An-Najah National University
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TRAUMA AND GENDER TRANSGRESSION IN ABULHAWA'S *AGAINST THE LOVELESS WORLD* AND HEMINGWAY'S *GARDEN OF EDEN*

By

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Islam Al Hanbali. Thank you my friend for EVERYTHING

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that I submitted the thesis entitled:

TRAUMA AND GENDER TRANSGRESSION IN ABULHAWA'S *AGAINST THE LOVELESS WORLD* AND HEMINGWAY'S *GARDEN OF EDEN*

Unless otherwise referenced, I declare that the work provided in this thesis is the researcher's work and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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Table of Contents

TRAUMA AND GENDER TRANSGRESSION IN ABULHAWA'S *AGAINST THE LOVELESS WORLD* AND HEMINGWAY'S *GARDEN OF EDEN*

By
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Abstract

This thesis argues that Nahr, the Palestinian refugee aftermath the Nakba in Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*, and Catherine, the American expatriate aftermath WW1 in Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* (1986), transgress their gender roles to reconstruct their traumatized lives in the aftermath of the Nakba and WW1. This thesis draws on psychoanalytic feminism outlined by de Beauvoir, Irigaray, Butler and Said's contrapuntal theory. Through the lenses of the feminist refugee epistemology (FRE) theory which derives from transnational feminist studies, Nahr's transgression of the Palestinian social and sexual norms is her bold mechanism to transcend the trauma of her forced refuge in Kuwait after the Nakba. Contrapuntally, and through the self-initiated expatriation (SIE) theory, Catherine, from her expatriation in the French Riviera, transcends WW1 trauma by rebelling against her husband, David. Her rebellion is manifested in her deconstruction of gender roles in the sense that she switches her sexuality and subsequently that of her husband. This gender transgression is also punctuated with changes in her appearance, sleep, clothing and writing. Catherine's disturbing transgression of gender norms is a rewriting of the Greek myth of Leda and the Swan as both events pave the way to new eras. In Foucauldian terms, Nahr and Catherine are stigmatized as mad women on account of their rebellion against moral restraints and regulations of conformity in their patriarchal societies.

Keywords: Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*; contrapuntal theory; gender transgression; Hemingway's *Garden of Eden;* psychoanalytic feminism; transcendence.

Chapter One
Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In broad terms, since antiquity, women have been constructed in an amalgamation of roles that define her relatedness to the male, being a sign of representation that lacks any signification by herself (Hamamra, Alawi, & Herzallah, 2020). Additionally, the female has been represented as the "Dark Continent" (Irigaray, 1985, p. 24), which is the chamber of darkness, marginality and "immanence" (Irigaray, 1985) (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 506) in comparison with the male who has been linked with reason, rationality and transcendence. This gender discrimination results in binary opposites, which cast the female in the second or inferior position of the duality for being "not a fully developed human being the way a man is" (Tyson, 2023, p. 11) and marginalizes her experiences in life in general and in displacement in particular. This inferior stigmatization of women has also been a cliché in World literature, especially literature and philosophy espoused by male authors. Since gender is "culturally constructed" (Butler, 1999, p. 12), this implicitly indicates that gender is performative and it could be deconstructed and performed differently. By deconstructing their gender roles, women in general and displaced women in particular could transform their immanence into transcendence and connect with rationality and reason as much as men.

Displaced women are vulnerable to diverse kinds of discrimination. (Hyndman, 2010) argues that due to the conditions of their displacement and patriarchal oppression, displaced women are exposed to sexual abuse as well as gender discrimination. Nevertheless, being exposed to such discrimination is not an obstacle for displaced women that prevents them from challenging their conditions to construct a better life. Thus, war-based displacement is not just a space "for oppression and domination, but also subversion and creativity" (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015, p. 2). Shalhoub-Kevorkian suggests that through this lens, displaced women's literature is not perceived as a stigma of marginality or homelessness, but it is broadened to reflect the intersection of their private grief with the public traumas hidden at the site of intimate domestic interaction. Women are given a unique opportunity in literature to translate their suffering to a dynamic location. (Karpinski, 1999) argues that from their diverse places of displacement, women possess the courage and willingness to confront the dominant

patriarchal, social and political order of displacement in order to overcome their traumas. (Karpinski, 1999) moves forward to argue that displaced women question and then reject being submissive to imposed gender roles by adopting subversive ones.

The literature that examines the experiences of women who have been displaced holds an ethical responsibility and an empowering effect since it is "devoted to the struggles women face because of the unique ways war and displacement impact and destabilize their lives" (Murphy, Çiğdem, & Nurlu, 2013, p. 8). (Abulhawa, 2020) and Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* are cases in point (Hemingway, 1995). I have chosen these two texts to compare the experiences of women in both male and female author texts. Comparing male and female texts will open up a space to explore the different modes of displacement and their effects on women. (El Houssine, 2023) argues that within postcolonial and diaspora studies, Arab female writers scrutinize each facet of displacement traumas and the patriarchal oppression that flourishes within it. Those female writers aim to "explore the extent to which Arab women are made invisible, submissive, and marginalized from domains of life and their attempts to change this history" (El Houssine, 2023, p. 7). Thus, Arab women's diasporic literature should be viewed as "literature of resistance, exile, home, and identity-making" (El Houssine, 2023, p. 2). Susan Abulhawa, the Palestinian-American writer` and political activist, perfectly exemplifies those female writers. In *Against the Loveless World*, the Palestinian resistance is demonstrated through Nahr, Abulhawa's most revolutionary protagonist whom she creates to embody the character of the Palestinian refugee who challenges and transcends the traumatic experiences of her displacement by subverting the preset gender roles. According to (El Houssine, 2023), diasporic writers resist the pre-conceived stereotypical patriarchal discourse and, in this respect, utilize language as a medium of transformation, subversion, and resistance.

Hemingway is an American novelist, short-story writer, and journalist whose impact on twentieth-century fiction is profound due to his economic and discrete manner. Beside the themes of love, war, travel, wilderness, and loss, he wrote about Americans abroad especially in France. (Fantina, 2005) argues that the dominant male values of Americans which later created a contradiction in representing the ideal American woman in the aftermath of WW1 are mirrored in Hemingway's fiction. The subdued and passive portrayal of women in Hemingway's fiction has been inverted in the *Garden of Eden* (Fantina, 2005). This remarkable and radical shift in Hemingway's principles on

machismo, as Fantina argues (2005), has brought him broad approval from critics. Hemingway positions Catherine as the dominant element in the *Garden of Eden* with full authority to portray the new identity of the American female in the aftermath of WW1 (Fantina, 2005). Thus, I argue that Abulhawa in *Against the Loveless World* and Hemingway in the *Garden of Eden* endeavor to survey the role war traumas could play to disrupt the patriarchal authority.

The analysis in chapter two draws on Derrida's hospitality theory as well as Agamben's Homo Sacer theory to reveal the diverse impacts of wars and conflicts on Nahr and Catherine. Since "Exile is explicitly more political and more about imposed departure and lack of choice" (Qabaha, 2018, p. 18), the Palestinian refugee experience is a traumatic and ongoing event that severely affects all aspects of their lives (Mahamid, 2020). The reception of the Palestinian refugees in Kuwait parallels (Derrida, 2000) argument that "hospitality is a word of a troubled and troubling origin, a word which carries its own contradiction incorporated into it" (p. 3). Derrida describes this contradiction as hostility. Thus, the conditional (hostile) hospitality through which Nahr has been received in Kuwait exposes her to be socially, politically, and economically discriminated against. Furthermore, Nahr's compulsory displacement heirs her an extra precarious state of abjection which is allegorically relevant to Agamben's Homo Sacer in his state of exception. In Agamben's words, Nahr, the Palestinian refugee in Kuwait, faces a distinctive line between "the rights of man from the rights of the citizen" (1995, p. 85). Quite simply, Nahr is regrettably subject to the Kuwaiti state's sovereignty but excluded from the rights that the dominant Kuwaiti citizens are privileged with. Employment opportunities, education, buildings and everything in the country become the blurred signs between exclusion/inclusion, inside/outside and the self/other.

WW1 caused the collapse of American morals and it was perceived as the fundamental traumatizing event of the modern era (Loughran, 2013). Catherine who is just like the rest of the Americans in this era, has gone through a major collapse and depression (Cresswell, 1993). Catherine's desire to escape this depressive condition and to improve her lifestyle which is considered a crucial SIE stimulus (Crowley-Henry, 2012), pushes her to take a free personal decision to depart her homeland in America through her "own agency for an indeterminable duration" (Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997, p. 12). Catherine's reception in the French Riviera is in contrast to Nahr who falls victim to conditional

hospitality and inclusive exclusion. Even though Catherine's unconditional and hospitable reception has compensated for her homeland, her expatriation embodies different types of trauma. War keeps imposing itself on Catherine as she is exposed to some French navel activities on the Mediterranean coast, and she has a deficit as well in profiting from the offered opportunities to be an artist. Catherine's persona is an embodiment of the Lost Generation which appeared in the aftermath of WWI, especially in the 1920s. The awful impact of this war is manifested in the turning of the Americans to be psychologically unsettled and maimed due to the devastating events and the bewildering confusions of WWI (Williams, 2020). Regardless their sense of absurd life functioned as a subjective space that allowed them to write the best novels at that time. Thus, Catherine suffers from the absurdity of time and actions.

Chapter three capitalizes on psychoanalysis feminism to show how displaced women are vulnerable to patriarchal oppression. Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* and Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* are illustrations of how both writers artistically mirror their argument that wartimes have dangerously exposed their female protagonists in their displacement to patriarchal oppression. Nahr is victimized by her father who relinquishes his responsibility toward his family and hangs out with his prostitutes. She is also made vulnerable by her gay husband who uses her as a medium to cover up his collaboration with Jews and justify his stay in Kuwait. Nahr's grandmother who internalizes the role of the patriarch is also involved in her victimization. James Baldwin, the black American author, shows to a large extent his criticism of Israel and sympathy with Palestinians by articulating his experience as a Black man in America through the Palestinian experience under Israeli control (Alahmed, 2019). Through a reference to him, Nahr links the social and political vulnerability of the Palestinians as a consequence of the Nakba with the racial discrimination that faces the blacks in America. Catherine, simultaneously, falls victim to her husband David. Being the embodiment of the 19th-century masculine tradition, David is privileged with sexual, economic and artistic supremacy while Catherine is depicted inferior and pushed into the immanence in comparison with him.

