literature provides insights into the intricate web of relationships that shape our world (Gronbeck - Tedesco).

The rise of transnationalism has reshaped our understanding of concepts like locality and identity, prompting us to consider how these concepts are both grounded in specific places and transcend those (Yeoh et al. 55). Transnational literature navigates the multifaceted dimensions of globalization, addressing its cultural, economic, and political ramifications.

Writers of transnational literature often grapple with issues of migration, displacement, and diaspora, giving voice to marginalized communities and challenging dominant narratives, as noted by Lam and Warriner (12).

According to Helgoson, Transnational literature offers a platform for writers from diverse backgrounds to share their stories, enriching the literary landscape with a multitude of perspectives (87). In this prospect, authors and writers from all over the world may construct a space for them in which they discuss their issues freely.

1.2.1 Characteristics of Transnational Literature

Transnational literature is characterized not solely by its thematic explorations but also by formal attributes that both mirror and embody its intergenerational vitality

1.2.1.1 Thematic Concerns

Transnational literature can also be defined across and through various types of inter-relationships between cultures, nations, gender, race and class. Displacement, belonging, and cultural negotiation are the interrelated concepts at the heart of transnational narratives.

Displacement can be interpreted as both physical and cultural displacement is one of the underpinning thematic focuses of transnational literature. Karima Laachir asserts that this kind of displacement often establishes what Abdelkbir Khatibi calls a "double critique" - simultaneous examinations of home and host cultures (Laachir 22). Johanna Sellman portrays transnational texts as a mirror that reflect the ways that people find ways to navigate spaces in which they are "othered," whether those are geographies, imagined or discursive spaces, and articulate experiences of exile, immigration, and diaspora.

As seen in the recent Arabic literature of migration, we are moving beyond traditional narratives of exile toward what Dr. Yassir Morsi describes as writings that confront subjectivities of individuals who were born in big migration and met borders and borderlands (101). In contexts of displacement, the question of belonging comes to the fore for those

negotiating multiple cultural identities and searching for a sense of home. Ṣāliḥ, Al-Ṭayyib, and Denys Johnson-Davies saw that transnational literature has the potential to subvert traditional notions of home as a fixed, geo-political space, and instead depict home as a forced, challenged phenomenon that is experienced in the interstices between cultures. Reading Season of Migration to the North and similar works, we can see how ideas of belonging become complicated through the protagonist's return to Sudan after years studying in Europe. Unable to fully integrate into either world (29-30).

Cultural negotiation is the active mechanism by which characters navigate separate, at times opposing, cultural frameworks. This negotiation occurs in everyday practices, linguistic choices, and interpersonal relationships. Transnational literature shapes characters who are made to map themselves, both literally and figuratively, across-cultural boundaries. Abdelkebir Khatibi's Love in Two Languages exemplifies this concern, investigating the relationship between language, identity, and cultural status (The Fiction of Translation: Abdelkebir Khatibi's 5).

North African transnational literature, more specifically, classify these themes through particular historical and cultural contexts. Books such as Assia Djebar's Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade engage with the tangled interplay of Algerian and French identities, grappling with how colonial legacies condition modern experiences of displacement and belonging (Pech and Garrigou 3–8). Boualem Sansal's Harraga similarly engages the contemporary problem of North African migration to Europe, demonstrating the physical and psychological burden of displacement for those who leave and those who remain (Sethi 45).

Transnational literature because shows how our own sense of identity is not entirely bound to a geographical place, nor quite geographical in an era of cross-borders cultures and exchanges. As Karima Laachir points out, North African novels show how identities are

"geographically and historically located, and therefore formed by the positional of the authors"

even as they engage more widely with transnational concerns (196–198).

1.2.1.2 Formal Features

Transnational literature is defined not only by its thematic engagements, but also by formal characteristics that both reflect and instantiate its cross-generational energy. Three important formal features-multilingualism, narrative experimentation and genre hybridity-function as literary strategies empowering authors to articulate transnational experiences.

That said, among the formal features characteristic of transnational literature, multilingualism is possibly the one most salient in the North African context, where the coexistence of various languages results from historical, cultural, and political conditions. The combination of various languages in one, for example, the use of multiple languages within a piece of writing in a bilingual context is representative of the linguistic reality of transnational subjects traversing multiple lingual worlds.

As emphasized in studies of North African novels, the authors often intermingle classical Modern Standard Arabic (Fusha) with local dialects such as Algerian Darija, Tamazight (Berber languages), and even French expressions (Laachir 199–210). This approach is parallel to what view critic Karima Laachir as a "multilingual local," creating a literary playground which reflects the kaleidoscopic linguistic dynamic of the Maghreb.

Abdelkbir Khatibi's work, particularly *Love in Two Languages* illustrates this multilingual aesthetic by treating Arabic and French not just as instruments of communication but also as representations of different worldviews and cultural systems (Beebee 105). Similarly, Waciny Laredj's Nuwār al-Lūz novel embraces a multilingual mixture of Fusha combined with spoken Algerian, Tamazight and some French expressions and words, incorporating colloquialisms which means linguistic style used for casual and familiar communication that ground the narrative in specific cultural contexts (Laachir 210).

Much of transnational writing is marked by narrative experimentation as writers create creative formal approaches to depict tough cultural crossings. These experimental approaches draw attention to the created character of narrative itself by means of non-linear chronologies, multiple viewpoints, and metafictional elements. For example, Tahar Ben Jelloun's The Sand Child novel employs complex narrative structure with several storytellers who present contradicting versions of events, so undermining any single authoritative narrative (58).This formal complexity reflects the protagonist's uncertain gender identity, so establishing a parallel between narrative ambiguity and identity change.

Another important formal element of literature is hybridity, in which writers combine several literary traditions to generate fresh hybrid forms. North African transnational authors challenge easy classification by combining Western generic conventions with indigenous literary forms. Abdelrahim Lahbibi's Taghribat Al-Abdi employs the conventional genre and the literary device of the "found manuscript." and the traditional genre of the riḥla (travel narrative) to connect Morocco with broader transregional geographies (Laachir 190-91). Likewise, Assia Djebar's work combines fiction, historical material, and autobiography to create a hybrid form that fits several voices and points of view (Pech and Garrigou 3).

The inclusion of several cultural references enhances transnational works even more since writers use different cultural repertoire to build intricate intertextual networks. These sources might call for references to religious books, folk customs, and canonical works from many literary genres. Majid Toubia's four-volume Taghrībat Banī Ụathūt for example uses Egyptian historiography, oral traditions, and literary devices to remap Egyptian history from the perspective of peasant masses (Laachir 200).

Translation and untranslatability are thematic elements and as pragmatic concerns, translation and untranslatability become major issues in transnational literature. Transnational works thematize the act of translating and investigate how meaning moves across linguistic

and cultural borders. Moreover, writers often include untranslated words or phrases, authors challenge readers' linguistic background and the constraints of translation. Abdelkebir Khatibi said this is like working at "the threshold of the untranslatable," highlighting how certain cultural and linguistic nuances resist perfect translation.

1.3 Diasporic Literature and its Characteristics

The term of diaspora originally refers back to the dispersion of Jewish communities, then transformed to a broader scope of displaced communities and their literary expressions. In contemporary literary theory, diaspora no more represents spatial displacement but a complex status of cultural hybridity and identity negotiation (Literature and Identity*: Africa and the Diasporic Experience- Open Access Library*).

1.3.1 Displacement

William Safran illustrates, diasporic experiences of displaced populations maintain memory, nostalgia, vision about their homeland, experiencing alienation in the host countries, and often a sense of desire to go back to their homeland (Awan 55). However, in late twentieth century to early twenty first century, the concept of diaspora became significant and linked to colonialism and postcolonialism. Postcolonialism reflects population's movements due to political revolt, economics necessity and cultural exchange; this marks a shift from viewing diaspora solely a geographic displacement to realizing it as a concept for analyzing in the contest of literature.

1.3.2 Diasporic Theoretical Development

The notion of diaspora has gone through significant theoretical development. Robin Cohen distinguishes four stages in diaspora conceptualization: the classical phase, the extended phase, the social constructionist phase, and the critical phase. The classical phase focuses on forced migration and victimhood. The extended phase incorporates diverse historical and cultural contexts. The social constructionist phase emphasizes hybridity and the "third space".

The critical phase emphasizes origin and historical exploitation (Bhandari 101–102). This comprehensive knowledge enables a more nuanced examination of diasporic experiences within various historical and cultural contexts.

1.3.3 Third Space

Homi Bhabha and others' contributions have profoundly changed the conceptual landscape of diaspora studies, and their conceptions serve as critical tools for interpreting diasporic literature. His conception of the "third space" provides a theoretical framework for comprehending the mixed cultural identities that form in diasporic settings. Bhabha contends that cultural identity emerges in an "ambivalent and contradictory" area between established cultural categories (Shackleton 66). His cultural hybridity dissertation acknowledges the artistic potential of diasporic experiences while also recognizing their inherent conflicts.

Diasporic literature uses unique narrative approaches to represent the complications of displacement and cultural negotiation. These strategies include multilingualism, temporal disruption, and intertextuality, all of which represent the shattered experience of diaspora. Multilingualism, for Adama Bah, is a key approach in diasporic literature, emphasizing linguistic diversity and the problems of navigating many languages. As the analysis of diasporic literature observes, "language and dialect are essential literary techniques used in diasporic literature, as they capture the authenticity of the diasporic experience and convey the challenges of language barriers and cultural differences"(107–115). Code-switching, the inclusion of vocabulary from different languages, and the intentional usage of non-standard language types all help to express linguistic hybridity.

1.3.4 Non-Linear Narratives

He added by asserting that temporal disruption appears as non-linear narratives, flashbacks, and memory sequences that reflect the disconnected experience of displacement. These interruptions reflect diasporic individuals' fractured connection with time as they move

between past and present, hometown and host country. This strategy, as shown in various diasporic narratives, enables for a greater nuanced comprehension of the difficulties of migration and identity (117).

1.3.5 Intertextuality

Diasporic literature makes extensive use of intertextuality, with pieces referencing a wide range of cultural traditions, historical events, and literary canons (Bah 110). This strategy allows writers to locate their work in many cultural contexts and engage in debates with diverse cultures. Via intertextuality references, diasporic writing establishes its place in a global literary world while remaining connected to individual cultural traditions.

1.3.6 Memory and Nostalgia

Memory and nostalgia play important roles in diasporic writing, allowing readers to reconnect with their lost homelands while navigating the emotional consequences of displacement. Memory in diasporic writing serves several tasks, including preserving cultural heritage, connecting generations, and confronting historical trauma. As Research indicates, Adama Bah argues that authors draw on both individual and collective memories to describe the ache of displacement and the bittersweet remembering of what has been left behind. Memory is frequently used as a location of contestation, with official histories disputed by personal and collective recollections (110). Memory is vital n writings of diasporic writers.

Nostalgia is a complicated feeling in diasporic writing that includes both nostalgia for the country and a critical perspective on its idealization. According to Adama Bah, "Diasporic literature often explores themes of loss and nostalgia, reflecting the experiences of individuals who have been displaced from their homeland and are navigating a new cultural and geographical reality" in the research of diasporic features. This nostalgia is seldom straightforward, since it typically acknowledges the negative features of the motherland while expressing loyalty to it (110).

1.3.7 Psychological Exile

Psychological exile, according to Emir Derva, is represented by images of isolation, fractured identities, and the fight to belong. This internal exile frequently endures after the actual settlement, as characters struggle to reconcile conflicting cultural standards and personal goals. This often means navigating a persistent feeling of being "in-between," no longer fully connected to their origin but not yet fully integrated into their new environment. The emotional landscape of these individuals is often marked by a profound sense of displacement that transcends physical geography, becoming an enduring aspect of their selfhood.

In Tahar Ben Jelloun's work, individuals "miss both their North African and recently gained European identities," (39–40). This statement demonstrating the tremendous psychological impact of relocation. It emphasizes how the act of migration can lead to a dual absence, where the sense of belonging to a past culture is diminished, and a complete sense of belonging to a new one remains elusive. This ongoing internal tension can manifest as an enduring struggle for self-definition, where memories of the homeland and the demands of the host society create a persistent and challenging negotiation of identity. Ultimately, psychological exile affirms how geographical relocation can trigger a profound and lasting transformation of the inner self, long after the physical journey has ended.

1.3.8 Cultural Translation

Cultural translation, to Ali Imad Oilad, refers to the adaptation and deconstruction of cultural practices, principles, and symbols in various situations. In diasporic fiction, characters move between several cultural contexts, which is both demanding and creative. The research of North African diasporic literature demonstrates that authors participate in cultural translation by reinterpreting traditions and generating new cultural expressions that draw on diverse influences (66).

1.3.9 Hybridity

As discussed in their book, both Allen and Gopinath Doraisamy believe that hybridity is a common theme in diasporic literature, reflecting the fusion of many cultural aspects and the emergence of new, syncretic identities. According to studies, cultural hybridity is a key issue in diasporic literature, representing the problems of identification and belonging that individuals and communities face in diasporic environments (8-9). This hybridity is frequently portrayed as both enriching and challenging, presenting new opportunities but also causing tensions.

1.3.10 Liminal Situations

Homi Bhabha's concept of the "third space" is clearly expressed in diasporic literature's construction of alternate cultural spaces that exists outside of binary classification. Bhabhas concept is deemed a way to understand what happens when different cultures meet and influence each other. Liminal situations, by Taylor Laurel, are commonly depicted in diasporic literature as areas where cultural borders are negotiated and crossed. These contexts, which include borders, transit zones, and ethnic communities, represent diasporic subjects' in-between positions. In their book that is entitled *Liminality as Identity in Four Novels by Ben Okri and Tahar Ben Jelloun*, the investigation shows how liminal environments serve as locations of identity negotiation in Ben Jelloun's work (32–36). Liminality, like hybridity, is about being in an in-between state caught between cultures, identities or stages in life.

Rim Feriani, in her analysis of characters in hybrid books confirms that hybrid characters represent a notion of the third space as they navigate different cultural affinities and identities. These figures frequently operate as cultural mediators, challenging essentialist conceptions of identity. As noted in the investigation of Ben Jelloun's writing, his "formation of ambiguous, hybrid characters" allows for a critique of fixed identity categories (53–57).

1.3.11 Linguistic Hybridity

Linguistic hybridity represents the third space by combining different dialects, languages, and linguistic registers. This hybridity undermines monolingual conventions and generates new modes of expression that represent the multicultural reality of diaspora life. As Tahar Ben Jelloun himself states, "I am a Moroccan and an Arab. My culture is Arabic and Islamic, yet it was in French, the language of the previous colonial power, that I freely expressed myself when I began to write"(Emir 39). Ben Jelloun's declaration profoundly exemplifies the lived experience of linguistic hybridity within a postcolonial diasporic context. It reveals not only the practical adoption of a new language but also the profound psychological and creative spaces that open up when an individual embraces linguistic multiplicity, even when that language carries historical complexities tied to power and colonialism. This intentional choice to express himself in French, despite his Arabic and Islamic cultural roots, demonstrates how language becomes a fertile ground for the creation of a unique, hybridized identity, fostering a literary voice that transcends singular cultural boundaries.