Women have challenged their traumas by skillfully using their mobility, education, and self-development experiences during displacement as an audacious instrument "of female liberation rather than a traumatic event" (Showalter, 1985, p. 12). This liberation is embodied in the reconstruction of their preset gender roles. In consequence, they

transcend their vulnerabilities as helpless victims of war into "agents of change due to their expositions to new knowledge and opportunities, which may have positive impacts on their lives" (Yadav, 2021, p. 1). Nahr and Catherine have adopted different modes of resistance to achieve their transcendence. The thesis links Nahr's and Catherine's gender transgression with Greek Mythology through Yeats' *Lead and the Swan*. This linkage exhibits that Nahr's and Catherine's gender transgression is so daring to the degree that it violates such a myth. They vigorously reverse it by incarnating the role of Zeus. Nahr's transgression of the Palestinian social and sexual norms is her bold mechanism to transcend her trauma. While Catherine's rebellion is manifested in her deconstruction of gender roles. She reverses her sexuality and eventually that of David. In addition to her economic transgression, Catherine intensifies her gender crossing with fundamental changes in her appearance, sleep, clothing, and writing.

In Foucauldian terms, Catherine's and Nahr's gender transgression is stigmatized as mad. This accusation is on account that Catherine's and Nahr's rebellion is against the regulations of conformity in their patriarchal societies and a refusal to be submissive followers of its set of societal norms. While Nahr herself internalizes the masculine construction of the transgressive female as made, Catherine's husband accuses her acts as signs of madness because they rupture and resist the prevalent and public politics of the American patriarchal traditions.

1.2 Methodologies of the Study

This thesis employs an eclectic approach draws on psychoanalytic feminism, depending on critics such as Cixous, Irigaray, Butler, and de Beauvoir to pursue the gender transgression of Nahr and Catherine and how it paves the way for their transcendence. The comparison is conducted by Said's contrapuntal theory which brings together human experiences that are "discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formations, its internal coherence and system of external relationships, all of them coexisting and interacting with others" (Said, 1993, p. 32). It explores the aesthetics of difference and similarities when it parallels Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* and Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*. It induces *Against the Loveless World*, an Oriental piece of literature to make "a voyage in" (Said, 1993, p. 216) and barge into the discourse of Euro-centric literature the moment it blends with the *Garden of Eden*. Hence, *Garden of Eden* artistically recognizes *Against the Loveless World* as its equal after

decades of biased tradition that looked at non-Western literature as being "marginalized or suppressed or forgotten histories" (Said, 1993, p. 216). The manifestation of this nexus is conspicuous in Nahr and Catherine's conversion of their displacement sites from being sites of vulnerability into dynamic platforms for transcendence. Since Nahr and Catherine's experiences with war and patriarchal traumas come from different geographical, historical as well as cultural epochs, the thesis is positioned in the field of transnational feminist studies. Consequently, this theory focuses on "linking patriarchies to colonialisms, imperialisms, and racisms" (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015, p. 32). It also draws on Derrida's theory of hospitality and Agamben's Homo Sacer theory to delineate and explicate the detrimental effects of the Nakba in 1948 and WW1 on both protagonists in their diverse modes of displacement.

The analysis in Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* is precisely framed by the feminist refugee epistemology (FRE) which connects the field of transnational feminist studies to the field of critical refugee studies as it "reconceptualizes "the refugee" not as the object of rescue, but as the place for social and political criticism" (Espiritu, 2014, p. 174). This theory broadens the angle by which the experiences of displaced women are criticized rather than simply portrayed individually as defenseless victims. It proposes a thorough review of the social and political factors that contribute to the vulnerability of their experiences. The thesis presents the life of Nahr as a feminine resistance experience through which she negates both the political regime in Kuwait and the patriarchal oppression. In the *Garden of Eden,* the analysis draws on the self-initiated expatriation (SIE) theory which indicates that the departure of the displaced person is not a compulsory one for economic or financial reasons, but rather it's a free personal decision to enhance lifestyle (Crowley-Henry, 2012). The displaced person departs through "his own agency for an indeterminable duration" (Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997, p. 12). Unlike Nahr's forced departure, Catherine's free departure is her quest for a new homeland that could compensate for the one she lost during the war, and she finds it as she arrives on the French Riviera. Hence, she starts a brand-new life as a transcendent individual.

1.3 Literature Reviews

Many studies have been conducted on Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* and each offers a diverse theoretical interpretation. (Bib, Rashid, & Khudai, 2022) offer a feminist reading to Nahr as it links the diversity in her names with the patriarchal oppression to which she is exposed in her displacement in Kuwait. According to (Bib, Rashid, & Khudai, 2022), Nahr's exposure to patriarchal oppression is reflected in the confusing representation of her personality as she is depicted with the multiple names of Nahr, Yaqoot, and Almas. Inside the Palestinian patriarchal society which enforces gender binaries and stereotypes this diversity of her names reveals that women's identity is not represented equally to men, and that there is a significant process of identity shift taking place (Bib, Rashid, & Khudai, 2022).

A postcolonial analysis of *Against the Loveless World* is introduced by Mami (2021) who points out that Nahr's actions and inactions incarnate the imagined revolution and embody the manner in which a revolution becomes irreversible. Mami (2021) further explains that Naher's erotic dances are literally revolutionary that open the door for all potential for social renewal. Abulhawa challenges Socrates' maxim that the unexamined life is not worth living (Mam, 2021). Abulhawa as Mami (2021) argues places emphasis on the body instead of the mind in prioritizing revolutionary work, revealing her insight that whoever cannot dance cannot be a revolutionary.

Khadivi (2020) in his psychoanalytic feminist analysis focuses on the "Cube" in his analysis of *Against the Loveless World.* Being depicted as a confinement, Khadivi (2020) argues that Abulhawa skillfully situates Nahr in a cube to reflect feminist anger about how little control Nahr as a woman has over her own life due to the patriarchal tradition and her displacement. Nahr is a 21st-century everywoman who is strong in her own mind (Khadivi, 2020). But Nahr's rebellious spirit propels this condition of being stateless inside the cube to preserve her spirit for reliving the past and for dancing to free her body from the restrictions of the Israeli occupation and the patriarchy (Khadivi, 2020).

While Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* has been recently a site for a variety of critical reviews, Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* never ceases to attract attention for decades since it has been a platform for analytical readings which draw on an array of critical lines. A psychoanalytic critique is introduced in Ladyga (2019) who explicates

that Hemingway constructs his haptic aesthetic around the theme of laziness to speculate about the bodily, sensuous dimension of all creative endeavors as it captures the tension between creative potency and impotency. This manipulation of the theme of laziness, as Ladyga (2019) further explains, is a radical effort to articulate through literary means the sensitiveness to exhaustion that underpins modernism's love of action. The *Garden of Eden* is an endeavor to comment upon the loss of artistic freedoms that the capitalist biopower of the twentieth century compelled writers to accept and internalize the rules and values of the book markets (Ladyga, 2019).

Eby (2019) follows a post-colonial critical line through his analysis of the *Garden of Eden.* Eby (2019) contends that the *Garden of Eden* is considered colonial rhetoric. While Hemingway was casting a shadow over his own 1953-54 safari, he actually found himself representing the British settler colonialism and native African resistance to it (Eby, 2019). There would be an opportunity to reject the *Garden of Eden* as mainly a chronicle of slaughter, the successful killing of Africans (Eby, 2019). It is not a novel for the delicate, since David more than once advises Catherine not to read it before eating, as it includes some grim and revolting details (Eby, 2019). The actual establishment of colonial rule as portrayed in the *Garden of Eden* can hardly, retrospectively, be perceived as wholly comfortable (Eby, 2019).

Hemingway's the *Garden of Eden* is discussed from a psycho- socio analytical perspective by Studdard (2021) who discusses the definitive link between alcoholism and masculinity. Studdard (2021) argues that Hemingway's access to alcohol as an expat writer was very distinct from that of a middle-class American. He grants his fictional characters freedom from the law of Prohibition, the person who has profited the most from this liberty is Catherine (Studdard, 2021). Catherine includes alcoholism in order to authentically, or rather traditionally, exert her male domination over her husband, David (Studdard, 2021). Once Catherine has had to suppress her sexuality, which is an aspect so central to her identity, she has an alcohol crisis which later causes the devastation of her marriage (Studdard, 2021).

This thesis is the first one that puts Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* and Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* against each other in a parallel comparison. Such a comparison will add a new array of perspectives and critical lines to both novels. Besides

the traditional postcolonial and psychoanalytic feminism perspectives, it deepens the critique when it makes a linkage with the Greek Mythology through Yeats' *Leda and the Swan.* It also builds on ecofeminism and semiotic analysis.

Chapter Two

War Traumas and Displaced Women

2.1 Introduction

The ramifications of wars worldwide impact all citizens, but regrettably, the grave consequences are those which affect women. (Archer, 2017) argues that "the consequences of [war] are calamitous for surviving civilian population, particularly women" (p. 166). The outbreak of both WW1 and the Nakba formed a drastic shift that drove the world to go through a rapid change and transform into a very hazardous place for women. While enduring war and political abuse, (Cohn, 2013) argues, women are subjected to a wide range of traumatic experiences that result in the loss of their homes and loved ones. The loss of their homeland embodies their traumas of statelessness and generates all sorts of discrimination against women (Pittaway & Bartolomei, 2021). Vulnerability is unequally distributed among people worldwide (Butler, 2004). The extent to which displacement varies and creates traumas is a direct consequence of how displaced women are received in their places of relocation and to which degree they are still exposed to military operations there.

The moment displaced women are received with unconditional hospitality and sympathy, as well as being detached from military operations, their trauma is alleviated. Accordingly, they are offered a unique opportunity of inclusion through which the possibility of constructing a new homeland to compensate for the one they lost during the war is high. This inclusion pushes them a step forward to make a brand-new beginning in their lives in which their dignity and subjectivities are preserved. On the contrary, when those displaced women are received with conditional hospitality that approximates hostility, their lives are dangerously exposed to vulnerable and humiliation. This vulnerability is intensified when they are still having exposure, even indirectly, to military operations which when associated with "a reduced positive emotional tone" (Peltonen, Kangaslampi, Qouta, & Punamä, 2017, p. 11), their losses become excessive. Nahr and Catherine are a case in point and their trauma is profound since they don't just lose their homeland, but they also lose their human dignity and agency as they are victims of patriarchal oppression and war trauma.