1.4 Major Themes in Diasporic Literature

1.4.1 Identity Formation and Negotiation

Identity is a vital theme in diasporic literature, according to Ali Imad Oilad, the search for self across-cultures is portrayed throughout people who negotiate diverse cultural influences and try to reconcile various aspects of themselves. This search frequently includes fighting prejudices, questioning imposed identities, and seeking real self-expression. According to studies, diasporic literature frequently depicts ongoing tensions with colonial roots and investigates postcolonial self-determination options (481-82"). Identity and the self-have been always recurrent themes in diasporic literature.

As illustrated in the book of Discrimination, Assimilation, and Cultural Identity in Tahar Jellon s Leaving Tangier, Emir affirms that negotiating numerous belongings is exemplified by

the protagonists' struggles to keep ties to their country while adjusting to new circumstances. This negotiation is rarely depicted as flawless, as characters face exclusion, discrimination, and inner conflicts. In *Tahar Ben Jelloun's Leaving Tangier*, characters battle with discrimination, assimilation, and the loss of a strong cultural identity, demonstrating the problems of retaining several belongings. In addition, the importance of language in identity is investigated through the characters' interactions with various languages and the ramifications for self-understanding. Language choice frequently reflects broader cultural affiliations and power relations, especially in postcolonial situations. (38-39).

1.4.2 Hybridity: Cultural Blending and its Implications

Hybridity, for Adama Bah, appears as a multidimensional issue in diasporic writing, expressing both the creative potential and the difficulties of cultural integration. Cultural hybridity is portrayed through the characters' interactions with various cultural customs, symbols, and ideals (108). This engagement is portrayed as a dynamic process that results in new cultural forms and identities. In addition, Diasporic writers frequently incorporate multiple cultural components into their novels, reflecting their diverse backgrounds and inspirations.

The mental impacts of hybridity are examined through the internal tensions, conflicting loyalties, and coherence difficulties of the characters. These psychological aspects draw attention to the emotional toll that negotiating various cultural contexts takes. Characters frequently undergo a complicated identity distortion in which the psychological impacts of colonialism, such as internalized trauma, cultural hybridity, and a divided self are apparent, as the examination of North African migrant fiction shows (Adama Bah 108–09). Hybrid characters undergo serious psychological dilemmas that affect their psychological stability and personality.

Emir declared that through the representations of interracial partnerships, multicultural communities, and interactions between various cultural groups, the social ramifications of hybridity are also explored. These social factors show how prejudice and injustice still exist as well as the opportunities for intercultural understanding. Characters in Ben Jelloun's writing negotiate intricate societal relations where hybridity can result in both marginalization and enrichment (55).

1.4.3 Displacement and Belonging

The experiences of those who have been uprooted from their homeland and are adjusting to a new cultural and physical reality are highlighted in diasporic literature, which frequently examines topics of displacement and belonging, as illustrated by Adama Bah (107). Characters' connection to space and place are altered throughout journeys, migrations, and moves, which represent physical displacement. Nkelah Naomi asserts that Characters' emotions of nostalgia, alienation, and yearning for belonging are used to illustrate emotional displacement, underscoring the psychological effects of physical relocation and the difficulty of forming emotional bonds in unfamiliar settings. As characters reinterpret what home and belonging entail, the quest for belonging is continuous and intricate. The conflict between personal feminist goals and group cultural identification illustrates the difficulties of assimilating in diasporic settings (32).

1.4.4 Memory and Historical Trauma

Adama Bah said that diasporic literature emphasizes how past experiences influence current identities and relationships by examining issues of memory and historical trauma. Both solace and confrontation with challenging pasts are provided by the characters' recollections of their native lands, family histories, and cultural customs (108). Images of colonialism, war, political repression, and forced migration are used to illustrate historical trauma, which impacts people and communities for many generations (Mammadova 103). Relationships among

diasporic families and communities serve as a visual representation of the intergenerational transmission of trauma, showing how past experiences continue to influence identities and interactions now. To examine this process, writers such as Assia Djebar combine historical, fictional, and autobiographical narratives (Feriani 42).

1.4.5 Resistance to Dominant Narratives

By explaining more diasporic literature, Feriani sees this kind of literature as a vital instrument for contesting colonial portrayals and opposing prevailing narratives. It seeks to provide more nuanced cultural identities and recover the right to self-representation. This method allows for a more inclusive interpretation of historical events by questioning both local patriarchal norms and Western canon. A feminist rewrite of Islamic history is the resuscitation of marginalized viewpoints and experiences, for instance those of women in Assia Djebar's writings. By developing alternative discourses, social relationships and cultural identities can be reimagined and new forms of identification, community, and belonging can be expressed. This method goes beyond colonial dichotomies to redefine cultural identity (54-78-85).

1.5 Forms of Hybridity

1.5.1 Narrative Hybridity

For Chang, "narrative hybridity" describes how several storytelling genres, forms, styles, and cultural influences are combined to create a unified story. It enables storytellers to craft intricate, multi-layered tales that incorporate elements from several traditions, enhancing the narrative's vibrancy and resonance in various settings. This hybridity is demonstrated through genre mixing, which creates novel storytelling forms by fusing aspects of historical narratives, fantasy, realism, and speculative fiction (156). Haruki Murakami's writings, for instance, frequently combine aspects of magical realism with realistic situations, demonstrating how genre hybridity allows writers to concurrently examine several facets of the human experience.

Additionally, Chang said that intertextuality is essential to narrative hybridity, in which works incorporate or refer to other texts, tales, or cultural symbols to offer more complex, nuanced meanings. Chang asserts that by allowing readers to understand stories across various cultural and contextual layers, this strategy not only enhances the narrative but also challenges traditional linear storytelling. Ricoeur highlights that the hybridity of storytelling entails a dialogic process in which different traditions and discourses come together to create a composite story that captures the variety of human experience (Chang 02).

Furthermore, narrative hybridity, for Montonen et al, is extending through multimedia and interactive storytelling styles in an increasingly digital environment, where texts incorporate sound, images, videos, and user interaction. The desire of modern audiences for multi-layered, interactive stories that transcend conventional narrative bounds is met by this technological hybridity. Digital narratives' emergence is a prime example of how hybridity increases storytelling's adaptability to technical advancements and cultural variety (32). In short, the practice of blending different cultural influences, genres, and media formats in narratives is known as narrative hybridity, and it reflects the complexity and interconnection of modern life. It is a deep cultural and philosophical blending in addition to a technological one.

1.5.2 Religious hybridity

As it is illustrated by Cornille that the term "religious hybridity" describes how multiple religious traditions, doctrines, and practices are combined to create a dynamic and adaptable approach to spirituality in which people or groups combine aspects of several religions to create new, composite belief systems. This phenomenon happens on both a personal and a collective level, and it frequently manifests in multicultural communities where several religious influences coexist. The procedure illustrates how religions change in reaction to shifting social environments, integrating and exchanging cultures rather than being constant. Religious

hybridity, as noted by Catherine Cornille, can both push limits and encourage revitalization within long-standing customs (9).

Globalization processes, for Bognár Bulcsu, historical ties, and social and cultural influences are some of the causes of the rise of religious hybridity. While historical occurrences like colonization and trade have long fueled the blending of indigenous beliefs with imported religious systems, interfaith marriages and media exposure help to promote the sharing of religious concepts in multicultural settings (3).

Across-cultures and historical eras and compelling instances, religious hybridity can be found. This process is best illustrated by Santería, which is mostly practiced in Cuba and combines Catholic and Yoruba customs. Changó, a male Yoruba deity of thunder and lightning, is syncretized with St. Barbara because of their shared knowledge of lightning science. Similar to this, Haitian Vodou blends Catholic rites and West African spiritual practices. African elements like drumming and ancestor worship are combined with Christian customs like baptism in ceremonies. These ceremonies associate deities known as Ioa with Catholic saints (*Syncretism - Santeria and Voodoo*).

A number of traits can characterize religious hybridity, as noted by Bognar Buscer. The blending of beliefs produces cohesive spiritual systems that incorporate elements of several traditions and modify rituals to suit various cultural contexts. Innovation in practices is also a result of this process, as seen in the employment of technology in religious observances or the blending of environmentalism and spirituality. The lines between sacred and secular social places are blurred in modern situations, when traditional religious buildings are converted for cultural events and secular locations, such as retail malls, may include religious symbols (3). These changes in space are a reflection of larger changes in the way that religion is perceived and practiced in contemporary culture.

Although religious hybridity promotes interreligious discussion and enhances cultural diversity, it also brings difficulties and disputes. Confusion or charges of cultural appropriation may result from the mingling of traditions, which can also cause tension over spiritual identity (The American Interest LLC). Cornille explained that according to critics, syncretic behaviors may weaken collective religious commitments or dilute theological profundity (95).

1.5.3 Cultural Hybridity

Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial theory can best be described through the lens of cultural hybridity. Hybridity, as discussed in Bhabha's work, makes him attempt to make sense of the cultural interactions that took place during or after colonization. It considers the blending of different cultures resulting from colonization, asserting that both "the colonised" and "the coloniser" possess elements of power and shaped cultures that defy and undermine colonial control (Bhandari 3). In contrast to the authoritative framework, which depicts culture as homogeneous, Bhabha argues that culture is dynamic; it constantly evolves and goes through changes as the result of many interactions and exchanges.

Bhabha's theorizations make use of the 'third space' of culture as one of the areas where identity and meaning are reshaped. This space becomes a culture zone of competition and creation (Bhandari 3). According to *Chapter 7. The Third Space in Postcolonial Representation*, transforming one's identity occurs in oscillating realms where cultures converge. The 'third space' is not a geographical one, but a figurative place where self-identity collides with external culture, allowing for regrowth of identity dismantling the oppressor vs. oppressed black-white binary (Wolf). In this zone, culture becomes a signifier—produced, analyzed, hybridized, and renewed rather than just passed down.

In Bhabha's framework, the 'third space' is classified as ambiguous and contradictory since it lies within fuels tension and negotiation that triggers resistance against binaries, dichotomous perspectives, and essentialized group classifications (Umar and Lawan 17).

Bhabha emphasis would be a possibility of new forms of Identity and cultural meaning emerge. The third space enables the expression of blended identities that cannot be simplified to one side or the other of the colonial divide, rather, they form a constructive combination of excursions. Both sides that seek to destabilize abusive colonialism and the cultural fallacy of being untainted (Bhandari 106).

In Bhabha's terms, hybridity is not simply the fusion or coexistence of different traditions that cross-cultural borders. Bhandari illustrates that hybridity is an active and a counterproductive action that reveals fabrication in all identities put forth as cultural, and subverts the power of dominant hegemonic subculture affects. It enables the entrance of marginalized identities and 'forbidden' knowledge into the dominant narratives, undermining their claim to supremacy. It is not only an act of defiance but also an act of mental and emotional freedom that makes possible the decolonization of the mind (55).

To conclude, Bhabha's postcolonial theory of hybridity and the third space deepens our understanding of cultural hybridity by characterizing it as a process of continual negotiation and transformation (Umar and Lawan 19). It goes beyond the fetishism of multiculturalism and the passive celebration of diversity to accentuate the actively disruptive and liberatory nature of hybrid cultural identities. It informs contemporary discussions around globalization.

1.5.4 Linguistic Hybridity

Linguistic hybridity highlights the phenomenon of existing languages, dialects or varieties of speech coexisting and interacting within a single context. This often occurs through new forms such interaction like code-switching, borrowing, or the addition of hybrid vocabularies. These approaches to language through the creation of new competes with older notions of an ideal language, an identity, a people to divide and submerge themselves within a society's virtue and social prosperity. It is clear to see the overlap within the nature of language

and society. Such practices are at their highest point within a multilingual society as languages become useful tools for crafting power or blending in and out of a culture.

Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia gives a general definition of the phenomenon of the coexistence of many languages in as much as it is far wider than mere borrowing of languages. Propounded in his essay "Discourse in the Novel", heteroglossia refers to the presence of various voices, languages, dialects and social speech types beneath the surface of the general language system. According to Bakhtin, each language variety has its inherent worldview, social values and ideological beliefs, so that language in nature is diversity and stratification (263).

This multiplicity is not something which happens to occur, but a quintessential feature of all languages, shaping both their production and understanding of meaning. Init is the dialogic interplay between other languages and speech types within an utterance or an act of communication. These forms do not exist in isolation, but they "interanimate," resident in a dialogue with one another, a constant interplay affecting meaning and expression. For instance, a speaker may mix formal, colloquial or regional dialects, each with its own social connotations, within a single conversation. This dialogized heteroglossia reflects the complex social identities and relationships embedded in language use (Zou 267).

Bakhtin also mentions the tension between centripetal and centrifugal forces in the development of the language. Centripetal tendencies lead toward the unification and standardization of language, often facilitated, for example, by institutions and official discourses. On the other hand, centrifugal forces are those, which lead to diversity, fragmentation and the development of regional, private or peripheral types of speech. Linguistic hybridity arises from this dynamic tension, as speakers negotiate between dominant language standards and their own social, cultural context, creating hybrid shapes that challenge the reductive tendencies of monolithic language ideologies (Hirschkop150).

A third crucial aspect is Bakhtin's differentiation between authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse, however, is open, dialogic, and subject to reinterpretation by the speaker. Authoritarian discourse insists on obedience and frequently linked to tradition, law, or official ideology; it is fixed and resistant to change, wholeness of the being of the person required to obey. Linguistic hybridity thrives where internally persuasive discourse contests or appropriates authoritative discourse, allowing speakers to challenge dominant meanings and create new, hybrid linguistic expressions that reflect their lived experiences (Zou 370).

Bakhtin's approach emphasizes that heteroglossia is a universal and historical trait of all languages. Bakhtin argues that the apparent unity of a "national language" is a "false unity" that conceals the heteroglot nature of everyday speech. This stratification based on social class, occupation, generation, and context assures that language is constantly evolving, affected by social interaction and historical change. Linguistic hybridity is thus a natural and continuing process, not an oddity (271).

In conclusion, Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia enhances our knowledge of linguistic hybridity by presenting language as a living, socially rooted, and dialogic phenomena. It highlights the presence and interplay of numerous voices and languages inside a single utterance, the conflicts between unity and diversity, and speakers' creative ability to negotiate and modify meaning (411).

1.6 North African Literature in the Diasporic Contexts

North African diasporic literature is deeply rooted in the region's colonial history and the waves of migration that followed, particularly to Europe, with France being a central destination. This literary tradition captures the struggles of displacement, cultural fusion, and the ever-evolving search for identity. For many North African writers, such as the French colonial period (1830-1962 in Algeria) left a lasting imprint, making French a dominant literary language and shaping a unique storytelling approach. As Hiddleston describes, these works

exist in a space that blends native cultural influences with the legacy of French literary traditions (45).

Migration itself has been driven by economic opportunities, political exile, and family reunification, leading to the formation of vibrant diasporic communities, as noted by Ali. Ali said in his book that is entitled *The Postcolonial Unconscious in North African Migrant Fiction* that these groups navigate the intricate ties between their homeland and their new countries, carrying with them the weight of history. As Ali points out, North African migrant fiction remains deeply intertwined with the colonial past, which continues to shape social, economic, and ideological realities long after colonial rule officially ended. This literature, then, is not just about movement—it is about memory, adaptation, and the lasting effects of history (481).