2.2 Nakba and Nahr's refuge experience in Kuwait

Nahr introduces a human narration of loss, hatred, and collapse in the age of merciless displacement of the twentieth century where "the earth is never steady beneath [her] feet" (p. 45). Since the outbreak of the Nakba in 1948,[1] Nahr's losses start immediately when the "European Jews stole everything when they conquered Palestine in 1948 right down to their furniture, books, and bank accounts. Her family became penniless overnight" (p. 32). Nahr's family left behind their properties such as their home with its furniture and their fields with all the olives and fig trees. In a moment of treason to morality and a violation of human rights, Nahr becomes a "daughter of refugees chased out of their homes in Palestine" (p. 106). While it has revealed to Nahr that her "fate was inherited, like eye color" (p. 136), she inherited the traumas of the Nakba. From her displacement in Kuwait, Nahr "feels the loss of what [she] never had" (p. 354). She loses her home, family and money. What traumatizes her the utmost is losing her dream of having a "grand wedding" (p. 49) where she will wear a fashionable bridal dress just like the other Kuwaiti girls of her age and invite hundreds of guests.

Since "Palestinians deserve to dream even when these dreams sometime transcend the possible" (Aouragh, 2011), Nahr has always been optimistic by "imagin[ing] a better world" (p. 106). She presumes that she could fulfill her dreams which according to her will "unfold in the familiar landscape of Kuwait" (p. 132). Nahr's wedding turns out to be "just a muted celebration, a small gathering, some cake, and a cute dress" (p. 49). Her insignificant wedding symbolizes "the smallness [she has] always felt" (p. 200) about her life as a helpless refugee in Kuwait.

Nahr's problem that associates seeking a home elsewhere than the home of origin and what it means to belong or not belong to a community is an issue to which Derrida returns in his theory of hospitality. Derrida deconstructs the relationship between host and guest through political and poetic philosophy that relies on philosophers such as Oedipus, Socrates, Lot, Kant and Levinas. (Derrida, 2000) stresses that a home needs to have some sort of openness to be home, that is, the host must be hospitable to retain his identity as a host. Derrida distinguishes between two kinds of hospitality. (Derrida, 2000) argues that there is an unconditional hospitality that does not demand that the guest's identity is

[1] Known as 'the Palestinian Catastrophe'; Nakba refers to the formation of the state of Israel and displacement and murder of thousands of Palestinians in 1948 (Said, 1999).

maintained as a foreigner. Vice versa, it signifies a radical openness to an absolute, indistinguishable other, and through its act of generosity which is experienced by the guest, this stranger is turned into a friend for a limited period of time (Derrida, 2000). In this perspective, as (Derrida, 2000) elucidates, the guest is viewed as a liberator that brings the keys to the prison of the nation or the family and the host is lacking being who sees himself as a parasite and impatiently induces the expected guest to enter as the host of the host. However, what the guest is mostly exposed to is the reverse. (Derrida, 2000) argues that unconditional hospitality is considered impossible, and he thus introduces the second type of hospitality which he calls conditional. Seeing hospitality as a word of troubled and disturbing origin, a word which bears its own inherent contradiction, Derrida (2000) argues that hospitality could be dreadfully transformed into hostility. Being conditional and grounded in the law and the right, it presupposes national sovereignty while it keeps reminding the guest that he is not in his own house (Derrida, 2000).

Nahr's reception in Kuwait resonates with Derrida's conditional hospitality which strengthens her belief that after the Nakba "nothing in the world makes sense" (p. 121). Nahr is just "a guest" in the country, and this impacts her legal status as she "could never be a citizen" (p. 43) which deprives her of the privileges of being a full Kuwaiti citizen. Nahr has been discriminated against when she is denied the right to participate in "the televised celebration for the royals during Independence Day" (p. 41). It is the Kuwaiti parents who express their refusal and complain that "such an honor should be reserved for Kuwaiti kids" (p. 41). Her trauma of being treated inferiorly is deepened and made dreadful when it turns into the accusation of betrayal. Jehad, her intelligent younger brother, is accused by the Kuwaiti military of betrayal during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Even though he was in Jordan at that time, Jehad has been brutally arrested and accused of cooperating with the Iraqis.

Jehad is treated with hostility and tortured in a way that violates and breaks him down by the "Kuwaiti police and military who colluded with the Americans to empty him of himself" (p. 123). Physically, Jehad's torture "caused severe trauma to his optic nerve, secondary to deep ocular lacerations and fragmentation of the orbital bone and optic canal" (p. 122). On the psychological level, Jehad's torture has emptied him of his dream of graduating as a surgeon from a Russian college. Nahr's trauma is even greater as she "will carry his broken dreams for the rest of [her] life" (p. 123). Jehad's dream is actually

an incarnation of her dream which she could not achieve as she was the one who was in charge of looking after the family due to the early death of her father. Nahr is the one who offered him the money and facilitates his access to college, but Kuwait deprives her of the fulfillment of her dream which deepens her traumas there. The impact of this cycle of toxic relationships affects not just Jehad and Nahr, the refugees, but also affect Kuwait the host country as well. Kuwait "suffers a loss for not embracing a young man as smart and passionate as him" (p. 107) who has, like all the Palestinian refugees, profoundly contributed to virtually all aspects of life in Kuwait. Thus, their exclusion leaves an emptiness in Kuwait which will never be filled as it "will never be the same without [the Palestinians]" (p. 107) and their dynamic presence.

Abulhawa links the experience of Nahr with the black Americans who face racial discrimination. As a Palestinian, Abulhawa's reference to Baldwin is paying a debt back to him for being the first prominent black American critic who expresses a profound sympathy with the Palestinians. (Alahmed, 2019) argues that Baldwin was seeking to describe the Black experience through parallels, thus, he links between Black and Palestinian radical history, ideology and poetry. Baldwin shows to a large extent his criticism of Israel and sympathy with Palestinians by articulating his experience as a Black man in America through the Palestinian experience under Israeli control (Alahmed, 2019). Nahr constructs this parallel comparison depending on her reading of Baldwin's nonfiction book *The Fire Next Time* (1963) where his words "beckons not only the mind, but also one's heart, history, and future" (p. 316) of all people around the world while transmitting a significant meaning. In *The Fire Next Time* (1963) Baldwin is sending a letter to his nephew, Big James, to explain to him how and why the "Nigger" (p. 316), a racial and stereotyping naming of Africans in America, are abused and "seen as worthless" (p. 316). This inferior stigmatization resulted in being excluded and forbidden to "aspire or excel" (p. 316) in any field inside America equally to the white. It moreover deprives the black of their independency as persons with free will, thus they are transformed into subalterns. (Spivak, 2006) describes the subalterns as ones who lack agency and are fully dependent on the white to choose and decide for them. Thus, it's the white who hold the power and tell the black "where to go, what to do, whom to marry, and where to live" (p. 316). Thus, Nahr's reference to Baldwin reflects her humanitarian solidarity with other victims of discrimination who share the same traumatic experience

of being “unwanted in the world” (p. 125). She is also bridging and shedding light on their experience to show how much they are still abused inside America, the nation that sees itself as the cradle of democracy in the 21st century.

Nahr is positively impacted by the advice Baldwin gives to his nephew, Big James. The blacks’ attempts to get rid of racial discrimination in America and Nahr’s attempts to be loved and treated with respect and dignity reveal to be “hard, at once, and forever” (p. 316). However while she “should fortify [herself] with love” (p. 300), Nahr finds a way out to save what remains of her spirit and “protect it from denigration” (p. 300) and collapse through her love affair with Bilal. The stunning positive impact of this love has turned her life upside down. Being now “wanted, loved, and valued” (p. 211), holds her the power to stand up again to fight with love “against the loveless world” (p. 316) of the twentieth century. Abulhawa’s reference to Baldwin reveals that her artistic skills as a female writer are sophisticated enough to enable her to critique a great male writer like Baldwin and comment on his writings. Thus, she intelligently ensures a voice and a presence of her Palestinian question once she connects it with the blacks’ issue.

Nahr is subjected to direct sexual abuse that violates decent Arab and Muslim conduct that guarantees the protection of the inviolability of her feminine body. During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the country is transformed into a police state and the military checkpoints which spread all along the streets looked like Foucault’s panopticon. Through such a panopticon everyone in the society is watched closely and subjected to direct surveillance which deprives them of their agencies (Foucault, 1961). The Kuwaiti system turns out to be a “System of domination that controls everything and leaves no room for freedom” (Foucault, 1996, p. 442). .Nahr’s small space of individual freedom is violated and crossed the moment she passes through the military checkpoints. There, the police officers cross the due material space that should be left between their masculine bodies and her female body as they shamelessly get so close to “stare” (p. 82) at her. This stare is a gaze that is used to derive pleasure (Lacan, 1981) the moment her body is seen by the Kuwaiti police officers. This sexual violation is “too humiliating” (p. 22) and done with a flavor of political discrimination when the police officers discover by looking at her ID that she is “identified as non-Kuwaiti” (p. 82) female. This stimulates them to “take [more sexual] liberties” (p. 82) with her as they shamelessly “stare at [her] breasts and tilt their heads toward [her] ass” (p. 82). This emphasis on her sexual parts is a sexual

deconstruction of her personality as she is not seen as a whole human body but she has been seen as fractured sexual parts.

Nahr's compulsory displacement heirs her a further condition of precarious abjection which is allegorically relevant to Agamben's Homo Sacer in his state of exception. Agamben targets his arguments on a bio politically equivocal state he calls the "inclusive exclusion" (1995, p. 7) of the Homo sacer. Based on that theory, the refugee is excluded because he contradicts/threatens the host country's symbolic order, thus, Agamben's Homo sacer is socio-politically segregated in an exceptional space and diminished to a state of zero life before politics and law. Hence, this refugee is included within the state's sovereignty, but at the same time he is excluded from the "rights belonging to citizens of a state" (Agamben, 1995). This thesis draws on the Homo Sacer theory since it explicates how Nahr is enraged from her disadvantageous refuge in Kuwait in which she is suspended in the status between entree and shadowiness; physical presence and symbolic absence.

In the words of Agamben, Nahr is a victim of "inclusive exclusion" which reflects the Kuwaiti state's rejection of co-existence between the Palestinian refugees and Kuwaitis. This exclusion makes Kuwait look like "an apocalypse sucking [her] into hell" (p. 92). It reveals to Nahr that all her dreams of transforming Kuwait into an alternative house that could compensate for the one she lost and in which she could be a daughter are transformed into hell. Kuwait makes it clear to Nahr that it "isn't home" (p. 120), and she will never be allowed more than "temporary residency" (p. 40) inside the country. In consequence, Nahr is forced to live dishonorably on the margin of society when she is inferiorly stigmatized as an "underclass" citizen (p. 40). Agamben's Homo Sacer theory argues that displaced persons exist as living beings by state law inside its borders, but still, they are rejected and alienated as they are not regarded as whole citizens and thus they are forced to live in marginalized camps or ghettos (1995). While Kuwait allows her to live within its borders, she is deprived of the privilege of being "a citizen" (p. 43). This alienation is translated in Nahr's residency in "a Kuwait ghetto" (p. 30), where Palestinian refugees have been forced to live after the Nakba.

Alongside the housing exclusion of the Palestinians, Kuwaitis "don't like seeing Palestinians excel at anything" (p. 41), particularly in the job market. Subsequently, Palestinian refugees in Kuwait suffered discrimination in employment markets (Hanafi, Chaaban, & Seyfert, 2012). The manifest of this discrimination is Nahr's prevention of fulfilling her dream of having a respected "job like modern women, a smartly dressed secretary like the ones on the covers of women's magazines" (p. 30). While the Homo sacer theory is employed to elucidate "the most extreme misfortunes" (Agamben, 1995, p. 102), the Kuwaitis are humiliating the Palestinians as they claim that "What Palestinians are good for is cheap labor" (p. 119). Thus, Nahr's dream to get an honorable job as a secretary falls apart. Allowed no other choice, and out of poverty, Nahr works as a "cheap whore" (p. 119) in a prostitution network run by an Iraqi woman called Um Buraq to satisfy the dirty freaks of upper-class Kuwaiti and Saudi men. Hence, the horizons of her enhancement are enclosed and she lives a diminished life.

Kuwaiti's humiliating reference to Nahr as stupid parallels the Israeli depiction of the Palestinians as inferior in comparison to their superiority. The misrepresentation of the Palestinians by the Kuwaiti regime as foolish people is implicitly Orientalist. While accusing the Palestinians that they "are stupid and that's why the Jews stole [their] country" (p. 41), the Kuwaiti regime falsely commits a historical inaccuracy that goes in harmony with the Zionist ideology. (Said, 2003) argues that Orientalism reflects Western society's prejudices about the Orient and its people which came as a consequence of a long tradition of false and romanticized images, through which the Western people define themselves as the superior race in comparison to the Orientals. Being in general depicted as backward and needing, European guidance had implicitly as (Said, Orientalism, 2003) argues justified the colonial and imperial ambitions of Europe and the United States in the Middle East. By applying Orientalism to the Palestinian context, (Sayegh, 1965) argues that Zionism has justified its colonialism of Palestine as a result of its stigmatizing of the Palestinians as inferior and backward compared to the imaginary supremacy of the Jews.

The Zionist's stigmatization of the Palestinians as inferior matches with the Kuwaitis as they accuse the Palestinians of being "stupid" (p. 41). Nahr's head teacher suspends her from attending school and roots her reputation as "a troublemaker" (p. 31) who is offensive to others. The charge is given to her just because she defends her brother Jehad

against “two boys [who] were bullying him” (p. 24) inside the school. This depiction intersects with the Zionists’ discourse in which they promote the idea that the Palestinian people are hostile and peace-averse people (Sayegh, 1965). The consequence of this political fallacy is to reverse the historic facts and exonerate the Zionists from expelling the Palestinians from their homeland and making them “endless refugees” (p. 126).

Nahr is deprived of her agency for being oppressed by the patriarchal figures of authority such as her father, husband, the Israeli occupation, and Kuwait which turns out to be another face of the Israeli occupation. (Bandura, 2011) claims that efficiency beliefs are the basis of human “agency,” which in turn allows individuals to have control over the nature and quality of their lives. Being displaced and “needing an anchor and solid ground beneath [her] feet” (p. 184), deprives Nahr of having “some autonomy” (p. 91) without depending on a father, a husband, and even on Kuwaitis. This independency could have constructed her agency as “the powerful woman” (p. 91) who exerts control over her life. It also could enable her to be her “family’s breadwinner, who took care of others” (p. 91) instead of being “vulnerable” (p. 91) and dependent. While crossing the borders of Palestine in her displacement journey into Kuwait, Nahr is entirely sure that she “could never again be complete in one place. This was what it meant to be exiled, never [be] whole anywhere” (p. 259). This fragmentary existence deprives her the chance of practicing autonomy over her life.

Nahr’s geographic statelessness manifests itself in the different names of Nahr, Yaqoot, and Almas she’s been given. These names are a consequence of the harsh displacement experiments she undergoes, and thus they show her unstable and fluid identity since each name reflects an aspect of her displacement. While her mother is crossing the Jordan River with her family out of Palestine on their way to their displacement journey, she begs this mighty river “not to swallow any of [her family]” (p. 37) and she makes a deal with it to give its name “Nahr” for her newly born girl. Thus, “Nahr” becomes a symbol of her fluid and changing identity as she moves with the water of the Jordan River and crosses towards her long exhausting journey through the burning sands of the Arabian Desert to arrive as a helpless refugee in Kuwait. The name “Yaqoot” represents her father’s betrayal of her mother as he names her after an Iraqi prostitute who is “one of his whores” (p. 21). The name Yaqoot refers to a very precious stone whose most common color is red. This redness while being connected with blood and honor, symbolizes the

shameful act of her father who loses his honor while hanging out with his prostitute and wasting his money for her. Simultaneously, he abandons his family and leaves them poor, helpless and disgraced while fighting the traumas of displacement alone.

Nahr's third name "Almas" epitomizes the rebellious dark era in her life when she works as a prostitute. This name is given to her by Um Buraq, an Iraqi old woman who is running a prostitution network inside Kuwait that provides its services to upper-class Kuwaiti and Saudi state men. Almas is a name of a precious stone that has been formed when carbon deposits deep within the earth are subject to high temperature and pressure. While some stones form within a few days or months, others take millions of years. In parallel, this name represents the awful pressures and traumas she is exposed to in her displacement in Kuwait that have "cheapened [her] in the eyes of others and intensified their scorn" (p. 63). Nahr's "turning to Um Buraq stands out as pivotal in altering the course of her life" (p. 61) as she is the one who truly sympathizes with her and "understands the shock and heartache of her fall from grace" (p. 63).It is true that Um Buraq picks her up from poverty as "men began raining many banknotes over [her]" (p. 62) while dancing at late-night parties. But it is also awfully true that she puts her on the wrong track making her the most "alluring and sophisticated" (p. 64) prostitute in Kuwait. Thus, Nahr's "glamorous" (p. 64) personality as Almas, documents the dark period of her life as it reflects her "rejection of the script to achieve a respectable life" (p. 62) as a respected married woman and a good mother.

2.3 WW1 traumas and Catherine's expatriation in the French Riviera

While Nahr is a refugee due to Nakba, Catherine is a victim of WW1. According to (Chakravertty, 2023), WW1 portrays the collapse of the Euro-American's heritage of enlightenment and a hideous reconnection with the primal level of experience which is best depicted as the heart of darkness. WW1 has been a catastrophe that sets the stage for the litany of horrors that spiraled throughout America in the twentieth century, and thus it is deemed, especially for women, the radical traumatic event of the modern era (Loughran, 2013). To transgress her traumatic memories of war, and to escape her "vulnerability to the myths of imperialism" (Tylee, 1990, p. 187), Catherine falls victim to a voluntary displacement in the French Riviera.

Catherine's chosen departure is an expatriation, unlike Nahr's forced refuge, as it is a free personal decision when she declares that she "has a right to make plans" (p. 96). She decides to make a new start where she improves her lifestyle and living standards. While declaring that "I'm sad" (p. 7), Catherine reveals the traumatic collective feeling of the American people during the great depression (Cresswell, 1993) they all suffered from aftermath WW1. The selection of Paris, the City of Light, to be her place of expatriation, is Catherine's start to find "the salvation" (p. 84) from her disillusionment. Catherine's marriage at a church at "Avenue Hoche" (p. 122) is a symbolic one. This church is situated on an avenue in the 8th arrondissement of Paris very near the *Arc de Triomphe* which holds a great symbolism for the French people. Being built in 1836 to be a monument for the triumph of the French army over the European armies during the Napoléonic Period, it symbolizes the French transgression of their traumatic wars in the 19th century and their move towards a new era of constructing modern France. Having a new "sense of style and [a wish] to move with the change" (p. 84), Catherine's choice of this place symbolizes her transgression of the First World War which paves the way for the construction of a new life.

While Nahr's reception in Kuwait is conditional, Catherine's reception in the French Riviera goes in harmony with Derrida's unconditional hospitability. Derrida depicts this kind of hospitality as "the opening up of home and giving not only to the foreigner but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, the place without asking of them either reciprocity or even their names" (2000, p. 3). In this unconditional hospitality, the country opens its doors wide without any prejudices to free access inside it, thus those arrivals are not being exposed to detailed investigations about their ethnicity, political or sexual orientation and personal details. People of Aigues Mortes never interfere with Catherine's private life to a degree they thought David is her brother and not her husband "until they said they were married" (p. 3). Being secured from any humiliating exposition to such an investigation, Catherine is offered a space of personal freedom and a sense of security. The manifestation of this belonging and inclusion inside the French society is Catherine's indication that "I'm glad I'm home" (p. 84). Actually, it is a very elegant home as she and David are "LIVING at le Grau du Roi" (p. 2), a resort on the Mediterranean beach, and their room "looked like the painting of Van Gogh's room at Arles" (p. 2).

Catherine's privilege of belonging transforms her from being the *other* whose presence is not welcomed into a *self* just like the French who in the "cheerful and friendly town" (p. 2) of Aigues Mortes treat her well, and "without being rude to see [her] in the village" (p. 9). On the contrary to Nahr who is treated as a second-rate citizen, Catherine is allowed by the French people to stay among them as they "liked her" (p. 9). In parallel to this inclusion of Catherine, Nahr faces the contrary when she is deprived of the privilege of belonging and maintained as an excluded foreigner who is forcibly living in a poor and isolated ghetto. While WW1 affected the whole people, Al Nakba has a detrimental effect on the lives of Palestinians who were expelled, displaced, arrested and murdered.