According to Imad Oilad Ali, North African diasporic literature is a rich and dynamic topic of study because it is influenced by migration, colonial histories, and the changing quest for identity. This corpus of work illustrates the continuous struggle between tradition and change through its subject themes of cultural hybridity, language adaptation, feminist viewpoints, and historical memory (466). The psychological repercussions of colonialism, the conflicts of relocation, and the complex intersections of Arab, African, Mediterranean, and European influences are all topics that writers extensively address. North African diasporic literature offers crucial insight into the intricacies of identity, belonging, and cultural expression in a postcolonial society by examining these subjects and utilizing creative narrative approaches (466).

The literature emergent from the North African diaspora is a literature of complex identity, summarizing what Emir calls "the paradox of acquiring European citizenship while simultaneously facing marginalization and erasure." (Emir 120). The characters in these texts routinely grapple with such intense psychological turmoil as to call to mind Fanon's conception

of a fractured self, where colonial legacy is expressed as internalized trauma, cultural hybridity, and a continual negotiation of belonging (Ali 130).

Language is important to the building of these literary texts, as most authors choose to write in French—a choice that, in Abu-Shomar's eyes is a mark both of cultural integration and of resistance against colonial powers (95). Many authors in these works incorporate Arabic terms, phrases, and grammatical structures are constantly woven in, creating what Tannenbaum calls "a hybrid literary language that reflects the complexity of diasporic identity." (36)

Women writers have played a key role in shaping this tradition, bringing feminist perspectives that challenge both Western stereotypes and entrenched patriarchal traditions. Nkealah observes that many of the narratives explore the tensions between collective cultural identities; forged through Islamic traditions and national histories; and individual feminist aspirations (Nkealah 68). By questioning traditional gender roles, the works offer complex portrayals of women as they navigate societal expectations along with their own agency.

The themes of memory and historical trauma are recurring motifs, deeply embedded in the fabric of North African diasporic writing. Ojuola argues that authors use both personal and collective memories to highlight a profound dichotomy, where the sorrow of loss meets the resolve to forge new identities (22). The aftermath of colonial histories, particularly the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), remains a key point of reference, shaping narratives that deal with the long-lasting wounds of history.

Situated within the space mapped by Bhabha as the "*Third Space*," North African diasporic literature is positioned at the intersection of Arab, African, Mediterranean, and European influences, thereby creating a unique cultural representation (Shackleton 88). This hybridization yields creative narrative strategies, such as the utilization of multiple viewpoints, which Bah recognizes as imperative to the conveyance of the complicated nuances of migration and identity. Many literary works integrate non-linear storytelling, fragmented narration, and a

changing interaction between autobiography, history, and fictional narration to reflect the complicated and developing nature of diasporic experience (Adama Bah 16).

Through these themes and narrative techniques, North African diasporic literature offers insightful commentary on migration, cultural hybridity, and the process of identity formation. Authors like Ben Jelloun, Djebar, and Sebbar have played significant roles in the global literary discussion, shedding light on what Sbiri calls "the privileged place of being between Arab, African, Mediterranean, and European identities." (Sbiri and Tiedekunta 66). Their texts underscore the continuous struggles and transformations undergone by communities in transit within an ever-connected world.

1.7 Hybridity in North African Literature (Illustrations)

Cultural hybridity characterizes much of North African diasporic literature as authors struggle between their indigenous roots and colonial French/European influences. Common themes from such cultural hybridity revolve around identity, displacement, and belonging. Tahar Ben Jelloun: wrote La *Nuit Sacrée* (1987), *Leaving Tangier*. This novel examines themes of identity and masculinity in question through Moroccan and Francophone influence and discussing issues of cultural diversity, hybridity. Ben Jelloun's work comes from a postcolonial perspective, meaning cultural hybridity is from the inside (Emir 2). Assia Djebar, for instance, wrote *L'Amour, la Fantasia in 1985, Loin de Medine* in *1991, La Femme sans sépulture* in 2002. Djebar's works puts into question the intersection of Algerian and Francophone canons. She is known for her inventive work with the historical archive and the intersection of personal/political memory. Leila Sebbar is another female writer who discussed the theme of hybridity. She *wrote Shérazade : 17 ans, Brune, Frisée, les Yeux Verts* in 1982.

Malika Mokeddem works often portray characters that belong both to traditional Algerian society and to the French cultural milieu. In her novel *Le Siècle des Sauterelles,* characters undergo tensions based on their ambivalent heritage, reflecting the

conflicts of identity rent between past and present, and between local traditions and Western values. The hybridity expressed in such works shows how characters derive their sense of self from a composite of sources, which allows them to cope with a hybrid social landscape (Allen 66).

Driss Chraïbi wrote *Le Passé Simple* in 1954. It is a semi-autobiographical; a commentary on colonialism and the fight between traditions versus modernity for a Moroccan society; Driss Chraïbi is one of the foremost members regarding cultural hybridity for postcolonial literary efforts (Hamil147).

Another important aspect of North African diasporic literature is linguistic hybridity, according to Ashcroft "Hybridity [...] is the primary characteristic of all post-colonial texts whatever their source" where writers combine Arabic, Spanish, and French to illustrate the complex nature of postcolonial identity (Igoudjil 170).

The novel *Nedjma* by Kateb Yacine. The novel that was written in 1956 is one of the first works of the hybridized linguistic form; it takes fragments of Arabic structure and Francophone Algeria/Morocco/whatever existence. It acts as a critical part of North African literary history (171).

Rachid Boudjedra, moreover, wrote *La Répudiation* in 1969. Boudjedra uses an Arabic/Francophone hybrid blend through a critical examination of linguistic standards in the nation to present a hybridization of study. He is known for his work in linguistic hybridity (175).

Mohamed Dib is another well-known Algerian writer who discussed hybridity in his pieces of writing. He is known for *La* Grande Maison that he wrote in 1952. Dib uses Arabic words within his French narrative to play with the predicated potentials of Algerian dialect; this hybridizes the reality of North African diasporic existence (50).

Leïla Sebbar, also wrote *Parle mon fils, Parle à ta Mère* in 1997. The novel is bilingual.

French-Arabic bilingualism becomes a site of contested identity as Leïla Sebbar examines intergenerational linguistic negotiation. She exposes the conflicts between cultural transmission and assimilation in the Maghrebi diaspora by fusing narrative reality through broken dialogue and code-switching (Igoudgil 11).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter seeks to chart the deep intricacies of hybridity in North African diasporic literature focusing on Homi Bhabha's pivotal concept of 'third space' alongside Bakhtin's heteroglossia. Through postcolonial perspective, this study explores the site of cultural dislocation and its synthesis into new forms of expression, identity construction, and resistance to dominant discourses. The theories developed here, from the striking attributes of transnational and diasporic literature to the more subtle forms of hybridity in religious, cultural, narrative, and language, enable us to understand how North African diasporic texts serve as contested grounds for memory and identity. In so doing, this chapter helps to explain the ways such Bhabha's third space, a transitional area where binary oppositions dissolve and new cultural formations emerge through processes of negotiation, translation, and creative tension, is therefore inhabited and articulated by North African diasporic writers. This chapter thus establishes the foundation for comprehending how these literary productions exemplify the emergence of hybridized identities in the spaces between disparate cultural traditions, historical traumas, and linguistic practices.

Chapter Two:

Cultural and Linguistic Hybridity in Mohamed Magani's *an Icelandic Dream*

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on delving into the intricate world of the short story collection *An Icelandic Dream* by Mohamed Magani. Here, the researcher embarks on a quest to uncover the nuanced threads of cultural and linguistic hybridity woven throughout this diasporic literature. To illuminate these elements of hybridity, two distinct yet complementary frameworks will be employed. The first is Homi Bhabha's concept of the third space, a transformative realm where diverse cultures collide and create new meanings. The second framework comes from Mikhail Bakhtin, who introduces the concept of heteroglossia, emphasizing the rich tapestry of voices and languages that coexist within a text. Through these lenses, we will explore how Magani's work reflects the complexities of identity and belonging in a globalized world.

2.2 The Contextualization of *An Icelandic Dream*

Mohamed Magani's collection of interconnected stories weaves a rich tapestry of narratives that traverse a wide array of geographical locales, ranging from a university town nestled along the banks of the serene Iowa River in the United States to the bustling streets of Washington D.C., the artistic enclave of Santa Fe, and the tranquil countryside of rural Algeria. The timeline of these stories swings between contemporary settings and historical reflections, with particular emphasis on the tale *An Icelandic Dream*, which intricately references a significant historical event, the 1627 raid that impacted Iceland.

This interplay of time and place creates a vibrant backdrop where various cultures, traditions, and identities not only coexist but also often intersect and collide, enriching the narrative with diverse perspectives. Within this collection, Magani presents four unique yet thematically cohesive narratives. In *Writing in the Mirror of a River*, the plot unfolds at a conference attended by international writers, where an eerie phenomenon occurs—fragments of their manuscripts begin to mysteriously disappear. This mystery culminates in the

supernatural emergence of a book that contains all their lost work, a metaphorical exploration of the creative process and the ephemeral nature of storytelling.

Conversely, *An Icelandic Dream* delves into an unexpected historical bond between Iceland and Algeria, portrayed through the interaction of an Algerian narrator and an Icelandic couple, thus illustrating how personal encounters can reveal deeper cultural connections. *The Hands of a City* shifts focus to the life of an unemployed waiter whose fixation on a Taiwanese writer named Lee Yin, known for her delicate origami animals, serves as a poignant commentary on obsession and artistic creation. Lastly, *No Snakes' Land* introduces Teguia Elhess, an aging Algerian storyteller grappling with the fading relevance of traditional narratives in a world increasingly inclined toward modernization. His journey culminates in a tragic confrontation with violence as he attempts to adapt his storytelling craft to fit contemporary tastes, highlighting the struggles of preserving cultural heritage in the face of change.

Magani's characters are often depicted as figures in search of connection and meaning, embodying themes of dislocation and belonging. The anxious collective of writers in *Writing in the Mirror of a Rive* the curios Algerian narrator, Eyvindur along with his spiritually conflicted wife Odda, in *An Icelandic Dream*; the unemployed obsessive waiter alongside the enigmatic Lee Yin in *The Hands of a City*, and Teguia Elhess, who confronts the obsolescence of his role as a traditional storyteller in *No Snakes' Land*. These characters frequently find themselves at cultural crossroads, embodying the tensions that arise between the pull of tradition and the allure of modernity.

The collection delves into several recurring themes, such as the cultural exchanges that occur between seemingly unrelated societies, the preservation and transformation of storytelling traditions, and the delicate balance between innovation and heritage. It also

examines feelings of displacement and the search for belonging, alongside the intricate relationship between memory and cultural identity. A particularly prominent theme is how narratives, whether conveyed through written word or oral tradition—play a vital role in shaping both individual and collective identities.

This exploration extends to post-colonial experiences, especially in *No Snakes' Land*, which critically engages with Algeria's complex relationship with its colonial history and its traditional customs. Magani masterfully employs a blend of realism and magical realism throughout the collection, shifting his narrative style between straightforward prose and dreamlike sequences that challenge the boundaries of reality and fantasy. Symbolism is prevalent, with elements such as rivers, various animals—most notably the snake in *No Snakes' Land* and the fennec fox—and everyday objects imbued with deeper significance, like the handkerchief that carries emotional weight. Additionally, metafictional elements are woven throughout, particularly in stories that reflect on the process and purpose of storytelling itself.

The author displays his versatility through varying narrative voices, employing third-person limited perspectives in *Writing in the Mirror of a River* and *No Snakes' Land*, while shifting to more intimate first-person accounts in *An Icelandic Dream* and The *Hands of a City*. The tone of the narratives ranges from anxious and contemplative to curious and at times desperate, yet maintains a consistent undercurrent of philosophical inquiry into the nature of cultural connection and the transformative power of narrative.

As an Algerian writer, Mohamed Magani's work is deeply rooted in the complexities of post-colonial identity, the nuances of cultural exchange, and the evolving nature of storytelling traditions. His fiction reflects a keen understanding of both Western and North African cultural contexts, allowing him to navigate and explore the intricacies of cross-cultural interactions with depth and insight. Through the experiences of his characters, who often grapple with feelings of displacement and the quest for belonging, Magani sheds light on the

multifaceted legacy of colonialism and the daunting challenges of preserving cultural practices in an ever changing world.

The narratives in *An Icelandic Dream* and its accompanying stories thoughtfully examine the ways that different cultures can connect through unexpected historical ties and shared human experiences. Ultimately, the collection serves as a profound meditation on storytelling itself, its evolution, the challenges it faces in contemporary society, and its crucial role in forging and sustaining cultural identities. Through his emphasis on cross-cultural dialogue and the tension between tradition and innovation, Magani offers a nuanced perspective on cultural identity, reflecting the complexities of a world that is both interconnected and fragmented.

2.3 Cultural Hybridity in *an Icelandic Dream*

The book functions within Homi Bhabha's "third space," a transitional area where dominant and subaltern cultures interact to create new, dynamic identities, challenging rigid categories like colonizer/colonized or East/West (Bhabha 38). North African literature, blending oral traditions, indigenous themes, and modern narrative, often exemplifies this.

2.3.1 Significance of the Title and Inter-Chapter Connections

The title *An Icelandic Dream* signifies hybridity through the interplay of geographic specificity (Icelandic) and psychological universality (Dream). Iceland acts as a metaphorical "third space" where cultural identities are navigated. The dream state represents Bhabha's "liminal space of cultural intervention" (Bhabha 11). Magani's choice of title for the collection implies the historical relationship between Iceland and Algeria is a pivotal metaphor for cultural hybridity.

2.3.2 Inter-Chapter Connections

The four narratives form Bhabha's "network of differential sites" (Bhabha 163),

investigating cultural hybridity from diverse viewpoints: *Writing in the Mirror of a River* emphasizes the materiality of writing and cultural exchange internationally. *An Icelandic Dream* focuses on the historical link between seemingly distant cultures (Algerian and Icelandic). *The Hands of a City* examines cultural translation through the interaction of a Taiwanese author and an unemployed waiter. *No Snakes' Land* delves into internal cultural negotiations within Algerian society, contrasting traditional and contemporary literary forms. This trajectory from global to local illustrates Bhabha's relocation of home and the world, or "unhomeliness," characterizing cross-cultural engagements (Bhabha 9). This sense of unhomeliness transcends a mere feeling of discomfort; it constitutes a fertile environment in which unconventional identities, cultural expressions, and notions of belonging emerge through the dynamic interaction of historical and contemporary influences, as well as indigenous and external elements. This phenomenon underscores the continual redefinition of belonging experienced by diasporic individuals, transforming the known into the unfamiliar and creating opportunities for the emergence of new cultural constructs. This persistent negotiation, rather than representing a shortcoming, evolves into a productive force, producing intricate and hybrid identities that transcend strict geographical or cultural boundaries.