WW1 ramifications have a precarious effect on women as in its aftermath women in the West "found [its traumas] difficult to avoid" (Scardino Belzer, 2010, p. 1)(and any sense of security is actually fragile. Catherine is not an exception, even though she is physically secure while living in "le Grau du Roi" (p. 2), a fancy resort that she and David "liked" (p. 2). Catherine's choice of the le Grau du Roi to be the place of her expatriation holds a significant feminist symbolism, as "historically the properties of fluids have been abandoned to the feminine" (Irigaray, 1985, p. 116). The sea is given female embodiment for being steadfast and self-willed (Quinn, 2014). Thus, it reflects how Catherine imagines her life during her expatriation. While she "has started on [her] good new life" (p. 26), Catherine is constructing an imagined life where she has "a right to make a few plans" (p. 96) to secure her life from the war and get her autonomy from the patriarchy. She "has a good time" (p. 16) when she is spending her time swimming or just sitting near the sea as David tells her. In contrast, Nahr's experience near the sea is the reverse. "The Persian Gulf" (p. 70) has witnessed one of her most grave and vulnerable sexual experiences. While sleeping with one of her Kuwaiti clients, a "big shard of glass was stuck in [her] back from the beach" (p. 71). Being part of her work as a prostitute to "endure and wait, and cater to the whims of men" (p. 70), Nahr does not care to move from her place and ask for help. Vice versa, she bleeds and cries silently. Thus, the sea holds bad memories of Nahr's sexual humiliation.

Catherine's expatriation in the French Riviera does not reveal to be the place in which she is sure of keeping her new feminine world free from the interference of the patriarch. (Helmreich, 2017) argues that historically the *Sea* has been masculinized as being the embodiment of Poseidon or Yahweh with all their virile power of storms. Since "Nothing

is sure" (p. 120) in wartime, Catherine's feminine sea has violently turned upside down to be under the control of the patriarch who insists on imposing its clout on her life and whose voice speaks loudly with the sounds of "the ships and planes and gunnery practice off the Porquerolles" (p. 213). While the Mediterranean gets gloomy and darkens "with the smoke screen" (p. 212) the results from the "Anti-sub maneuvers" (p. 212), this military appearance is indeed a masculine violation and deconstruction of Catherine's temporary sense of security. Such security is replaced by a panic feeling that is similar to the "terrific" (p. 213) sounds of the bombs as they shook the windows of her room. Catherine is traumatized every time "she looked out at [the sea] and her eyes were very sad" (p. 13) by the horrendous male presence of ships and submarines which are now occupying her feminine world.

The 19th-century patriarchal tradition which America adheres to, intertwines patriarchy and dominance over narrations. Thus, being considered a taboo for women, Catherine was deprived the access to the field of art while living in America. Catherine faces the trauma of being deficient to take advantage of the marvelous and stunning opportunities available on the French Riviera to fulfill her dream of becoming a painter and artist. She sadly confesses that she "can't even write a letter and can't paint" (p. 26). When roaming all along the divine landscape of "Hendaye" (p. 16), Catherine is surprised by the huge number of magical and wonderful natural things "to paint and to write about" (p. 26). In addition to her openness to nature, her displacement on the French Riviera is like a real *Eden*, as it offers a unique chance for a change that would push her towards "her good new life" (p. 26). While transgressing the 19th-century gender roles, Catherine's artistic deficiency deprives her of the chance to embody her new life in a book which consequently weakens her feminine narrative in comparison with David's masculine narrative.

Catherine exemplifies Hemingway's fictional protagonists who, according to (Williams, 2020), embody the traits of the lost generation of American expatriates in France after WWI who experienced an absurd life in which they lack the sense of time and aims, still, they wrote the best novels of their time. Catherine is one of Hemingway's expatriates, who despite being in France to escape war and seek pleasure and creativity, they are psychologically unsettled and maimed due to the devastating events and the bewildering confusions of WWI (Williams, 2020). Hemingway's lost generation features start to be

evident in Catherine's confused and unsettled actions the moment she arrives at her expatriation as she declares that she "doesn't care at all" (p. 3) about having respect for "the established rules" (p. 84) concerning the time dimension. Whereas it is known that the right time to go to the Mediterranean beach is in the summertime and that "no one came to le Grau du Roi" (p. 3) earlier, and since "her time is different" (p. 118) and is not framed with the regular and ordered start and end points, Catherine disconnects with this timing. Her disconnection reveals that this time is actually "Not the time that's Catherine's" (p. 118), and thus her arrival is "regarded as madness" (p. 84) by the local people of the le Grau du Roi. This accusation of madness is due to her violation of the established timing of coming there, which is of course in the summer season. But she does the contrary when she arrives at her own time while the weather is still cold and rainy. This does not stop her from starting another journey in which she knows that she is "going everywhere and doing everything" (p. 16) without identifying the exact duration. As she indicates that her roaming may last for "Six months. Nine months [or] A year" (p. 14), Catherine thus shows an ambiguous and disrupted self that lacks the ability to decide an ordered timetable and follow it.

Nahr intersects with Catherine as she is also experiencing an absurd time while living in her refuge in Kuwait. Nahr the "endless refugee" (p. 125), experiences an ambiguous residency which is politically imposed on her by "the Jews" (p. 125) who do not allow her to go back to her homeland in Palestine. Stating that "I LIVE IN the Cube" (p. 22), Nahr reveals that her time disconnects and does not "match [regular time] of the outside world" (p. 22) as it becomes confined inside the four walls of the cube. Nahr's time ambiguity is strengthened by being deprived of the right to have a calendar which consequently "helped [her] understand that time isn't real and unnamed" (p. 22). The Cube is thus devoid of time just as her life is "without present, future, or past" (p. 22) and thus it has no meaning or logic while being empty of hope. This disconnectedness with time in both novels shows the obsession of both protagonists to disconnect with the current time since it means nothing to them but a link to their traumas.

Catherine's repeated actions incarnate the template of Hemingway's lost generation who voluntarily left the USA in the aftermath of WWI and arrived as expatriates in France. (Williams, 2020) depicts the persona of the lost generation as he argues that what shadows their lives is the vacuum of their actions which in consequence makes them lack any clear

and tied ends. While she is roaming the French Riviera, Catherine's life is stuck in a cycle of actions that are kept repeated endlessly without even a slight difference. Each day she goes with David to "fish from the jetty and swim on the beach" (p. 3), then she goes back to the cafe to "eat and watch the sea and the sails" (p. 2), and at night she "makes love [with David]" (p. 2) until she is tired. Nevertheless, she "makes love again" (p. 2) before going to sleep. The next day, she starts the cycle of actions "again" (p. 2) without feeling bored or "worried about anything" (p. 3). As Catherine's actions are stuck in a cycle of repetition of her choice, Nahr's life faces a different kind of repetition. Nahr declares that "I'm tired of being chased out of wherever I am in the world. Out of Haifa, then out of Ein elSultan, then Jordan, and now Kuwait? I'll just die here instead of facing another exodus" (p. 110). Nahr starts this cycle of repeated displacement when her family is forced to be refugees inside Palestine itself, then in Jordan, next in Kuwait, and after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait she is forced to be a refugee for the second time in Amman.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined how the ramifications of WW I and the Nakba have differently traumatized the lives of Nahr and Catherine since they turned their safe and stable world into a place of great danger to them. Drawing on Derrida's theory of hospitality and Agamben's Homo Sacer theory, this chapter has argued that Nahr was received by the Kuwaitis with conditional hospitality that gets near to hostility which has intensified her traumas. While the door through which she could have obtained compensation for her lost homeland has been closed, the door of discrimination has been opened which in consequence led to Nahr's exclusion. The sexual, social, political, and economic discrimination closes the horizon in front of her blending into Kuwaiti society. Depending on Baldwin's nonfiction book *The Fire Next Time* (1963), Nahr has conducted a parallel comparison between the discrimination she is facing as a Palestinian refugee in Kuwait and the discrimination against Blacks in America.

Unlike Nahr, Catherine has been received with unconditional hospitality from the French people inside the French Riviera which has opened the door wide to be included and offered visibility and agency. Nevertheless, Catherine's expatriation continues to embody different types of trauma as she becomes to embody the disillusionment of the persona of Hemingway's lost generation. These traumas start with her exposure to some military operations in the Mediterranean Sea which consequently disconnects her from her

feminine world. Her trauma is deepened when she faces a deficiency in taking advantage of the offered opportunities to be an artist. Catherine's life becomes an absurd one when she suffers a disconnectedness from time and an absurdity of aims as well as being trapped in a repeated cycle of actions.

Chapter Three

Women's Transgression and Transcendence of Patriarchal Oppression and War Traumas

3.1 Introduction

Nahr's and Catherine's traumas are intensified when both of them fall victim to diverse manifestations of patriarchal oppression. Nahr experiences "Trinitarian" oppression caused by her father and her husband Muhammad and grandmother. Nahr falls victim to her grandmother who assumes the role of patriarch and becomes its mouthpiece aftermath of her father's death. In parallel, while WW1 pushes Catherine to leave America and live as an expatriate in the "le Grau du Roi" (p. 2) on the French Riviera, she falls victim to her husband. David, the "cold-hearted little bastard" (p. 122) continues his inferior depiction of her while indicating his supremacy. Consequently, he is the one who is privileged with artistic, sexual, and economic transcendence.

Displacement experiences still enable women to reconceive their displacements sites as not just a space "for oppression and domination, but also subversion and creativity" (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2015, p. 2). Displaced women skillfully utilize their war experiences as an audacious instrument "of female liberation rather than a traumatic event" (Showalter, 1985, p. 12). This liberation qualifies them with the needed skills to transcend their vulnerabilities as helpless victims of war into "agents of change due to their expositions to new knowledge and opportunities, which may have positive impacts on their lives" (Yadav, 2021, p. 1). The prominent change they manage to achieve is revolutionary since it aims to deconstruct their imposed gender roles. Their transgression of gender roles disrupts the image of "helpless and superfluous women dislocated and destitute; uprooted and unwanted" (Manchanda, 2005, p. 179). Women are empowered and placed at the center with entire visibility and agency that enable them to simultaneously transcend their patriarchal oppression and war traumas.

Nahr's and Catherine's subversive transgression of their gender roles is their pioneering audacious mechanism to construct their transcendent lives. Nahr breaks the morals of her society through indecent feminine conduct, her erotic dance, and her work in prostitution. Catherine subverts her gender roles by manipulating her sexual orientation, transcending female appearance and clothes, and finally transcending writing.

The male is “the human form, the subject, and referent” (Millet, 1970, p. 25), thus he is the one who sets the rules to be followed by women in the society. Under the patriarchal context, the “reason has been associated with the male” (Liang, 2008, p. 10), consequently, this gained privilege makes the patriarchal rules, “order, physical and moral constraint, the anonymous pressure of the group and the requirements of conformity” (Foucault, 1961, p. 66). Nahr’s and Catherine’s crossing of gender norms reveal an uncomforting attitude toward the patriarch and a crossing of reason, thereby, it implicitly embodies madness. Qasim et al. assert Foucault’s social madness when they argue that “Madness is often associated with those who refuse to follow the set societal norms” (Qasim, Mehboob, Akram, & Masrour, 2015, p. 384). Catherine’s accusation of madness comes from her husband. He addresses her saying “you are crazy” (p. 113) because he considers her transgressive acts as signs of madness because they rupture and resist the prevalent and public politics of the American patriarchal traditions. Meanwhile, Nahr herself confesses that her life story is actually “a [narrative] of a madwoman” (p. 361). Their confessions reflect a maximum level of transgression and that it is made without a coming back. While (Cixous, 1996) argues that:

> *Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies – for the same reason, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into the history – by her own movement…Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it. (p. 320).*

Nahr’s and Catherine’s transcendent bodies are the ink through which they are writing their own feminine narratives.