2.3.3 The Dream as Third Space

Magani's collection embodies Bhabha's "third space" by exploring hybrid cultures, cross-cultural interactions, and multicultural transformations. The narratives evoke dreams through elements like identity-blurring boundaries of cultures which exhibit odd combinations, surreal vanishings as seen in the first chapter's unexplained disappearances, alongside the vivid reincarnation fantasies of the character Odda which brought to life evoke dreams, whimsical changeovers, and visionary narratives of Teguia Elhess all contribute to an "embodied imagination" within this emergent "third space."

As Bhabha posits, this "third space" arises from the "no-synchronous temporality of global cultures and national", the creation of a distinct cultural space facilitates not only the recognition of differences but also their active formulation and negotiation (Bhabha 218). The collection acts as a third space, a discourse environment where difference transcends mere representation and critically dismantles rigid categorizations of class and other social constructs through the emergence of new forms of identification and expression. This dynamic process challenges essentialist perspectives on culture, illustrating that hybridity transcends a basic merging of existing elements; rather, it represents a generative act that produces entirely new cultural formations and subjective understandings. Consequently, it compels readers to engage with the fluid and interstitial nature of contemporary identities.

2.3.4 Analysis of Epigraphs: Thresholds of Cultural Hybridity

Epigraphs, brief quotes at the start of a work (Dictionary of Meriem Webster; Encyclopedia Britannica), are significant in the first three chapters. *Writing in the Mirror of a River*: The epigraph from L.P. Hartley, "The past is a foreign country they do things differently there" (qtd. in Magani 9), introduces how temporal distance fosters cultural differences, akin to geographical separation. Magani implies the past is a foreign entity requiring cultural interpretation. Bhabha states that engaging with culture involves an encounter with "newness" outside the past/present continuum (Bhabha 7). The river symbolizes the continuous flow between past, present, and self/other, reflecting altered identities.

In the chapter of *An Icelandic Dream,* Abdelkader Khatibi's epigraph, "I preferred strange words, which opened to me the heart of some distant land. Beyond being simple discoveries, it was a question of a silent and glacial hand-to-hand struggle..." (qtd. in Magani 27), resonates with Bhabha's cultural translation. The preference for unfamiliar words illustrates the "performative aspect of different identities" (Bhabha 25). The "hand-to-hand struggle" captures the tension in intercultural interactions, especially the Icelandic-Algerian

clash. Khatibi's "double critique" aligns with Bhabha's third space, criticizing both Western dominance and nativist reactions, situating Magani's work within a transcultural framework valuing hybridity over purity.

In this chapter that is entitled *The Hands of a City,* Magani referred to Abdelwahab Meddeb. The epigraphy is from Abdelwahabs Meddeb, "The finest image has no form" (qtd. in Magani 53), aligns with Bhabha's critique of rigid cultural depictions. The "ambiguous image" illustrates the "uncertainty of diasporic identity" (Bhabha 47). Lee Yin's origami, transforming imagination into physical forms, metaphorically represents cultural translation, setting the stage for a story where identity defies definitive expression, thriving in the "dynamic third space."

2.3.5 The University Conference as Colonial Space

The international writers' conference exemplifies Bhabha's regulation in addition, negotiation of spaces that are perpetually and contingently 'opening out', redefining boundaries (Bhabha 4). The university town becomes a contested locus where global power dynamics manifest through cultural representation. As the narrative describes, "Two hundred novelists, poets and playwrights had been invited to participate in the 'Literature of the World…, they came from all parts of the world with a strong desire to make their voices heard and their works translated." (Magani 9). Writers' aspiration for translation particularly highlights Bhabha's agonistic aspect of cultural difference (Bhabha 25), a contestation for acknowledgment within global literary frameworks that transcends mere linguistic transfer. This contentious conflict highlights the inherent power inequalities present in cultural exchanges, wherein particular languages and narratives gain prominence while others seek recognition and recognition in the worldwide landscape. Consequently, the pursuit of translation emerges as a deliberate strategy, an endeavor aimed at acquiring intellectual and cultural capital that confronts the supremacy of dominant literary conventions and seeks to establish different centers of cultural influence.

Graham Huggan's "postcolonial exotic" is pertinent; as postcolonial literature can be commodified for consumption in metropolitan environments it resists (Huggan 26). The conference venue embodies this paradoxical coexistence of resistance and commodification.

2.3.6 The Phantom Dog at the Writers Conference

The "barking dog" in *Writing in the Mirror of a River* illustrates Bhabha's "borderline interactions of cultural difference." The dog, an "embodiment of cultural unease," evolving into "The Shadow of an Indian," exposes underlying colonial implications in the international writers' gathering. This surreal dog symbolizes the "psychic uncertainty" Bhabha associates with change (Bhabha 60). The "barking writer" and the transformation of his "soundless barking of a young mind" into "The Shadow of an Indian" (Magani 23) demonstrates a third space emerging from the shift between inexplicable vision and defined narrative, this process resulting in a profound hybrid cultural creation, seamlessly blending Western literary traditions with indigenous elements and exposing the interpenetration of distinct cultural registers. Claire Chambers notes these uncanny encounters often lead to "textual apparitions" in postcolonial literature (Chambers 12). In contexts where the repressed narratives and apprehensions of colonial encounters manifest in symbolic and haunting manifestations, the ghostly dog emerges as a powerful symbol of suppressed colonial hostilities and unresolved historical traumas.

This phenomenon becomes apparent within seemingly neutral or scholarly cultural exchanges, thereby disclosing the enduring spectral influence of the past on contemporary realities. The unsettling existence of this figure compels an engagement with the uncomfortable truths surrounding power dynamics and historical legacies that persistently inform present-day cross-cultural discourse. In another way, the ghostly dog symbolizes suppressed colonial tensions surfacing in seemingly neutral cultural interactions.

2.3.7 The Modern Storyteller's Dilemma

The enigmatic communication from two fleeing authors in *Writing in the Mirror of a River*, "Literature, they wrote in the message, belongs to ghosts" (Magani 24), encapsulates Bhabha's "haunting of the historical present" (Bhabha 284). By associating literature with specters, the authors illuminate the hybrid character of cultural production, existing in a constant interplay of presence and absence, self and other. This establishes a "narrative strategy for the emergence and negotiation of marginalized, minority, subaltern, or diasporic agencies" (Bhabha 223). Jacques Derrida's "hauntology" further elucidates this concept, where haunting necessitates integration into a concept's foundational construction (Derrida 161). Literature as a spectral presence signifies a third space where cultural meaning is continually deferred and transformed.

2.3.8 The Book from Nowhere

The enigmatic emergence of River Bed Writing exemplifies Bhabha's "development of a hybrid locus of cultural negotiations" (Bhabha 255). The text, encompassing materials lost during the conference and existing in multiple languages, tangibly manifests the third space. Its simultaneous existence in various languages subverts the colonial hierarchy of original texts and translations, producing a text "neither entirely foreign nor wholly domestic" (Venuti 20). The synchronism of translations was "impressive and puzzling" and hailed as a "literary event of a high and deep order" (Magani 24-25). The autobiographical note's assertion about the insignificance of names, dates, and places of birth illustrates Bhabha's concept of articulating cultural difference through the "bifurcation of the traditional and the transitional" (Bhabha 174). The book thus emerges as a hybrid cultural artifact transcending national literary traditions and distinct authorial identities.

2.3.9 Spiritual-Historical Hybridity in Odda's Reincarnation Belief

Odda's belief in her past as a belly dancer exemplifies Bhabha's "temporal hybridity," occupying a third space transcending sequential time and geographical confines. This spiritual nexus between North African and Nordic identities engenders a "disjunctive temporality" where past and present coexist (Bhabha 177). Odda's statements like "I was not a foreigner in Morocco...I had lived there before, another life" (Magani 42) and "In my former life I was a belly dancer. Sharifson this is true!" (Magani 46) highlight this. Her spiritual ties challenge colonial discourses delineating distinct European and Arab cultures, reflecting Edward Said's "contrapuntal awareness" that cultures are interconnected (Said 51). This hybrid spiritual identity illustrates how the third space facilitates the emergence of "interstices," highlighting overlap and displacement (Bhabha 2).

2.3.10 Odda's Door Metaphor

The metaphorical door in the novel exemplifies Bhabha's "realm of cultural hybridity, engendering a novel and unfamiliar entity" (Bhabha 211). Odda's dream-door is neither fixed in Iceland nor Algeria, but it is situated within the "shared historical narrative," signifying the third space emerging from historical interactions between these cultures (Magani 52). As a liminal threshold, this door encapsulates fluid hybrid identity, resisting singular categorization. This concept of perpetual transformation finds resonance with Trinh T. Minh-ha's assertion that "Identity is a way of re-departing" (Trinh 14). This viewpoint aligns with Odda's experience, as the process of restoring connections to a previously rejected or neglected heritage, representing a departure from a rigid, singular identity, facilitates the emergence of new beginnings and the expansion of self-identity. Consequently, Odda's door serves not only as a gateway into this newly constructed identity but also embodies the significant potential for perpetual departure and self-reinvention through intentional and impactful cultural re-

engagement. This underscores the notion that identity is an evolving, dynamic process rather than a definitive arrival.

2.3.11 Historical Narrative Hybridity in the Pirate Account

The two following quotes of Magani regarding historical origins "Turkish raid of July 1627, when pirates from Rabat in Morocco, killed 36 people and carried off 242 into slavery..."versus "It's impossible. The pirate went from Algiers," and "Pirates from Rabat? No way, said Eyvindur" (Magani 48-49) exemplifies Bhabha's "articulation of cultural differences" (Bhabha 38). This disputatious narrative engenders a third space where historical veracity is negotiated, not established. The indistinctness of Algiers and Rabat as piracy's genesis embodies Bhabha's "fragmentation of the subject of identification" (Bhabha 45). Dipesh Chakrabarty's assertion that historiography must acknowledge multiple temporalities underscores the relevance of this hybrid history (Chakrabarty 109). The conflicting accounts do not converge but forge a third space where historical possibilities persist, subverting the colonial assumption of monolithic truth. The narrator's assertion that all history is contentious further highlights historical narratives as arenas of contestation.

2.3.12 The Hybrid Object in *No Snakes' Land*

The handkerchief serves as a "boundary object" (Bhabha 37) at the convergence of disparate cultural realms. Its transformation from a mundane item to one with supernatural attributes. Magani said, "This ordinary object changed his life. As soon as he touched it, his person was covered with a strange heady perfume. The hermit washed himself, but it felt that he was washing coal." (118-119). He added, "A pink and white handkerchief caught on a shrub...scented with a delicate perfume." (Magani 94). This quote exemplifies Bhabha's assertion that the third space makes meaning and reference ambivalent. This handkerchief becomes a hybrid symbol, bridging traditional narrative forms and contemporary issues. The enigmatic fragrance, defying chemical analysis, embodies Bill Ashcroft's "metonymic gap,"

where colonized culture asserts aspects resisting appropriation or comprehension by the colonizer (Ashcroft 75). This defiance engenders a third space where indigenous epistemologies retain authority and enigma.

2.3.13 The Third Space of Cultural Reinvention

Teguia's reinterpretation of Abi Hayan Tawhidi nights aligns with Bhabha's "third space." This initiative blends philosophical dialogue, literary artistry, and oral expression, creating a "écriture contestataire" (Malki 46) that challenges both colonial domination and indigenous inflexibilities. Teguia aims to democratize traditional storytelling, introducing "a democratic quality to his stories, break the logical thread, tone down authority, listen to the victims, the weak, the sick and all those left out" (Magani 115-116). This transformation exemplifies Bhabha's "emergence of a third space that contests the dichotomous representation of social conflict" (Bhabha 58-60). By questioning patriarchal narratives where men dominate and women are voiceless, Teguia establishes a third space that is neither exclusively traditional nor wholly modern.

2.3.14 Hybrid Identity in *The Hands of a City*

The conversation between the waiter and Lee Yin exemplifies Bhabha's "encounter with cultural difference," an ongoing, dynamic process (Bhabha 22). Their linguistic dialogue "We exchanged Arabic and Chinese 'Good mornings.' I even managed to imitate the Hong Kong and Cantonese drawls...I learned how to say 'You are pretty,' and 'I like you,' and so on." - Magani 72) creates a new communicative space not entirely encompassed by either culture. Santa Fe serves as a tangible third space where East Asian, Native American, and European-American influences amalgamate. Françoise Lionnet asserts that such linguistic interactions are where identity discussions are most vivid (Lionnet 3).

2.3.15 Lee Yin's Authorial Identity

Lee Yin's integration of another's image into her self-conception "I once found a photo of a boy...I actually used the photo to get a sense of my own past...As soon as I opened the door, he said, 'I have come to reclaim my past.'" (Magani 82-83) elucidates Bhabha's "problematic of seeing/being seen in cultural representation" (Bhabha 47). This appropriation engenders a third space where identity is negotiable. "I have come to reclaim my past" signifies where the hybrid narrative confronts it's constitutive other. This excerpt illustrates Gayatri Spivak's "politics of translation," where the translator surrenders to the text (180). Lee Yin's art involves translating others' experiences into her narrative, producing a hybrid text in the interstice between authentic experience and creative transformation.

2.3.16 Hybridized Storytelling in Teguia's Evolution

Teguia's reform of traditional storytelling exemplifies Bhabha's "borderline function of culture," engaging with "newness" beyond historical and contemporary narratives (Bhabha 7). By subverting patriarchal norms and integrating marginalized perspectives "The medh had become a child's play...only the men could express themselves...He would introduce a democratic quality to his stories...listen to the victims, the weak, the sick and all those left out." (Magani 115-116), Teguia forges a hybrid cultural expression within the third space, interlacing colonial/traditional and postcolonial/modern modalities. This resonates with Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's "*decolonizing the mind*" (Ngũgĩ 4), where artistic practices contest colonial power dynamics. Teguia's progression illustrates the third space as a locus of resistance, where cultural practices are innovatively reinterpreted.

2.3.17 Creating a Third Space Between Traditions

Teguia's reinvention of *Abi Hayan Tawhidi Nights* engages in Bhabha's "third space of enunciation" (Bhabha 37) at the confluence of popular oral storytelling (meddah) and literary-philosophical tradition (al-Tawhidi). Bhabha elucidates that this unpresentable Third Space

establishes discursive conditions affirming the absence of primordial unity in cultural meanings, allowing signs to be "appropriated, translated, historicized, and reinterpreted" (Bhabha 37). Teguia's process exemplifies this dynamic reinterpretation. The invocation of Tawhidi nights manifests Bhabha's "liminal function of culture," engaging with "newness" beyond past and present (Bhabha 7).

By facilitating dialogue between disparate textual traditions, Magani constructs a "hybrid cultural space that emerges contingently and disjunctively" (Bhabha 173). The juxtaposition of Tawhidi nights with *The Thousand and One Nights* This country needs stories...It cannot content itself with Elf Lila, which was stolen and fabricated elsewhere and then reintroduced to serve as a model." (Magani 102) underscores this intertextual negotiation, creating a "hybrid moment of political transformation" (Bhabha 28) that critiques both Western appropriation and rigid adherence to indigenous customs.

2.3.18 Resisting Colonial Categorization Through Hybridity

In Bhabha's framework, hybridity resists colonial authority by subverting essentialist cultural classifications. The invocation of Tawhidi nights in *No Snakes' Land* challenges the Western orientalist narrative of a fixed Arab-Islamic culture. By emphasizing al-Tawhidi, a figure whose work transcends simplistic categorization and amalgamates cultural influences. Magani confronts reductive colonial portrayals of Islamic cultural heritage. Teguia's aspiration to reconstitute this tradition epitomizes Bhabha's "emergence of interstices," where overlapping domains of difference facilitate the negotiation of national identity and cultural significance (Bhabha 2). The hybridized *Tawhidi Nights* thus emerge as a locus for reconceptualizing cultural identity in defiance of colonial constraints.

2.4 Linguistic Hybridity in *An Icelandic Dream*

Magani displays this hybridity through various linguistic practices:

2.4.1 Hybrid Naming Conventions

The creation of names like "Sharifson" exemplifies Bhabha's notion of cultural translation, where Icelandic patronymic tradition merges with an Arabic name. This engenders a "newness that enters the world" (Bhabha 227), transforming difference into familiarity and otherness simultaneously (Young 26). This intentional blend of disparate linguistic worldviews forms what Bakhtin terms an "intentional semantic hybrid" (Bakhtin 358), aligning with Alastair Pennycook's idea of "transcultural flows" that fashion new identities (Pennycook 6).

2.4.2 Heteroglossia and Code-Switching

The text utilizes heteroglossia, the presence of diverse linguistic registers and languages, as a postcolonial strategy. This involves code-switching (e.g., Japanese "Nichi bantan!", French "widespread beau geste") that functions as Bakhtin's "dialogized heteroglossia," where languages contend to create composite meanings (Bakhtin 293). Such linguistic interplay not only reflects multilingual realities but also serves as an act of resistance against colonial dominance. The incorporation of foreign words is analyzed as "the problem of quotation" (Bakhtin 430) and "internally persuasive discourse," which, according to Monica Heller, "construct and negotiate social relationships, roles, and identities" (Heller 1). Roman Jakobson's "interlingual translation" further describes this linguistic blending (Jakobson 233).

2.4.3 Specialized Terminology

The consistent use of Arabic terms like "mâanis," "medh," and "Eldib," along with untranslated place names, exemplifies Bakhtin's "professional dialects" and "genre-specific languages" (Bakhtin 262-263). This creates Mary Louise Pratt's "linguistic contact zones" (Pratt 34) and what Arjun Appadurai calls "ethnoscapes" (Appadurai 33), preserving linguistic specificity and constructing a heteroglossic geography.

2.4.4 Narrative and Structure as Linguistic Hybridity

Beyond direct linguistic choices, Magani profoundly embeds hybridity within the novel's very structure and narrative techniques, crafting a complex textual space where cultural blending is enacted not just through character experiences but through the architecture of the storytelling itself :

2.4.4.1 Mediation Through Translation

The narrative frequently employs reported speech (Voloshinov 115), For instance, in *An Icelandic Dream*, information sourced from an Icelandic book is frequently relayed through English oral rendition, as illustrated "it is said that two ships sailed East … she could get in English. The book of course was written in Icelandic."(Magani, 38).This creates multiple layers of mediation and "internally dialogized heteroglossia" (Bakhtin 324), where diverse voices and perspectives coexist. The commitment to translating information into English highlights the crucial role of translation in cross-cultural communication, echoing Lawrence Venuti's concept of the "translator's invisibility" (Venuti 1).

2.4.4.2 Intertextuality

Magani's work is rich in intertextual allusions that create hybrid cultural environments. By invoking The Thousand and One Nights (Elf Lila) as mentioned in the last chapter "thought Teguia Elhess, hundreds, thousands of lies opposed to other lies. It cannot content itself with Elf Lila, which was stolen and fabricated elsewhere and then reintroduced to serve as a model" (Magani, 110) and framing it as "stolen and fabricated elsewhere," Magani performs an "insurgent act of cultural translation" (Bhabha 7), contesting orientalist appropriations and establishing a third space between textual and oral storytelling traditions. This also acknowledges the already hybrid nature of *The Thousand and One Nights* itself. References to British literature (L.P. Hartley) and North African thinkers (Abdelkebir Khatibi, Abdelwahab Meddeb) as illustrated "I preferred strange words, which opened to me the heart

of some distant land. Beyond being simple discoveries, it was a question of a silent and glacial hand-to-hand struggle... "(Magani, 27) further align the novel with a Maghrebi literary tradition that explores cultural blending.

2.4.4.3 Genre Hybridity

The composition of the collection fundamentally encapsulates hybridity through the amalgamation of various genres, signifying Magani's intentional departure from traditional literary classifications. This includes elements of magical realism, where supernatural phenomena are intricately interwoven with the ordinary realities of life, as illustrated by the mysterious disappearance of writers' manuscripts in *Writing in the Mirror of a River*" Five pages of the novel I am writing have disappeared from my room… You can see the blanks. It appears as though they never existed in my fiction "(Magani 7). This fantastical motif, coupled with the recurring symbol of the enigmatic white dog, the same writer who saw a dog in the laundry had the same vision of the barking animal, culminates in the enigmatic emergence of *River Bed Writing*, a compilation encompassing all the forgotten works.

These magical elements are seamlessly integrated with historical fiction, grounding the narratives in actual events. For instance, the collection frequently alludes to the "1627 Turkish incursion into Iceland, detailing how pirates from Rabat, Morocco, killed 36 individuals and abducted 242 into slavery: That was the most disastrous event in the history of Heimaey" (Magani 48). Similarly, *No Snakes' Land* explicitly contextualizes itself within the Algerian War of Independence and the actions of the OAS, with characters recalling, "My parents had fled our village to escape the bombing. An O.A.S. grenade killed them... Those responsible have paid, but those who murdered, stole, and raped in our country live in peace "(Magani 102).

Furthermore, Magani employs psychological realism, providing a nuanced exploration of characters' inner experiences and mental landscapes. This is vividly depicted in *The Hands of a City*, where the narrator's unemployment engenders tangible physical and psychological manifestations, such as the disturbing growth of fingernails and toenails, an overwhelming sense of emptiness, and even hands that emitted electrical discharges (Magani 55). The psychological ramifications of cultural displacement are further articulated through stream of consciousness narratives and poignant reflections, as the narrator perceives themselves as a poacher in Santa Fe, wholly engaged in a ritual that necessitated only two legs and the capacity to observe from a distance (Magani 57).

Lastly, metafiction constitutes a pervasive element, as the collection routinely engages in self-reflexive discourse regarding storytelling and its mechanisms. *No Snakes' Land*, for instance, directly interrogates the nature of narrative authority and preservation, asserting that "Writing puts an end to stories. Liberty lives in speaking... Writing will ultimately serve as our death sentence" (Magani 95). Additionally, *Writing in the Mirror of a River* offers a meta-commentary on the structure of writers' conferences and the creative process itself, noting how writers began to comprehend the true essence of a creative block the individual block that struck them now and then before was merely an itching on the back or a small pebble in a shoe (Magani 7). Lee Yin's reflections on *Writing in The Hands of a City* further illustrate this, as she articulates that writing commences with a hunch, followed by the emergence of ideas, but really, the kernel of the matter is form...The finest novel lacks form (Magani 59). This comprehensive genre amalgamation explicitly constitutes Bhabha's third space, effectively resisting colonial literary categorizations and mirroring the sense of unhomeliness characteristic of postcolonial experience (Bhabha 96), where the traditional boundaries of genre, akin to those of identity, are perpetually re-negotiated and transformed.

2.4.4.4 Orality vs. Textuality

A key tension in *No Snakes' Land* lies in the fundamental contrast between oral storytelling traditions and written texts, which simultaneously symbolizes larger postcolonial cultural interactions and the ongoing negotiation of cultural authority. Malki's emphasis on l'écriture de l'oralité (the writing of orality) in Magani's narrative offers a crucial lens for examining this intricate relationship (Malki, 48). This conflict is clearly highlighted when a woman encourages Teguia to document his stories instead of simply sharing them through performance, revealing a societal shift toward textual preservation. The meddah figure's counter-assertion that "Liberty lives in speaking" and "Writing puts an end to stories" (Magani 95) directly encapsulates this ideological dichotomy, foregrounding the perceived loss of spontaneity and communal engagement inherent in the transition from oral to written forms.

This dynamic reflects Bakhtin's "dialogic interplay" between spoken and written forms (Bakhtin 340), where different communicative registers interact and vie for dominance. Furthermore, it explicitly represents the tension between historically imposed colonial written traditions and resilient indigenous oral practices (Gal 20-21). The tragic assassination of Teguia Elhess, the storyteller, tragically underscores the political silencing of these vital cultural voices (Malki 46), indicating that the struggle between oral and textual forms is not merely academic but carries profound socio-political consequences for the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage.

2.4.4.5 Multi-Voice Narration

The narrative employs Bakhtin's "double-voiced discourse," where the narrator and reported speakers coexist (Bakhtin 185). Expressions like "According to a widespread beau geste" denote "varidirectional double-voiced discourse" (Bakhtin, 202), and the inclusion of the French term "beau geste" serves as "metaphorical code-switching" (Gumperz 60-61), invoking specific cultural connotations. This layering of voices and narratives reflects a

"hierarchy of languages and voices" and "language stratification" (Bakhtin 332-311).

2.4.5 Traditional Animal Naming and Symbolism in Storytelling

Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* illustrates the social heterogeneity of speech forms through the symbolic use of animals in storytelling (Bakhtin 262). The excerpt highlights a hierarchy of animals for narrative purposes: "A hedgehog or hen or horse could not affect the upheaval heralding a superior medh. They were common, inoffensive, banal creatures whose contribution to storytelling would be close to nil. But the beautiful, exotic, savage fennec surpassed them all" (Magani 87).

This specialized discourse surrounding animals reflects what linguist Michael Silverstein identifies as a cultural schema, a distinctive framework for classifying and interpreting reality (Silverstein 11-12). The contrast between common animals and the "striking, exotic, and wild fennec" serves as an example of Bakhtin's internal stratification of language, where varying evaluative nuances are applied within a single linguistic framework (Bakhtin 270). These aesthetic and cultural assessments underscore the evaluative and ideologically imbued nature of language.

The indigenous Saharan fennec also represents what linguist Nicholas Evans calls endangered semantic domains (Evans 212) culturally specific knowledge systems embedded in vocabulary that face obsolescence due to linguistic uniformity. As a narrative element, the fennec exemplifies the tangible sociological stratification of language (Bakhtin 300).

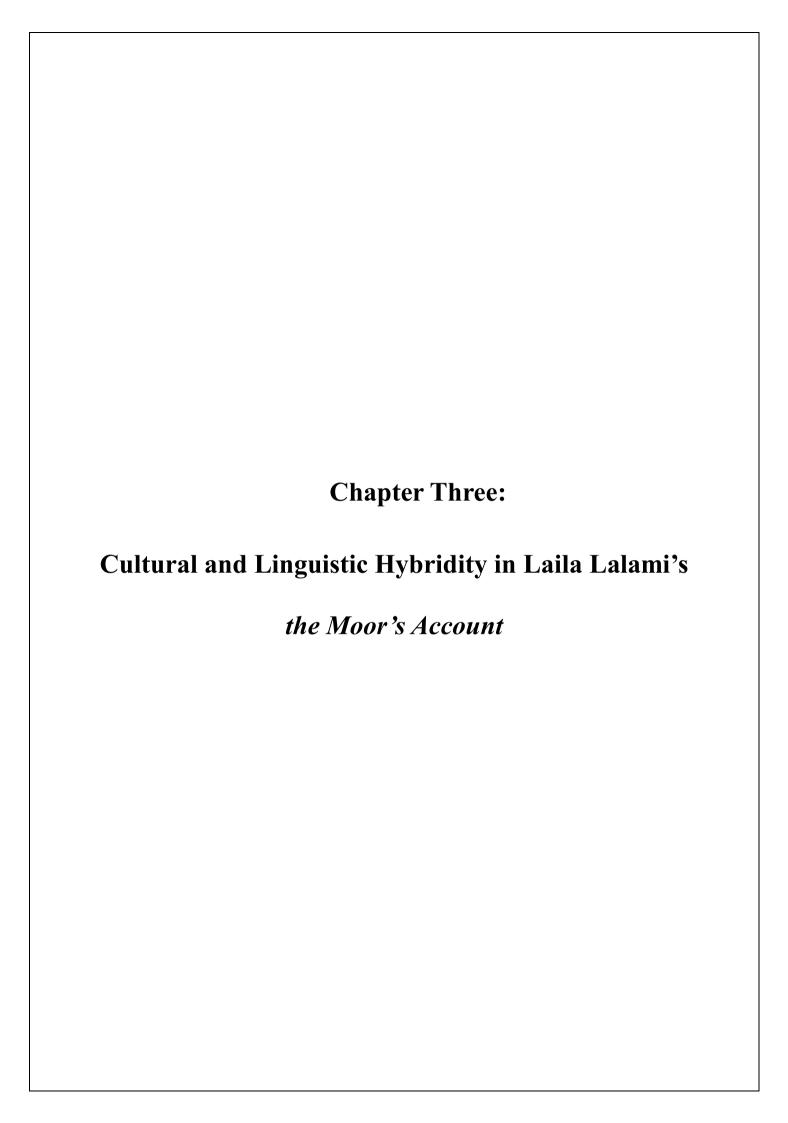### 2.4.6 Storytelling Vocabulary and Specialized Terms

The text further demonstrates the professional stratification of language, where language is divided according to profession or specialized task (Bakhtin 289). For instance, the use of "The Sanctuary" as a proper name within a performance context, along with specialized terminology from music and performance, exemplifies this.

The inclusion of a "young Guatemalan" "singing in Spanish" (Magani 48-49) introduces what Bakhtin describes as "another's speech in another's language" (Bakhtin 324). This Spanish song functions as an identifiable narrative speech genre, contributing to the novel's overall heteroglossic texture where different languages coexist without necessarily blending.

Moreover, the observation about "this disparity between a mature voice and an adolescent's body" illustrates "heteroglossia within a common language." This highlights that even a single language, like English, can encompass diverse dialects and a variety of speech types, such as the descriptive and analytical register of musical performance. As Bakhtin notes, "Language is heteroglot from top to bottom" (Bakhtin 291).

2.5 Conclusion

Upon delving deeply into the chapter, it becomes evident that the author, Mohamed Magani, masterfully employs the concepts of cultural and linguistic hybridity to illuminate the mixed identities of his characters and the challenges they face. The characters inhabit a world marked by instability, which is reflected in the fragmented nature of their language. Indeed, these individuals navigate intricate realities, making the intertwining of cultural and linguistic hybridity virtually indistinguishable. At times, examples drawn from the text can be categorized as manifestations of both linguistic and cultural hybridity, further enriching the narrative tapestry.