3.2 Nahr’s gender transgression and transcendence of patriarchal oppression and war traumas

War and patriarchal oppression reinforce the dynamics of each other. Nahr’s declaration of “Fucking patriarchy” (p. 320) is an obvious evidence that the trauma she endures as a refugee in Kuwait is intensified by patriarchal oppression. Nahr’s experience exemplifies the reality that many generations of Palestinian children have grown up knowing nothing except violent warlike events, conflicts, and painful events (Abdeen, Qasrawi, Nabil, &

Shaheen, 2008)(Abdeen et al., 2008). Whereas the normal situation of scattered families living in the displacement is to maintain familial cohesion, the opposite happens with Nahr's families which suffer a rupture and fragmentation similar to the one Palestine goes through in the aftermath of the Nakba. Nahr reaches an absolute conviction that the "patriarchy was anything but [not] the natural order of life" (p. 63). While he keeps repeating "I am [the] man!" (p. 18), her father is very far away from doing what this cliché is supposed to mean in an Arab society. While he should be the protector and supporter of his family, he does vice versa by disavowing his moral commitment to Nahr and the others in the family. The moment one of his feet enters Kuwait, the other immediately gets out of his family's house to hang out with prostitutes on the streets of Kuwait. When he comes back late from his whores houses, "he reeks of khamr and sin" (p. 47) which consequently has passivized his presence inside his family house to be a "face in the framed photo hanging on a wall" (p. 19). This passivity indicates that her father's presence is ineffective like an idle and lacks any interference that could contribute to the benefit of the family. Being like the wall "has fractured her family" (p. 38). Thereby, this has led the family to its impoverishment as he spends his money on his whores instead of her family.

Nahr compares her vulnerable life at the hand of her father (the patriarch) with the vulnerability that the whales face at the hand of the fishermen (the males- the patriarch). While the name of this animal starts with the letter "w", it intersects with the first letter in the word "woman" which is also a "w", thus Nahr the woman and the whale are resemblances to each other. On one side, the lives of Nahr and the whale share the features of statelessness and fluidity, Nahr in her displacement, and the whale in the ocean. On the other side, while the whale is "still vulnerable to a small man's greed" (p. 149), this resemblance reveals that man's ego pushes him to oppress even the biggest animal in the world, and this gives a kind of relief to Nahr to see that even the whale is a victim of her oppressor.

Catherine likewise makes a similar analogy when she compares her vulnerability to that of the African elephant being hunted by David. Elephants have been regarded as paramount icons of the power and triumph of the colonial empire, in consequence, they are seen as the jewels of colonial animal collections throughout Europe (Szczygielska, 2020), David's "elephant hunting" (p. 92) embodies the white man's colonization

discourse in Africa. David's marriage to Catherine is also a colonizing discourse. While being killed and grabbing his tusks violently, "the elephant loses all dignity" (p. 103), and thus it resembles Catherine who is also left "ludicrous and undignified" (p. 35) as a consequence of David's humiliating oppression.

Nahr has also been victimized by Mhammad, her husband, about whom she has "fantasized fairy-tale love and sex, having her own house, children" (p. 30). Dreadfully, it turns out to be the opposite. This hero whom she has been for long waiting for to reconstruct her shattered life after the death of her father is revealed to be her comprehensive ruiner. The deadly blow that causes her life to fall apart forever happens when she discovers the reason why Mhammad isn't sexually attracted to her and why he abandoned her marital bedding and sits "naked on the balcony, crying softly to an indifferent moon, a cigarette burning between his fingers" (p. 51). Mhammad turns out to be homosexual. Due to being religiously and legally prohibited, homosexuality progressively has started to draw condemnation and criticism in the postcolonial Middle East Muslim world (Dalacoura, 2014). Thus, homosexuals are condemned to moral degradation. In Mhammad's case, the degradation is not only sexual, but it's on the patriotism level as well once Nahr discovers the horrible truth that he is "gay and a collaborator" (p. 205).

Nahr's marriage doubly traumatizes her. First, she is sexually betrayed as "Mhammad did not love his wife. He did not want to be with her and did not enjoy touching her" (p. 53). In less than a year of Nahr's marriage, their cold sexual relationship results in the crumble of this marriage. Mhammad humiliates her severely when he abandons her just to go back to "Tel Aviv" (p. 153) to meet Itamar, his Israeli boyfriend. Secondly, it traumatizes her that he used her to cover his cooperation with the Jews, her enemies who caused her displacement as he reveals to be "an Israeli informer" (p. 153). Nahr's mean exploitation by her husband deepens the fact that women should "trust no man" (p. 180) in this world as it reveals to Nahr that all men are "vampires who leave when they've sucked [women's] last drop of blood" (p. 66). Hence, Naher is left to "live in limbo" (p. 54), where she is not married and not divorced but rather severely shocked and "fallen from grace" (p. 63) into a desperate poor life in Kuwait.

In contrast to Nahr, who has been sexually and politically victimized by Mhammad, the *Garden of Eden* shows that Catherine is exploited by her husband David. (Millet, 1970) argues that traditionally, and in a system in which kinship is property, patriarchy has granted the husband as the head of the family nearly total ownership over his wife. When being asked about their names in the hotel, David's answer that "Our name is Bourne" (p. 44) reveals such ownership of his wife Catherine. Recognizing that this ownership is implicitly enslavement, pushes Catherine to show a refusal to be totally under his name and thus under his control when she angrily tells David that "because I'm married to you doesn't make me your slave" (p. 94). Catherine's enslavement by her husband is manifested in his inferior framing of her as a slave. Under the patriarchal tradition, "Woman is destined to maintain the species and care for the home, which is to say, to immanence" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 506). David translates this inferior role when he reveals his wish that Catherine "should have stayed home and looked after [him]" (p. 67). The consequence of this resemblance is reducing her presence to a zero state as she sadly confesses that "I'm nothing" (p. 98).

Abulhawa shows that women are hostile towards each other. Piper (2016) argues that the belief that women's "instinctive hostility" towards each other is one with a long history. Consequently, "the pervasive discourse of female relatives contributing to women's downfall meant that women's inter-familial relationships were constructed as sites of danger" (Pipe, 2016, p. 8). When applied to the Palestinian context, (Haj, 1992) argues that the young Palestinian female is not only humiliated because of being subordinate to all men in the family but also she is humiliated due to the aggressive treatment she receives from the senior women in the family, especially the mother-in-law and grandmother. Similarly, Nahr falls victim to her grandmother, the "ornery old woman" (p.32), who holds control and fills the father's absence.

Nahr's grandmother becomes the patriarch's mouthpiece, and performs the role of father very well, and "her insults all the more wounding" (p. 32) and causing psychological humiliation to Nahr.

Eco-feminism encompasses every kind of oppression of women and nature. It always exhibits that "women are culturally linked to nature; this relationship is conceptual, symbolic, and linguistic" (Tong, 2006, p. 350). Nahr's grandmother who "could be mean

for no reason at times" (p. 32), links her with animals when she bullies on her level of intelligence and her appearance. Ecofeminism is built on the belief that "the oppression of nature and of women is caused by the social patriarchal system" (Candraningrum, 2013, p. 4), Nahr's grandmother oppresses Nahr and the donkey as she stigmatizes both of them for having inferior level of intelligence when she says to her that you are as "stupid as a donkey" (p. 19). She also mocks both Nahr's and the cow's fat appearance when she sarcastically warns her that "No one is going to marry a cow" (p. 14).

Nahr's reputation is insulted when her grandmother accuses her of being a cheap girl whom the boys think that she is "sweet on them" (p. 35) just because she used "to play with boys" (p. 34). The grandmother fears that she will "let someone puncture her hymen and destroy her reputation" (p. 131). (Haj, 1992) argues that:

> *young Palestinian females are taught early that "their sexuality does not belong to them, is not theirs to give or to withhold; it is the inalienable, permanent property of the hamula. As a result, sexual purity and lineage honor are seen as inseparable. One way to ensure lineage honor is early arranged marriage; sex segregation is another. (p. 4)*

Nahr's grandmother makes preventive steps to protect their reputation. First, she tells Nahr's mother that "she should marry her" (p. 131) and prevents Nahr from playing outdoors with her peers. She orders her to stay home and do what women do, to "keep the house clean" (p. 130). Thus, being treated as a woman whose world is limited inside the housework gives Nahr an unfit frame and deprives her of enjoying her childhood like the rest of her peers.

Nahr is subject to threatening surveillance in her household. Nahr is exposed to close surveillance from her grandmother who is according to her the "BLACK EYE that sits in the center of my sky that sees and records everything I do" (p. 198). (Foucault, 1977) argues that the function of the Panopticon is "to induce a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (p.201). Thus, her grandmother is like the *Big Brother* who is watching her and keeps ordering and "telling [her] to watch where [she's] going" (p. 73). Hence, while Nahr is being vulnerable to such close surveillance, she is deprived of the right to talk and give a personal opinion as "Nahr keeps her mouth shut because that's the kind of person [she is]" (p. 18). As a consequence

of being “heavily censored” (p. 24) by the grandmother’s surveillance, Nahr’s world is shrinking and withheld from any agency.