Chapter Three:

Cultural and Linguistic Hybridity in Laila Lalami's

the Moor's Account

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the novel *The Moor's Account* by Laila Lalami. Laila Lalami is a Moroccan writer, who writes about the fluid identities of her characters. Her genuine language is displayed via the use of linguistic tools to express both linguistic and cultural hybridity. Lalami's characters are distinguishable and they represent in-betweens, displacement, and a sense of not belonging. The Moors is an account of the bitter realities of the world. In doing so, she displayed multiple linguistic tools that mirrored the reality.

3.2 Contextualization of the novel *The Moor's Account* by Laila Lalami

The Moor's Account, a novel by Laila Lalami, starts in the 16th century Azemmur, Morocco, and features multiple locations and time periods. It covers the ill-fated Narvaez expedition from 1527 to 1536 which sought to bosom La Florida and The American Southwest. This account attempts to recreate a journey in history where only four people out of an estimated manned 600 Spanish conquistadors, met the Moroccan slave referred to as Estebanico. The story s setting moves from the familiar North African Islamic world into the opposing realm of Spanish colonialism (Salam 89-90). The narrative shifts from the familiar Islamic culture of North Africa to the harsh realities of Spanish colonialism. Such a shift or transition provides an avenue for cross-cultural interactions that give rise to new forms of identity.

The novel is presented as a memoir told by Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Abdussalam al-Zamori; a Moroccan slave known to his Spanish masters as Estebanico. Once a free merchant in Morocco, Mustafa chooses to sell himself into slavery to help his family avoid financial collapse. He joins a Spanish expedition to La Florida led by Pánfilo de Narváez, motivated by the promise of gold and conquest. However, the journey quickly turns into a struggle for survival as the men face harsh conditions, hunger, disease, and conflicts with local

tribes. As the expedition falls apart, Mustafa ends up as one of just four survivors, alongside his master Andrés Dorantes, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, and Alonso Del Castillo. Their challenging path through indigenous lands shifts their roles from conquerors to captives and ultimately to healers in various Native American communities.

Throughout this physical journey, Mustafa also embarks on a personal quest to reclaim his identity and voice, documenting his experiences in contrast to the official Spanish accounts (*The Moor's Account | Summary, Analysis, FAQ*). This non-linear approach illustrates the multi-faceted identity of Mustafa, who is an underrepresented figure in history; this approach provides an alternative account to history. The novel, with its episodic structure, perpetuates the oral tradition of both Moroccan culture and indigenous peoples that Mustafa runs into (Issafi 120).

The novel contains multiple themes, including those surrounding identity and naming. Mustafa pays great attention towards names by asserting that losing one's name means losing one's culture and history. This perspective responds to colonial violence of renaming and identity obliteration. Other themes include slavery's relationship with colonialism, the potency of storytelling as a tool for survival and historical activism, and conflict between cultures and religion. The novel also depicts the forms of resistance by the colonized through various forms of local acts of defiance (Salam 94-95). The search for gold and power symbolizes unchecked ambition and greed, which can corrupt individuals and blind them to moral issues. Mustafa's struggle between his old life as a free Muslim merchant and his new existence as a Christian slave reflects the theme of dual identity, emphasizing the internal conflicts that arise from cultural displacement. The narrative explores different forms of bondage, including physical slavery, religious conversion, and cultural erasure, while questioning the true meanings of freedom. It also highlights the significance of storytelling, with Mustafa's account serving as a

counter-narrative to the dominant Spanish history and demonstrating how narrative power often aligns with political authority.

Furthermore, the interactions among Moroccan, Spanish, and indigenous cultures create opportunities for cultural blending and transformation (Issafi 121-125). Lalami's prose is outdated but simple; she evokes the spirit of sixteenth-century Arabic travel literature while still being comprehensible to contemporary readers. In interviews, Laila Lalami illustrates her choice of vocabulary consists of phrases and terms that were in vogue at the time but are still used today; she does not want to sound formal (Kate).

The lack of quotation marks around conversations is meant to imitate Arabic historical manuscripts, which adds to the realism of the novel (Ungewitter 12). The story is narrated in the first person from the perspective of Mustafa, who clearly states that he is writing for an audience "back home". This allows Lalami to highlight references to Islamic culture, such as "an Islamic opening praising Allah and his Prophet Muhammad" and "the Islamic Hijri calendar," as well as the form in which the narrator is presented as "Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Abdussalam al-Zamori" (Salam 94). First-person accounts create what Ungewitter calls "fictive autobiography," which serves to "construct selfhood" and narratively bestow agency to the controlled by systems of dominant ideological frameworks representation (Ungewitter 3).

The novel has a tone that feels both like a testimony and a mourning for what has been lost. It's about bearing witness to history while also expressing deep sadness over lost freedom and fading traditions. Mustafa's voice is strong yet restrained. He refuses to accept oppression, but he also does not allow himself to be crushed by it. Instead, he carries a mix of emotions: sorrow, frustration, hope, and pride in his heritage. His reflections on history make the tone even more layered, especially when he recognizes how empire keeps repeating itself, spreading like an unstoppable force from one land to another.

Laila Lalami was born in 1968 in Rabat, Morocco. She has a very unique view of multiple cultures in her historical fiction. Lalami is a Moroccan-American writer who moved to the United States to pursue linguistics for her doctoral degree. She is herself the mixture of cultures that she writes about in her books (American Writers Museum). Her linguistic research helps her identify many languages spoken throughout colonial history. As a postcolonial writer, she is capable of filling in the gaps of history with what she describes as a commitment to "restoring the voice of a figure erased by official history" (Post 45).

Novel characters illustrate the intricate social configurations of Spanish missions. Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Abdussalam al-Zamori (Estebanico), is the central figure, and other characters' conflicts and motivations are revealed through him, the main character whose transformation from merchant to slave to healer illustrates the novel's themes of identity and cultural hybridity. Señor Dorantes, who is Spanish master to Mustafa, is the conquistador mindset motivated by greed and social standing. Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca serves as the expedition's treasurer and provides a European perspective as a foil to Mustafa. Appears to be more introspective in nature, and his real-life history provides the foundation for Lalami's fictional retelling.

The indigenous characters, although frequently viewed from Mustafa's perspective, reveal alternative means of comprehending the earth and survival. Secondary figures such as Ramatullai, the female slave who "taints her master's food" as a clandestine means of resistance, illustrate what Salam refers to as the "gendered lens." This lens examines "the intersection of colonial and patriarchal violence" (Salam, 2025). Oyomasot, a Native American woman, deepens Mustafa's connection to the New World and represents the indigenous perspective (Salam, p 90-100). Diego Dorantes, Andrés's younger brother, adds another viewpoint on European interactions with the New World (*The Moor's Account | Summary, Analysis, FAQ*).

3.3 Cultural Hybridity in the novel *The Moor's Account*

Homi Bhabha's notion of cultural hybridity emerges from his understanding of the Third Space of enunciation, where cultures are constructed and given new meanings. As Bhabha puts it, "It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity" (Bhabha 37). It is this Third Space from which we can make sense of how Mustafa perpetually circulates through different cultural systems without being fully assimilated into any one culture.

3.3.1 Hybridity in Identity Formation and Naming

The protagonist's doubled identity as both Mustafa ibn Muhammad and Estebanico illustrates Bhabha's concept of hybrid identity formation. When clearly refer on his renaming, Mustafa observes:

> "Estebanico was the name the Castilians had given me when they bought me from Portuguese traders—a string of sounds whose foreignness still grated on my ears. When I fell into slavery, I was forced to give up not just my freedom, but also the name that my mother and father had chosen for me. A name is precious; it carries inside it a language, a history, a set of traditions, and a particular way of looking at the world. Losing it meant losing my ties to all those things too. So I had never been able to shake the feeling that this Estebanico was a man conceived by the Castilians, quite different from the man I really was".
> (Lalami 12)

This is a prime example of what Bhabha calls "the ambivalence of colonial mimicry," whereby the colonized subject has to be "almost the same but not quite" (Bhabha 89-90). Mustafa's becoming Estebanico is neither an assimilation nor a resistance but a hybrid state where fragments of both co-exist in tension. The emphasis on names as carriers of "language,

history, traditions" reveals Bhabha's sense that cultural identity works through what he calls "iterative temporality", continual repetition and slight variation of cultural signs, which produces difference out of apparent sameness.

Also illuminates what Bhabha calls the "process of cultural translation," in which identity is neither entirely preserved nor entirely lost, but re-shaped through cultural encounter (Bhabha 163-164). The tension between Mustafa's assigned name and his assigned Spanish identity creates what Bhabha refers to as "the ambivalent space of cultural identity," in which the subject finds himself at the threshold of conflicting cultural forces (Bhabha 37).

Mustafa vacillates throughout the novel tactically between these various identities, employing sometimes his Moroccan heritage and sometimes his use as Estebanico in order to survive in the colonial world. This negotiated approach shows Bhabha's argument that identity in colonial contexts does not stem from cultural purity but from cultural translation. Salam trusts this idea, mentioning, "As a literary text, *The Moor's Account* is intertextual and hybrid, alluding to historical events, figures, and places that link Mustafa with his identity and native land, Morocco."(Lalami 93) With fiction, this mix of cultures is not just in the text, it is also shows up in the identity of the main character, which resists any clear and fixed categorization. Lalami said in her book "I had entered the church as the servant of God Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Abdussalam al-Zamori; I left it as Esteban. Just Esteban converted and orphaned in one gesture." (Lalami 103).

This fragment captures Mustafa's identity shift in Spain when his baptism takes place. His Muslim name "Mustafa" gets replaced with the Spanish "Estebanico," marking identity rupture. The expression "converted and orphaned in one gesture" summarizes with precision the violence of colonial practices of renaming, where obliteration of names becomes a disconnection from culture, religion, and identity. Becoming 'Estebanico' sums up as erasure

of identity. In this case modification is achieved through colonial violence, baptism served as the tool through which Mustafa's identity is forcibly hybridized, morphing into a neither fully Moroccan, nor, Spanish. Bhabha's colonial hybridity notion is again witnessed.

As claimed instead of obliteration the baptism creates 'split' subject who occupies 'third space' border between identities. This begs the question is it possible to sustain life without being boxed into single identity. Intended as an act of controlling, obliterating, renaming subjects to enforce domination sets boundaries. Each renaming shows intrinsic subversion to boundaries of "purity" breed intended in colonial imposition. Resurrection subjects' paradox.

As Issafi observes in his postcolonial analysis of the novel, this act is an attempt to cut off Mustafa from his past, cultural and religious roots as he relates" (123). It is an effort to detach Mustafa from his culture by redefining him in a singularity. But, in this context Mustafa defines every need to assume internal notion of "Mustafa" to maintain coherence of self throughout is designated realm of enduring dissemblance within multi-layers of identity. The fact of his hybridity is shown in this quote, Lalami contends,

> "I wondered why God created so many varieties of faiths in the world
> if He intended all of us to worship Him in the same fashion. This
> thought had never occurred to me when I was a young boy memorizing
> the Holy Qur'an, but as I spent time with the Indians, I came to see how
> limiting the notion of one true faith really was. Was the diversity in our
> beliefs, not their unity, the lesson God wanted to impart? Surely it would
> have been in His power to make us of one faith if that had been His
> wish." (Lalami 260)

Estebanico, which is Mustafa, demonstrates Bhabha's hybrid subject by embodying the identity of multiple cultures at the same time. An academic analysis explains that "Mustafa is a textbook case of someone with a hybrid identity: he is even wrestling tripled identities, being Arabic in the conquistadors' eyes, Spanish in the eyes of the Natives, and also eventually

belonging to Native American culture." (Ungewitter 17). This blend of three cultures shows that colonial encounters do not result in clear or fixed cultural identities. Instead, they create identities that are fluid, shifting, and continuously shaped through negotiation.

The novel illustrates various forms of cultural hybridity, which merge to create a multicultural identity, religious practices "Estebanico's resistance to assimilation also underscores the potential for cross-cultural exchange and hybridity in colonial contexts. Despite the pressures to conform, Estebanico maintains his own cultural practices and beliefs, such as his adherence to Islam and his use of Arabic language. In doing so, he asserts his own cultural identity and resists the erasure of his African heritage" (Benlahbib et al. 131). As Benlahbib et al. argue, in spite of the numerous attempts made to force him, Estebanico continues to practice Islam and speak Arabic, which reinforces his African identity and counters attempts to erase his heritage.

Exchanging cultures through multilingual and multicultural lenses, Estebanico interacted with indigenous peoples and other slaves, enabling him to participate in cross-cultural interactions. This exchange emphasizes the prospects of hybridity and cultural creativity in colonial settings. In addition to storytelling traditions with healing and powerful man's medicine, which encompasses Moroccan oral narrative traditions (Issafi 124), Mustafa creates new hybrid identities while interacting with Native American communities.

3.3.2 The Third Space of Power as Resistance

Mustafa's navigation between Islamic and Spanish cultures, highlighting his ability to adapt and survive in a colonizing environment while maintaining his identity. The incorporation of Islamic cultural elements alongside Spanish influences, such as the use of different calendars and religious practices, exemplifies cultural hybridity. Moreover, Mustafa's interactions with native cultures and the blending of different traditions reflect the complexity

of identity formation in colonial contexts (Ghufran 33-34). The navigating of different identities depicted as a cite of resistance to the colonial power. Lalami states:

> Dorantes and I had slowly reprised our old relationship. Once again, he was standing in the sun and I had to retreat in his shadow. Once again, he was the speaker and I was the listener; he was the decider and I was the supplicant. Once again, he was the master and I was the slave. (277)

As Mustafa travels, the power between him and his master is not constant; it changes, showing how blending cultures can be a way to push back against colonial rule. When their positions start to change in Indigenous lands, the way they interact reveals that colonial power isn't as strong as it seems. It's like a shaky performance where authority is asserted but also weakened, because colonial control needs to be constantly reinforced and can always be challenged when cultures meet and mix (Ungewitter 14). These shifting power dynamics demonstrate Bhabha's argument that colonial authority is never complete or secure but always subject to renegotiation in the Third Space of cultural encounter.

3.3.3 The Body as a Site of Hybridity and Colonial Transformation

Mustafa is very aware he stands out as a Black man traveling with white men. He does not really belong to anywhere the indigenous people do not see him as one of the Spanish colonizers, and the Spanish don't treat him as an equal either. Because of his skin color, he is stuck in between both groups mix (Ungewitter 17). Lalami focuses on this idea by confirming that "All of the Indians in these parts were probably convinced by now that the white aliens who had come to their territory were flesh-eating monsters. And where did that leave me, a black man among these white men?" (180)

The indigenous people view the Europeans as monsters, and Mustafa gets lumped in with them. According to Bilhbib et al, everyone sees him differently, the Spanish think he's Arabic, the Indigenous think he's Spanish, and over time, he starts to feel connected to the

Indigenous culture too. This shows how, in colonial settings, people often have to juggle different identities based on how others see them and how they see themselves, which can leave them feeling divided and unsure of where they really belong (132).

3.3.4 Bridging Traditions Through Cultural Blend and Negotiation

The novel starts with a traditional Islamic invocation (bismillah), immediately creating a hybrid text situation whereby the traditions of Arabic manuscripts are replicated in English in the context of a Western style narrative. The formal hybridity echoes the thematic preoccupations with cultural mixture and identity negotiation in the content. By starting his narrative with Islamic invocations in a language that his first audience will not be able to understand (English), Mustafa's narrative encapsulates the linguistic and cultural liminality that defines his experience. Lalami says, "In the name of God, most compassionate, most merciful. Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds, and prayers and blessings be on our prophet Muhammad and upon all his progeny and companions." (8)

This hybridity in the text is a manifestation of the process named by Bhabha as writing back to the center, wherein the colonized individuals utilize the colonial literary models and simultaneously introduce elements of their own cultural heritage. Maszewski notices that "*The Moor's Account* makes the reader. Aware of the pleasure of 'literary' freedom on a journey across various traditions, conventions, narrative patterns of discovery, with self-discovery at the very heart of the process of telling." (Maszewski 324) Third space narrative form thus emerges as a literary embodiment of the third space, confronting Western literary traditions and conventional Arabic manuscript forms by fashioning something that is not entirely aligned with either tradition. Lalami said, "It was the year 934 of the Hegira, the thirtieth year of my life, the fifth year of my bondage, and I was at the edge of the known world." (10)

In his story about the expedition, Mustafa uses the Islamic Hegira calendar instead of the Christian Gregorian one. The Hijri calendar starts with the migration of Muslims from Mecca to Medina to escape oppression. Mustafa likely chose this calendar because he planned to share his story with people in Morocco, who would relate more to that timeline. As Elboubekri argues "Whichever way you turn, there is the face of God": *Diaspora, Memory, and Historiography from the Margin in The Moor's Account,* Abdellah Elboubekri argues that one of the key ways to recover history is by uncovering the hidden or marginalized stories of people who have been pushed to the margins of society.

Elboubekri emphasize the role of memory in Laila Lalami's *the Moor's Account,* especially memory shaped by displacement or diaspora. He affirms that this kind of memory serves two purposes: first, it helps piece together history from the perspective of those usually left out of official records; second, it becomes a space where power struggles play out between dominant voices as well as colonizers or masters and those who were oppressed or silenced like slaves or subordinates (Issafi 120-121). This really shows how storytelling and memory can challenge the "official" version of history. By using the Hijri calendar and writing for a Moroccan audience, Mustafa is reclaiming his voice and perspective. It's powerful to see how memory, especially from those pushed to the margins, can be a way of resisting dominant narratives and making space for different truths.

3.3.5 Objects as Cultural Hybridity

The following passage illustrates the making of makeshift sails out of various materials, as a strong metaphor for hybrid culture. The "jumble of colors, textures and shapes" is a visual image of the hybrid's mixed nature. The fact that these heterogeneous materials are used to make effective sails, the capacity to move forward, implies the productivity of hybridity. The "liberating sense of 'boundless pride'" that Mustafa feels implies that hybrid products can be empowering sources, not merely indicators of loss or displacement.

This group of artifacts richly demonstrates Bhabha's point that hybridity can function as astimulate to creativity and transformation. The sails evoke Bhabha's "articulation of culture's hybridity" (Mambrol); this is not so much the essence of cultures placed side by side, but rather the invention of new entities that facilitate movement and change. As Maszewski suggests, processes like the making of sails out of diverse materials are metaphors for the story's weaving together of a diversity of cultural threads (Maszewski 326). The hybrid object is a material embodiment of the productive capacity of the third space.

3.3.6 The Shift from Estebanico to Mustafa

When the main character takes back his real birth name, it is a powerful way of taking control of his own identity and culture. Estebano says, "Yes, I replied. Send a group of men, some bearing injuries of battle, to Vacapa. They can tell the friar Marco that the Zunis killed Estebanico… Estebanico would be laid to rest. But Mustafa would remain; free to live a life of his choosing." (Lalami, p301). As Lalami affirms in interviews, history only kept the name he was given as a slave, a false name that erased who he truly was (Post 45). By using his full Arabic name, "Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Abdussalam al-Zamori," the novel pushes back against how colonial powers tried to erase his identity and shows that he has the power to define who he really is.

Mustafa's last trick faking his own death as "Estebanico" while living among the Zuni people Is his boldest act of resistance. By doing this, he frees himself from both the slave's name forced on him and the role he was given under colonial rule. He uses storytelling as a way to break free. This reflects what scholar Homi Bhabha calls the "third space"; a space where mixing cultures (hybridity) and imitation (mimicry) can be used to challenge and weaken colonial power.

In *The Moor's Account*, we follow Mustafa's journey through various cultures, which allows for a deeper examination of cultural mixing, or hybridity, a concept articulated by Homi Bhabha. The novel illustrates that in colonial contexts, individuals don't simply hold to their original culture or abandon it completely. Rather, identity is formed through an ongoing process of negotiation, transformation, and translation within what Bhabha refers to as the "Third Space"; a realm where different cultures intersect and influence one another. Mustafa's experiences across Moroccan, Spanish, and Indigenous cultures exemplify Bhabha's notion of a hybrid individual, someone whose identity is continually evolving through cultural interactions, rather than being fixed to a single, purely origin.

By applying Bhabha's theories to Lalami's narrative, we gain valuable insight into how cultural identities are formed, challenged, and redefined at the crossroads of varying cultures, languages, and power dynamics. *The Moor's Account* is not only illuminates the complexities of our colonial history but also resonates with the multicultural realities we face today.

3.4 Linguistic Hybridity in *The Moor's Account*

Mikhail Bakhtin's heteroglossia theory emphasizes the presence of various linguistic forms, communication modes, and vision within a single language. For him, language is not a monolithic and coherent voice but rather contains a synthesis of different social visions and conceptual structures (Bakhtin 263-264). This concept is especially applicable to the study of *The Moor's Account*, a novel that presents a multiform variety of languages and narrative. Through its use of a diversity of cultural and social voices, the novel demonstrates the heteroglossia of language, which makes Bakhtin's theory a valid paradigm for understanding its complicated utilization of language.

3.4.1 Intertextuality and Allusions as Linguistic Hybridity

The text is very intertextuality, with Bhabha's cultural hybridity theory being substantiated through engagement with a wide range of textual traditions. Lalami features direct citations of classical texts, especially Cabeza de Vaca's report, forming what scholars describe as dialogic intertextuality, in which there are rival accounts in tension (Salam 94). The application of memoir-like narrative in the novel echoes both Spanish colonial narrative and Arabic storytelling tradition, thereby producing a formal hybridity that conveys themes of concern.

The text is permeated with references to both the Bible and the Quran, particularly through the mention of "sons of Adam," which fosters a dialogue between faiths that surpasses traditional religious confines. Such references act as what Bhabha refers to as "signs of cultural difference," preserving their uniqueness while simultaneously existing in novel contexts (Bhabha 110).

Moreover, the persistent theme of storytelling functions as a meta-textual reflection on the novel's endeavor concerning cultural reclamation and narrative defiance. The novel begins with Mustafa's Arabic religious invocation as a site of resistance as mentioned. Religion is obvious in the novel, Lalami says, "In the name of God, most compassionate, most merciful. Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds, and prayers and blessings be on our prophet Muhammad and upon all his progeny and companions." (Lalami 8) which starts with Islamic invocation "Basmala". This establishes the narrator's Muslim identity while introducing Islamic prayer formulas to non-Muslim readers. The way the story begins shows Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia by bringing in Arabic religious language into a story written in English about Spanish colonialism. The use of a phrase from the Qur'an acts as what Bakhtin calls alien language a foreign or outside voice (Bakhtin 342). It pushes back against the one-sided,

dominant voice of colonial history and shows that there are other perspectives and voices that matter.

The phrase "son of Adam" is a very powerful phrase since it serves as a common religious concept between both the Islamic and Biblical traditions. "Bani Adam" in Islam is a phrase frequently used in the Quran to refer to humankind, with the "Al-A'raf" Surah addressing all humanity. The phrase is used multiple times throughout the Quran. There is a quote in *The Moors Account* "Nothing new has ever happened to a son of Adam, she said. Everything has already been lived and everything has already been told. If only we listened to the stories." (Lalami 54). Likewise, though not as often referred to as the phrase "sons of Adam," references to mankind in the Bible as sons of Adam are very frequent in reality. But the very idea exists.

The usage of this shared language of religion in the novel subtly furthers inter-religious dialogues. By embedding terms that echo with Islamic and Christian traditions in the speech of some characters, Lalami forms a linguistic bridge across the two faiths represented in the novel. It is striking to note that the phrase son of Adam bridges the Islamic to the Christian tradition. This shared reference underlines the use of multiple voices and points of view in the novel, aligned to Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia. By the usage of such inter-religious language, Lalami enriches her narrative to accommodate certain dissimilar cultural and religious perspectives coexisting with one another in the plot.

In Chapter Eleven of the novel, which goes by the title *The Story of the Rafts*, Laila Lalami inserts the line, "The elders teach us: we all belong to God, and to Him we return." (149).This comes from the Qur'an and is said by Muslims often on someone is passing. Arabic has the full verse: "Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un." Through this verse, one is reminded that

all belong to God, and one day they will return to Him. This direction instills acceptance of God's will, even with patience and faith, particularly in times of hardship and loss.

The saying is used in the story at a tragic moment: a crew member, dying of thirst, drank seawater and perished almost immediately. Estebanico which is the narrator remembers the man as selfish and greedy, as he had previously asked Estebanico to trade a valuable knife for just a sip of water. That knife, however, was useless in the end. This death berefts of anything worldly or temporarily binding, affirms the deathly notion that nothing lasts in this world, and we cannot take anything with us when we die.

The verse from the Qur'an pours light on one of the deeper meanings of the novel; the idea that life is transient, that we are all trudging back toward God, and that faith, patience, and humility matter more than possessions or influence. Lalami's choice to embed an Islamic saying not only enriches the spiritual ethos of the scene but also brings to the reader's attention the Islamic notion that this worldly life is merely a stage, and our real return lies in God (Khajieva, 1114).

3.4.2 Mustafa's Multilingualism and the Practice of Code-Switching

As it is clearly mentioned in the passage "So I was curious about the Indians' tongue, even though it had none of the clues that had been helpful to me when I learned new idioms: familiar sounds, few words in common, a similar intonation."(Lalami, p16), and in many pages in the novel such as 260-299-301, Mustafa navigates multiple languages as a site of resistance and survival, Issafi argue that he is a multilingual figure became. He speaks Arabic, Tamazight, Spanish, and a great deal of Portuguese. With exposure to Indian languages, he was able to expand his vocabulary of the language of the Capoques (124). Lalami says, "So I was curious about the Indians' tongue, even though it had none of the clues that had been helpful to me when I learned new idioms: familiar sounds, few words in common, a similar intonation." (16).

This multilingual capability generates what Bakhtin calls the dialogic imagination, where different systems of language exist in productive tension within a single speaker. The question does the language represent just simple communication or, in Bakhtin's words, a particular worldview, a particular way of conceptualizing the world (Bakhtin 333). Mustafa's facility in crossing from one language to the other, allows him to mediate and negotiate within multiple social worlds by virtue of his polyglot capacity.

3.4.3 The use of Arabic Terms

The novel contains multiple Arabic terms that create heteroglossia as depicted by Ungewitter Mustafa "uses the Islamic calendar of Hegira, and unapologetically refers to place names and objects in their Arabic form: the genre, the msid, the souq"(16). In addition, Laila Lalami's retention of Arabic words in *The Moor's Account* is an effective means of ensuring cultural identity in a novel that uses the English language. According to Hairech Faiza, there are numerous Arabic words, shari'a, and souq, Tarawih, and Ayat al-Kursi, for example, that Lalami has written in English letters but kept their original pronunciation. The fact that there are no explanations or English translations of these words encourages the reader to stop and think and perhaps determine their meanings (Hairech 140). This is a case of an instant of defamiliarization; the words are familiar in shape but strange in meaning, and hence arousing curiosity about the Arabic culture and language.

In the Bakhtinian viewpoint, this move illustrates the concept of heteroglossia, characterized by the presence of multiple voices and languages within one text. The Arabic words illustrate the inability to be completely integrated into English; it maintains its voice and cultural specificity; the presence of Arabic terms identifies the notion of centrifugal forces the resist the centripetal pressure of dominant language (Bakhtin 272). This is a form of linguistic resistance, in which the minority language (Arabic) asserts its identity instead of being lost or minimized for the universal English-speaking audience.

Lalami's employment of temporal paradigms illustrates the same principle. By including both Islamic and Christian calendars in the novel, she refuses to privilege one cultural paradigm over the other. Rather, she accommodates both of them together, revealing how both different worldviews can together coexist without one dominating or displacing the other. In another way, the untranslated Arabic terms alongside the double dating systems indicate the concept of cultural diversity. Both these elements illustrate the coexistence of various languages, religions, and worldviews. Each maintains its distinctiveness while contributing to a homogeneous narrative.

3.4.4 Narrative Structure as Linguistic Hybridity

Laila Lalami in this novel used many narrative techniques to provide a counter narrative, Lalami's technique presents an excellent instance for Bakhtin's view of heteroglossia as it came to represent a dialogic space where scattered voices, genres, and cultural influences intermingle within a single text. The very presence of multiple voices serves to underline the polyphonic nature of cultural voices as illustrates "the sound of the drums, came the voices of the Indian women, mourning for their abused sisters. Their cries briefly…into a low note, sustained and anguished. It was a communion of pain" (Lalami, 91), pointing to the dialogic and heterogeneous fabric that constitutes history, identity, and storytelling. It is within this multi-bodied cultural confluence that Lalami wove a narrative style that is flexible enough to infuse a number of forms, with the dominant themes centering on endurance, valor, civil disobedience as depicted "The notary of the armada, a stocky man with owlish eyes by the nameof Jerónimo de Albaniz, stepped forward. he said, we wish to make it known"(Lalami ,14) the novel juxtaposes official colonial language with Mustafa's internal commentary, and retreating into nature. Many such influences bring forth numerous voices and perspectives, as does the multifaceted interaction of the other literary works that touch on ethnic and cultural differences (Maszewski 324-325).

When Lalami's narrative technique is considered, it is easily said to demonstrate Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia because of its multi-voiced utterance, envisioning in itself a dialogic interplay of multiple voices, genres, and cultural influences within a single text. Her shifting from one manner of discourse or genre to another-narrative as depicted by Ungewitter the chapters in the novels are not referred to as chapters, but rather as different stories: 'The Story of the Illusion' and 'The Story of La Florida' for example (5-6), scholarly discourse, and historical reflection is a representation of Bakhtin's coexistence of social languages.

The presence of this multiplicity colors the narrative texture and simultaneously foregrounds the polyphony of cultural voices, thereby tracing the dialogic and heteroglot texture of history, identity, and storytelling as mentioned "My mother had accustomed me to fairy tales in which it was easy for me to imagine myself… but I knew better than to ask her, because my mother would have told me that stories are not riddles; they do not have a simple answer."(Lalami, 54) illustrates Bakhtin's concept of "polyphony," where multiple voices present different perspectives on the same events without authorial resolution. Lalami's narrative style is versatile and blends multiple forms to emphasize endurance, courage, civil disobedience, and retreat into nature; such a mixture of influences mirrors the many voices and perspectives similar to the multifaceted interaction of other works of literature that deal with ethnic and cultural differences.