Catherine falls victim to close surveillance as well. While Nahr is a victim of her grandmother’s surveillance, Catherine is exposed to a patriarchal surveillance by an American military figure. She is carefully monitored by “Colonel John Boyle” (p.31), a friend to her husband, while she is on a visit to the Prado. Declaring that “I saw you in the Prado looking at the Grecos” (p. 31), Colonel John Boyle passes a message to Catherine that she is not under his personal surveillance, but actually she is under the surveillance of the apparatus he works for -the American military. The colonel appearance while she is looking at the art of El Greco is symbolic. (Martínez-Lage, Piqueras, & Pérez-Espejo, 2014) argue that critics have stated that “the personal style of El Greco’s paintings is hardly comparable to that of others. His art was disdained because it did not follow the rules and principles of recognized styles” (p.1474). El Greco is a rebellious artist who calls from his displacement in Spain to the reformation of art by deconstructing the established traditional art rules to pave the way for a modern era in art to start. Thus, being a pioneer painter who had advanced over his time and caused a threat to the stability of the art field, El Greco comes to resemble Catherine. Being a pioneer American girl with her rebellious and modern lifestyle, Catherine resembles El Greco as she also forms a serious threat to the established American traditional roles. While telling David to “Take good care of [Catherine]” (p. 31), Colonel John Boyle symbolically reveals an order to David to keep an eye on his wife. David could not but do what the colonel has ordered. Thus, he insists on Catherine to let him “go along [with her] and keep [her] from doing anything crazy” (p. 21). In other words, David, the traditional husband, does his best to keep the spirit and actions of his wife submissive and obedient under his control.

While Nahr’s grandmother attempts to fashion Nahr according to the masculine construction of the female as passive and obedient, Nahr starts rebelling against her grandmother’s orders to adopt decent conduct by behaving rudely and violently. Nahr paves her way inside the school “by fighting [and] a reputation as a troublemaker” (p. 31). While two students are bullying her younger brother in the middle of the school, Naher gathers her girl posse, “and they wait for them outside the school gate and gave them a good hiding” (p. 24). On another occasion when the head principal and her teacher punish her for her never-ending “fights with students, pulling pranks on teachers, and

stealing candy from the corner store at school" (p. 31), Nahr's revenge is done in a subversive way by "slitting the tires on both of their cars" (p. 31). Hence, Nahr's rude and violent behavior prevents any Kuwaiti at her school to cause her any insult since "No one dared cross [her] after that" (p. 31) to avoid being vulnerable by her aggressiveness.

Nahr is being rude to her grandmother to pay back the humiliations she inflicted on her. Nahr verbally insults her grandmother when she tells her that:

> *You're a mean old woman [and] that's why your daughters haven't asked you to live with them. It's not because they're moving, or their houses are too small, or whatever other lies they feed you. It's because you're a nasty old woman nobody wants around. (p. 14)*

Thus, Nahr exceeds the social norm which determines the respectable way the young should talk with the elders. Nahr admits that she is "the first one my age who spoke to their elders in such a manner" (p. 15), which reflects Nahr's transformation into a rebellious and bad girl with an impudent tongue.

Simultaneously, female subversive aggressiveness overshadows the *Garden of Eden*, but Catherine directs it to her husband because he is all she has as a family in her displacement after the death of her parents. Being a male who is privileged with the domain over writing, David proudly states that writing represents "his strength" (p. 93). Catherine deceptively chooses not to let him go with his claimed hubris. She decides to deconstruct his power and humiliate his source of pride as a writer by subjugating his artistic skills to bullying. She diminishes his competence when she accuses him of making "mistakes in spelling and grammar" (p. 110). She also degrades the language he writes with when she says that he writes with an inferior "slang" (p. 110) rather than the superior standard language. This inferiority of the language he uses leads to an inferiority of his artistic book which she describes as "ridiculous child's notebooks" (p. 110). Being the transcendent while personifying the role of artistic critic, Catherine renders her final humiliating and harsh judgment which rates David as an "illiterate" (p. 110) writer. Catherine's bullying of David confines his writing to immanence.

Nahr utilizes her elevated skills in belly dance as a mechanism to achieve her transcendence. Nahr's belly dance at the Palestinian mixed wedding parties was "the most

popular" (p. 54) among all her friends, and her presence at such weddings is very desirable as "everyone wants to see her dance" (p. 54). Men are "intrigued watching her dance" (p. 56), while their women "would have torn her to pieces" (p. 55). But her husband Mhammad who "did not want to be with her" (p. 53), is not moved by her dance and doesn't show the slightest interest in her body. Even when she is dancing for him on the first night of their marriage, and her sexual desire is like the "fire that ignites her body" (p. 50), he "did not enjoy touching [her]" (p. 53). He humiliates her dance when he touches her body "with hands of pity" (p. 50) that are cold and hollow of any sexual desire and love. Consequently, his cold and pathetic reaction humiliate her awfully and "made [Nahr's dance] smaller" (p. 52). Thus, while Mhammad leaves her without giving her a divorce and goes back to Israel to meet his gay friend, Nahr the "abandoned bride" (p. 58), decides to pay the humiliation back to him. Though Mhammad has degraded her belly dance by "turning his eyes away" (p. 50) from her body while dancing, Nahr owns a strong "desire for relevance and attention" (p. 63) for her belly dance and thus for herself. She gets this attention when men "couldn't take [their] eyes off her" (p.46) while subversively starts dancing for them in secret erotic parties.

Nahr's belly dance goes beyond being an erotic scene to being an act of transcendence and liberation as well. (Hanna, 2010) clarifies that woman's dance has been used by marginalized women as a mechanism to subvert current rules and cultural norms in their societies in order to find new identities and spaces. At the time Nahr, the vulnerable Palestinian refugee who is "living on the margins" (p. 73) in Kuwait, has "no means or shelter in this fucking world" (p. 121), she takes refuge in her body. Being the only space she still owns and has autonomy over in the midst of her wretched and hard displacement, the harmonious movement of her body while dancing becomes "the only nation she ever claimed, the only religion she comprehends" (p. 30). Her dance which "relinquishes power over her body, bestowing autonomy on every bone, ligament, nerve, and muscle fiber" (p. 29) gives her exhausted and fragmented self a safe refuge from the traumatized and pathetic reality of her displacement. Accordingly, the more she dances, "the less her heart hurts" (p. 55) as her pain flows away with each shake of her body.

In conservative Islamic Arab societies, female dance has been linked to social vice, lewdness, degeneration, and eroticism (Meftahi, 2016), thus, it is considered a taboo as it arouses men's sexual lust. Nahr's mother shows refusal of this dance as she keeps

ordering her to “stop dancing” at mixed parties (p. 46), implicitly this rejection reflects a social refusal of female dance for being taboo. While Nahr is “dancing between three men who are ogling her body” (p. 76), she proves that she dares to cross and break that taboo. Nahr continues with her subversive scheme to utilize the erotic effect of her dance as a weapon through which she subjugates the Kuwaiti men who are ready to “pay gold just to watch [her] dance” (p. 82). One of her clients is Abu Nasser. Regardless the fact that he represents the religious level in the country and who is an important “pillar of his community and an upstanding public figure. He spoke on platforms about virtue, caliphates, and better times when morality was woven through social and legal fabrics that wrapped tightly around women” (p. 59), Nahr’s dance manages to subdue him and reveal that his religious discourse on morality and virtue is merely a cover for his sexual corruption. Abu Nasser is one from many men who comes from the diverse social and economic fabrics inside the Kuwaiti society who Nahr’s dance succeeds in making them pay her trauma bill when they “began raining many banknotes over [her]” (p. 62) while dancing between them.

Female dance and singing could be also understood from a political perspective as being a “form of resisting hegemonic ideologies” (Karayanni, 2006, p. 251). Nahr’s dance in an Israeli court is a case in point. While temporally coming back to Palestine during the Israeli invasion of the West Bank in 2000 to get her divorce from Mhammad, Nahr has been arrested by the Israeli Defense Army. She has been accused of collaborating with Palestinian guerrillas to “pump phthalates” (p. 352) into Israeli settlements’ water pipes system near Bethlehem. Consequently, “her crime had been ‘terrorism’” (p. 353). On her way to an Israeli “military court” (p. 352) and before the Israeli “judge opened the proceedings” (p. 334), Nahr starts to dance and sing while completely ignoring the Israeli judges. Since any Palestinian “cooperation with the Israeli judiciary would mean recognition of Israel’s authority” (p. 351) and a symbolic confession of the State of Israel, Nahr’s dancing and singing show her refusal of the legitimacy of this court and its judgments.

Throughout the history of the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation, Palestinian patriotic songs have played a significant role in arousing people’s feelings of national pride and dignity (Al-kharusi, 2016). The Palestinian patriotic songs have been utilized as strong tools of political struggle against Zionism’s colonization (Al-kharusi,

2016). The history of these songs as (Al-kharusi, 2016) further explicates deals with the history of the Palestinian struggle itself since the aftermath of the Nakba and they echoed the struggles of the Palestinian people and the guerrillas who have strived for them. Depicted by one of the Israeli judges as a "Heroic" (p. 335) act, Nahr's dancing and singing are profoundly revolutionary. Being a court of the Israeli colonizers, Nahr's "chaotic [dance and singing]" (p. 245) in the midst of it humiliates and insults the prestige of the Israeli judiciary. Her body and voice disturb the discipline inside the courtroom and the judge who "was baffled, then irate, yelling at her" (p. 351) orders the guards to interfere and stop her from "wasting the court's time and [making] things worse" (p. 335). Nahr who has transformed by her dance to an agent of the Palestinian resistance, never stops but vice versa she indeed makes things worse. She starts singing "Yumma Mweil elHawa" (p. 351) which is a lyrical narration of the Nakba, the Palestinian resistance, and the inevitable coming back of the refugees to their homeland.

Nahr's dance and singing in the midst of the Israeli court are uncanny. "The uncanny is nothing else than a hidden, familiar thing that has undergone repression and then emerged from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfills this condition" (Freud, 1919, p. 15). While Nahr is singing about the Nakba and the Palestinian refugees, she brings back the suppressed Palestinian narrative and refugees from the forced forgotten displacement into the midst of presence. Thus, the ghostly image of the Palestinians is revived again and the memory becomes a present fact in front of the Israeli colonizers. Nahr links her Palestinisness deeply with the Arab World the moment she starts singing "Abdel Halim Hafez song "El Hawa Hawaya"" (p. 351). Whereas she is strengthening the Palestinian cause by framing it with Arab Nationalism, she is making it clear that the Israeli claim of the Judaism of the land of Palestine is false. Singing in Arabic proves that Palestine speaks Arabic and all its space is owned by the Arab Palestinians.

The metaphoric battle between the Palestinian narrative and the Israeli one is accompanied by a physical one. Nahr transforms the court first into a battlefield platform when "one of the guards cupped her mouth, then she licked his palm" (p. 334) which enables her to "hijack the sanctity of her courtroom in particular and Israel's democracy in general" (p. 334). Subsequently, it enables her to transcend her Israeli colonizers who stole her homeland and kicked her out to her desperate refuge in Kuwait. Via her body, Nahr "colonized the colonizer's space of authority" (p. 323). This declaration is an

announcement of transcending the "chains" (p. 323) of war-based traumas that have captivated her life in displacement. Since "Israel had not been able to censor the footage that showed their court humiliated and their authority diminished by a Palestinian woman in shackles" (p. 335), the humiliation they have received has been made visible in front of the media and the public.