The narrative style of *The Moor's Account* already reveals the presence of many voices and perspective as Bakhtin notion of heteroglossia. The narrator moves between different tones, time periods as Maszewski notes "readers may still raise their brows in wonder when Mustafa writes about the Moroccan boys' school "credentials" (32) or his wife's, Oyomasot's, reluctance to listen to her mother's complaints about her many idiosyncracies'"(325) , and cultural viewpoints, making the voice feel many-layered and rich in expression. Lalami even admits to
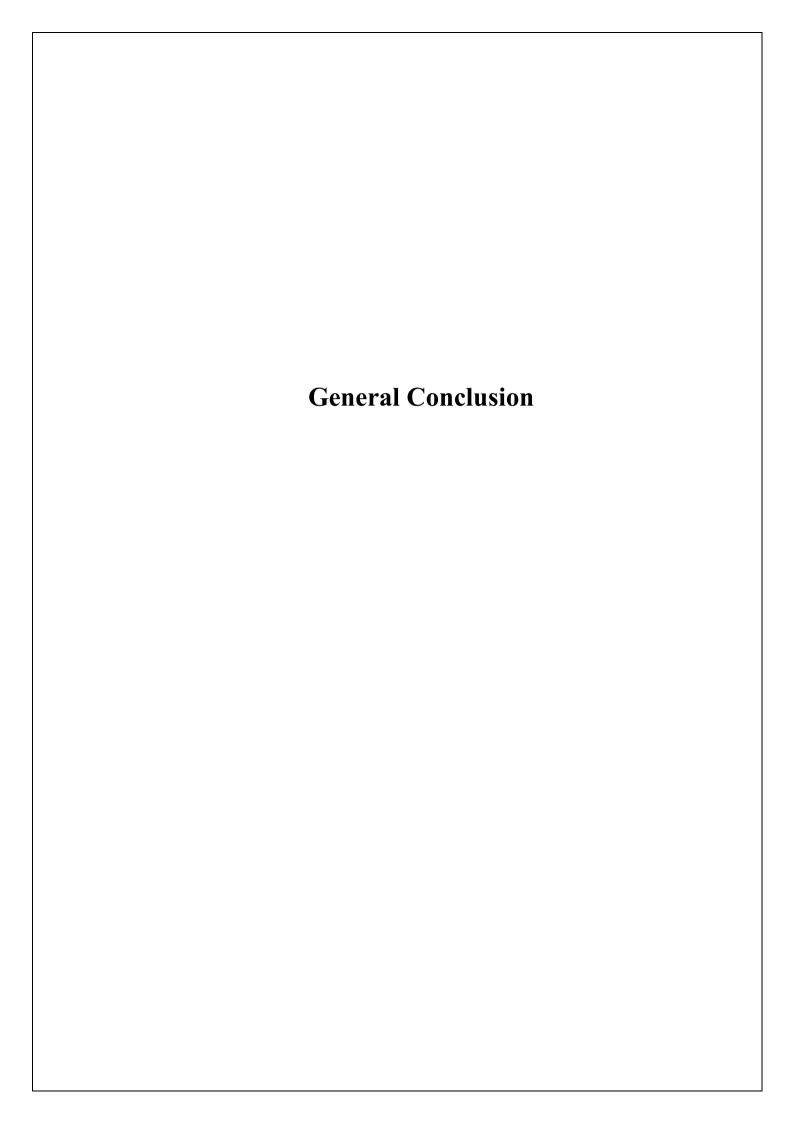
including some playful gestures in storytelling, hints to meanings that go beyond the immediate surface and historical manifestation, as Maszewski remarks (325).

The intermixture of voices and cultures is, therefore, not simply an aesthetic act; rather, it postures as a form of postcolonial resistance. Lalami retells the history through the eyes of a Moroccan slave, offering an account greatly divergent from the official colonial history recorded by the Spanish conquistador Cabeza de Vaca. Her narration forces voices and experiences into existence whose repressors had previously dismissed or ignored them, especially in relation to Islamic culture and African identity. In addition, the use of narrative techniques as stream of consciousness, flashback and flash-forward incorporated with oldest techniques such as omitting quotation marks, recorded as a site of belonging and resistance as counter narrative (Issafi 120).

In doing so, Lalami complicates the usual dichotomy of colonizer versus colonized. She shows that relationships between the Moroccan slave, Spanish explorers, and Native American groups were not simple or one-sided (Post 45). These interactions were full of complexity, change, and negotiation. This fits well within Homi Bhabha's theory wherein hybridity creates a space for the suppressed knowledge and identities to negotiate with and resist the dominant colonial narratives.

3.5 Conclusion

The Moors Account is a novel written by Laila Lalami. This novel stands as a witness or a testimony of the horrors of the worlds and the issue of identity. Since her characters in the novel live in between word, or as Homi Bhabha said, the third world, thus they cannot feel placement, home or be psychological distortion. Because of this instability, Laila Lalami tries to depict this fact via displaying hidden linguistic and cultural clues that reflect the characters reality and show how they are culturally and linguistically hybrid.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Transnational African diasporic literature engages fundamentally with cultural and linguistic hybridity, a phenomenon intrinsically linked to historical migrations and the persistent dynamics of global interconnectedness. This literary domain illustrates the vibrant interaction of diverse cultural influences and linguistic expressions that inform identities forged through diaspora. An examination of Mohamed Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* and Laila Lalami's *The Moor's Account* demonstrates how these texts exemplify this dynamic interplay.

The core argument posits that this literary genre confronts the complexities of cultural and linguistic confluence. These texts utilize hybridity not merely as a thematic element but as a foundational narrative and stylistic approach. They establish a "Third Space," as articulated by Homi Bhabha, where diverse influences converge to yield innovative storytelling that challenges monolithic conceptions of identity. This literary form enriches the global literary landscape and provides essential insights into the complexities of belonging in a postcolonial and interconnected world. It highlights hybridity as a powerful force for cultural negotiation and redefinition. The analysis reveals that both Magani and Lalami strategically deploy hybridity in their works which creates realms where conflicting cultural influences intersect. It facilitates the emergence of something new and unrecognizable, a space for the negotiation of meaning and representation. This space, inherently ambiguous and contradictory, serves as a site for counter-discursive production that actively destabilizes rigid binaries such as colonizer and colonized. The ambivalence inherent in this space enables the emergence of marginalized identities, transforming cultural interaction into a potent political act that extends beyond simple cultural blending.

The understanding of hybridity has evolved significantly, moving from historical negative connotations to its contemporary postcolonial understanding rooted in cultural interaction. This trajectory underscores a crucial shift from biological determinism to a nuanced

emphasis on cultural identity and interaction. The re-evaluation of cultural mixing, moving from a deficit paradigm to a generative one, proves vital for grasping its role in diasporic literature, framing hybridity not as a weakness but as a source of strength, creativity, and resistance, particularly for formerly colonized populations. Complementing Bhabha's framework is Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of "heteroglossia," describing the coexistence and interaction of multiple voices, languages, dialects, and social speech types within a single linguistic context. This perspective underscores that linguistic hybridity constitutes not merely a linguistic observation but a profound statement about how individuals negotiate and modify meaning within a language system. Linguistic practices such as code-switching, the inclusion of foreign terms, or multi-voice narration function as acts of linguistic resistance that mirror the multicultural reality of diaspora life.

Transnational literature, as a genre, traverses national borders and addresses universal human experience. It acknowledges the fluidity of cultures and identities as it engages with themes of migration, displacement, and diaspora. Key formal features include multilingualism, narrative experimentation, and genre hybridity. Diasporic literature has expanded to encompass displaced communities and their literary expressions, signifying a complex status of cultural hybridity and identity negotiation. The interconnectedness of transnationalism, diaspora, and hybridity becomes evident in how the conditions of transnationalism and diaspora directly necessitate the emergence of hybrid identities. The literature, therefore, becomes a primary site for articulating these complex, "in-between" experiences, underscoring that hybridity operates not merely as a literary theme but as a fundamental socio-cultural reality of the modern, globalized world.

Magani's *An Icelandic Dream* expertly portrays cultural hybridity, deeply rooted in Bhabha's "Third Space." The title itself signifies hybridity, positioning Iceland as a metaphorical "Third Space" for cultural navigation. The narratives explore cultural hybridity

and illustrate the concept of "unhomeliness," which constitutes a fertile environment for the emergence of unconventional identities and new notions of belonging. Magani's linguistic hybridity aligns with Bakhtin's heteroglossia theory, emphasizing the presence of diverse linguistic forms and worldviews within a single language. Hybrid naming conventions merge traditions and reflect transcultural flows. The text utilizes heteroglossia through code-switching, functioning as an act of resistance against colonial dominance. Magani embeds hybridity within the novel's structure and narrative techniques, including mediation through translation and intertextuality.
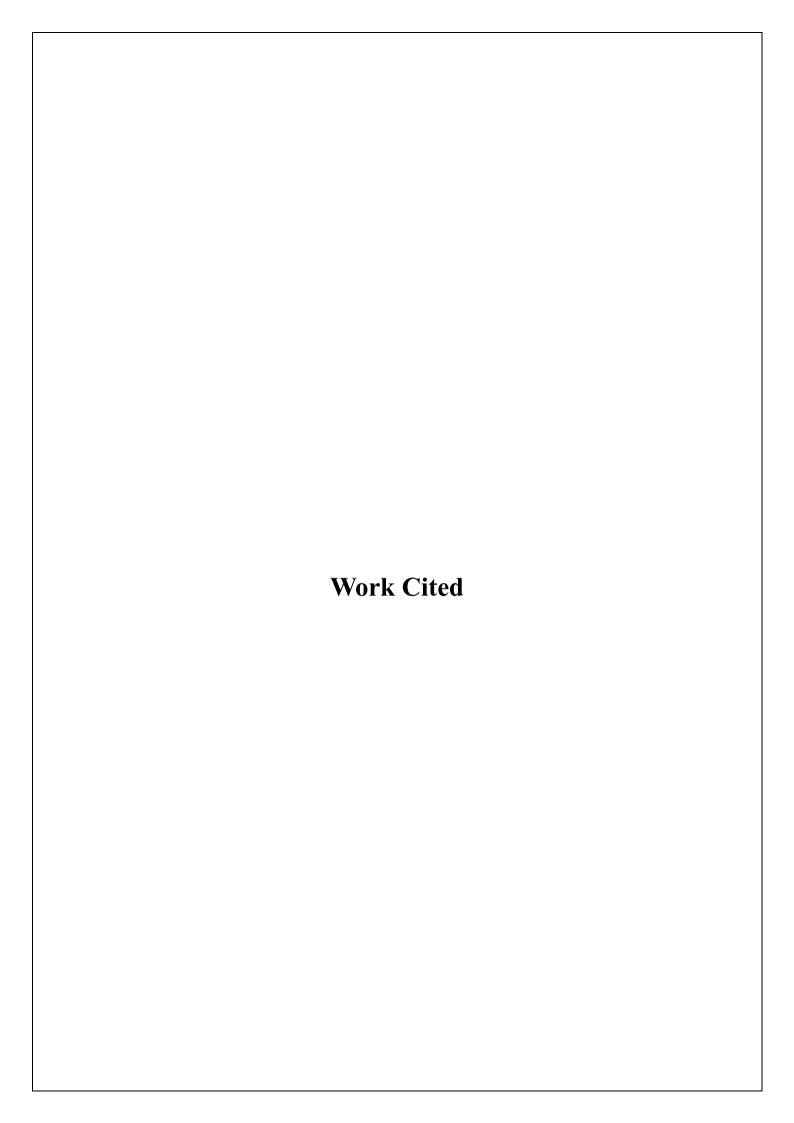
Lalami's *The Moor's Account* illustrates cultural hybridity through Homi Bhabha's "Third Space," allowing the protagonist, Mustafa, to navigate various cultural systems without full assimilation. Mustafa's dual identity is a prime example of hybrid identity, embodying Bhabha's ambivalence of colonial mimicry. His forced renaming appears depicted as an act of colonial violence, severing his ties to his language, history, and traditions. This act of erasure creates a "split" subject who occupies a "third space" between identities, allowing him to tactically vacillate between them for survival. Mustafa's internal resistance and eventual reclamation of his name transform this colonial imposition into a site of agency and counter-narrative. His ability to embody multiple cultures simultaneously demonstrates that colonial encounters lead to fluid, shifting, and continuously negotiated identities. Lalami creates a hybrid text by commencing the novel with a traditional Islamic invocation in English, replicating Arabic manuscript traditions within a Western narrative style. In terms of linguistic hybridity, Lalami's narrative aligns with Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia. The text is highly intertextual, engaging with diverse textual traditions and incorporating religious allusions. Mustafa's multilingualism proves a site of resistance and survival, generating Bakhtin's "dialogic imagination," enabling Mustafa to mediate and negotiate within multiple social worlds.

Both Magani and Lalami portray hybridity as a profoundly transformative factor in redefining diasporic identity, extending beyond mere cultural blending to active negotiation and resistance. Magani illustrates this through the "unhomeliness" of his characters, where displacement becomes fertile ground for new cultural expressions. Lalami, conversely, focuses on the reclamation of agency through linguistic and naming choices and the subversion of dominant historical narratives. In both cases, hybridity appears shown to be a dynamic process that reshapes characters' internal selves and their external interactions, compelling them to forge new identities in the interstitial "third space." The analysis demonstrates that hybridity operates as an active process through which characters redefine their identities, empowering individuals to challenge fixed notions of belonging and resist oppressive categorizations.

Hybridity manifests in transnational literature through thematic concerns, including displacement, the search for belonging, cultural negotiation, and resistance to dominant narratives. Formally, it becomes evident in multilingualism, narrative experimentation, and genre hybridity. Lalami primarily employs cultural and linguistic hybridity in *The Moor's Account*. Cultural hybridity appears evident in Mustafa's identity formation and the blending of Islamic and Spanish traditions. Linguistic hybridity showcases through intertextuality and Mustafa's multilingualism. Magani extensively utilizes both cultural and linguistic hybridity in *An Icelandic Dream*. Cultural hybridity appears seen in the symbolic title and the exploration of "unhomeliness." Linguistic hybridity demonstrates through hybrid naming conventions and heteroglossia.

The insights derived from this investigation suggest several promising avenues for future academic inquiry, extending the comprehension of hybridity in transnational African diasporic literature and its wider relevance. A key direction involves expanding the authorial scope to include a wider array of North African diasporic authors. Furthermore, future studies could delve into a more in-depth exploration of other forms of hybridity, such as religious, social,

and political hybridity. The application of alternative theoretical frameworks, such as trauma theory and sociological theories of migration, also presents fertile ground for future inquiry. Comparative studies represent another valuable direction, helping identify universal patterns while highlighting unique regional specificities. The conclusions drawn underscore the continuous relevance of hybridity as a concept for understanding postcolonial identity beyond simplistic binaries. The study of hybridity in transnational literature offers crucial insights into the complexities of belonging in an increasingly interconnected world, holding significant real-world implications for navigating the complexities of multicultural societies and fostering intercultural understanding.

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