In contrast, there's no mention of female dance in general or belly dance in particular in Hemingway's *Garden of Eden*. This absence is due to Catherine's distinct subversive scheme which is built on manipulating the appearance of her female body rather than its movements. That is to say, while clothes and haircuts have a symbolic significance in Western societies, Catherine's focus is to transcend via them rather than belly dance. Likewise, as "Women of [Nahr's] generation were born dancing" (p. 11), belly dance has a meaning back in Nahr's Arab Islamic country.

3.3 Catherine's gender transgression and transcendence of patriarchal oppression and war traumas

Catherine's relationship with her husband David portrays how patriarchal traditions still hold dominion in American society in aftermath of the WWI (Fantina, 2005). Catherine is victimized by being portrayed as inferior in comparison to David's supremacy. As the woman is "not a fully developed human being the way a man is" (Tyson, 2023, p. 11), this construction of the female as inferior in this duality is made clear when Catherine and David are presented with the breakfast meal in the café. David's eggs "were big eggs and fresh and [Catherine's] were not cooked quite as long as [his]. He remembered that easily and he was happy with his" (p. 2). This scene incarnates the entire patriarchal transcendence discourse from antiquity. While the male is the "complete individual" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 503) in such a tradition, David is the one who is privileged with perfection and superiority in comparison with Catherine's inferiority and imperfection.

Hemingway is a misogynist who depicts the female as inferior. While the male is "regarded above all as a producer" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 503), David keeps on revealing his gladness for being the transcending and "the inventive type" (p. 3) for being a writer. His career as a writer offers him an extra advantage that makes his presence in this world "a great success" (p. 26). This success in writing leads to achieving economic transcendence. David is the one who supports his family economically with the "five

hundred dollars" (p. 12) he has earned after the publication of "the first printing [of his book]" (p. 12). His contributions in this book reflect his "flashes of intuition" (p. 3) for being part of the history of white man's colonization of Africa. He proudly personifies his adventures with his father during an elephant hunting trip to Africa and the ivory industry that flourished at that time. In parallel, The Arab male in *Against the Loveless World* has been depicted in a similarly supreme discourse as "Men have a way of speaking to women as if we're children" (p. 247) according to Nahr. Ghassan, Nahr's Palestinian friend, "had a machismo that provoked [Nahr] to sarcasm" (p. 247). He often talks inferiorly about women and underestimates their abilities. While extinguishing the fire that has burned in Nahr's friend beauty center, Ghassan blames her for causing the fire and consequently ruining her shop. At the same time he claims that "Just the men fix things" (p. 230) in this world after been damaged by women.

The link of women to the reproductive and domestic roles has in consequence confined women's lives and deprived them of the possibility to achieve equal supremacy and dignity that privilege the man. Harmoniously, Catherine's presence in the world is made a similar one. When being asked by the waiter in the café about her job, she desperately answers that she is a "lazy... housewife" (pp.12-20), which accordingly links her with the imaginary order or "immanence" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 506). Hence the female presence has been "placed in passive situations" (Irigaray, 1985, p. 24). Catherine's presence is alike when her effectiveness and activeness are detracted. While declaring "I'm nothing" (p. 98), Catherine translates her passive and limited role to be that of worthlessness and undignified. In accordance, her presence is deconstructed and excluded from the main scene by pushing her out to live humiliated in the margin. In parallel, Nahr's skills and abilities are disgraced and undervalued by her grandmother who never ceases to describe her ~~personage~~ as "a failure" (p. 134) for having low marks at school when she is a girl. This depiction continues to stick with her personality when she grows up and gets married. Nahr's grandmother depicts her as a failed wife and holds her responsible for the ruin of her marriage as she is not clever enough to "keep a husband for even one year" (p. 58).

Catherine's subjectivity is diminished by being linked to nakedness. Haire (2021) argues that the female characters have been viewed in terms of their bodies alone since they were likely subject to the authority of men's power over their bodies. Being relegated only to

wife role, women could not expect to ever possess considerable authority over their own bodies (Haire, 2021). The greatest humiliation to this female body is made when it has been linked to nudity and thus to the state of vulnerability and submission to masculine authority (Haire, 2021). Stating that "I'm a naked wife" (p. 12), reveals the lack of her subjectivity as she is being reduced to an erotic object. Catherine's sexual openness exposes her body to David's masculine dominance which violates its feminine privacy. Catherin's name holds an implicit indication of her sexual subordination to David. While taking the three initial letters of her name, "Cat", Catherine resembles the cat family in the sense that even "the most splendid wildcats, the tigress, lioness, and panther, lie down slavishly under the male's imperial embrace, inert, stupid, insensitive, and humiliated" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 43).

Catherine's linkage with the animal world paves the way for dropping the animalistic trait of speechlessness in her life. Catherine is a victim of the patriarchal politics of silencing women to deprive them of their agency. While David addresses Catherine, "I'd be happy looking at you if you never said a word" (p. 6), his speech reveals the old patriarchal policy of silencing women by stigmatizing them as the incarnation of the "zone of silence" (Irigaray, 1985, p. 56). Catherine is victimized by being silenced by her husband. While being asked by the waiter about her name, Catherine is muted and David is the one who speaks on behalf of her when he answers "Our name is Bourne" (p. 44). This muting is not just a muting of her voice, but it implicitly indicates that it's a mute of her subjectivity. In the patriarchal tradition the woman "belongs to [her husband] so profoundly that she shares the same nature with him and she has his name and his gods" (de Beauvoir, 2011, p. 229). Thus, Catherine is deprived of her agency as an independent individual when her husband relates her to himself by naming her after his family name.

Nahr's voice is being silenced in a parallel way. While being humiliated by her father and later by her grandmother, Nahr admits that she "keeps [her] mouth shut because that's the kind of person [she is]" (p. 18), and thus she is transformed in the Spivakean terms into a subaltern who has deprived the right to speak for herself.

Catherine picks up her humiliated self to avenge her war traumas and patriarchal oppression while "looking at the marble of Leda and the Swan" (p. 31) when she goes down to the Prado. Yeats depicted this Greek Myth in his poem *Leda and the Swan*. The

marvelous yet strange images of Leda's violent rape by Zeus, result afterward in Leda giving birth to Helen of Troy. Later on when Helen grows up to be a beautiful woman, a huge war is caused because of her. The horrific consequences of this war have resulted in the ruin of the Greek civilization, the death of its king, and consequently the outset of the modern era (Ruzbeh & Wan, 2014). Catherine's stare at the sexually violent event of Zeus's invasion of Leda is "a sort of tempting" (p. 26) as it provokes her vigorous desire to "own [the marble]" (p.31) and revive this Greek myth. While obtaining an infinite artistic license to revive such a Myth, Catherine does it in her own subversive way to be the best identical frame for her new life on the French Riviera.

Incarnated in a swan, Zeus is attempting to impose his masculine discourse over Leda while subjecting her to his violent rape (Ruzbeh & Wan, 2014). Catherine dares to mess with the masculine authority of Zeus, who is considered the king of Gods and the protector of man in Greek Mythology. She rebelliously switches the event from being a masculine rape of the female to being completely the opposite. While Zeus' "great wings beating still above the staggering girl" ((Yeats, 2000) lines 1-2) in the midst of his violent rape of Leda where "he holds her breast upon his breast" (Yeats, 2000) line14), Catherine encroaches on his sexual authority while having sex with David. Being on the top and David "lay there and her hand holding him and her breasts pressing against him" (p. 9), Catherine makes the audacious and radical change in her life. She masculinizes her role by switching her sexuality and personifying a man named "Peter" (p. 10). Simultaneously, she says to David "You're my wonderful Catherine" (p. 10) to indicate that now she is feminizing his role by forcing him to turn to her persona.

The consequences of her mess with the sexual roles inside the scene are subversive as well. While the consequences of Zeus' rape of Leda were "the broken wall, the burning roof and tower and Agamemnon dead" ((Yeats, 2000), lines 10-11) which evinces the horrendous collapse of the Greek civilization and the beginning of the modern epoch. Catherine's subversion of the physical sexual position through which imposes her sexual power over her husband leaves him "dead and empty" (p. 10) to refer to his metaphorical state of emasculation and powerlessness. Conversely, Catherine proves that legends never die when she gains the legendary power of Zeus' "great wings" ((Yeats, 2000) line1) through which she breaks the patriarchal gender constraints. Thus, she flies high to touch

her dream of eternal and equal sexual transcendence where she can do “anything and anything and anything” (p. 8) the way the male does.

Women’s castration complex draws them to challenge the penis for “being the only sexual organ of recognized value” (Irigaray, 1985, p. 11). While the male is the one who is privileged with the phallus which consequently crowns him with the dominance over sexuality discourse, women make a daring step to overcome their lack of the phallus. Irigaray (1985) argues that “to reverse the relation in the economy of sexuality, women are to preserve and expand their autoeroticism, their homo-sexual pleasure keep themselves apart from men long enough to learn to defend their desire” (p. 16). Catherine overlaps her wave of sexual transgression to the extreme to violate another sexual tradition when she enters a homosexual relationship with Marita. Transforming into “very gay” (p. 66), Catherine neutralizes David’s phallus from being the only source for the satisfaction of her sexual desire once she leaves his marital bed and gets into Marita’s bed. While both of them are “lying in the big bed together side by side; the sheet pulled up under their chins” (p. 107), her sexual transgression is pushed to be “wildly and dangerously” (p. 11). Consequently, being like a raging fire that burns everything green or dry ahead, her sexual transgression threats to “burn out [David’s sexual dominance] in a fire that rages like that” (p. 11). Thus, it foreshadows her transcendence towards owning an equal sexual authority as David.

Likewise, in *Against the Loveless World,* Abulhawa touches on this sensitive discourse according to the Arab and Muslim traditions through Nahr’s sympathetic tone toward homosexuality which transcends heterosexuality norms. (Dalacoura, 2014) argues that the controversial issue of homosexuality in Arab and Islamic societies has been prohibited religiously and legally and thus it gains a wide rejection from all the social level as well. Mohsin, the “seventeen-year-old” (p. 87) gay boy, is brought to Nahr’s prostitution apartment by his father to correct his sexual orientation after he had “caught him in the act with an older man” (p. 88). With an implicit violation of the morals of sexuality and a crossing of this taboo, Nahr shows a supportive stance when she says that “It’s okay to like boys, Mohsin. Everybody has a little bit of love for the same sex, some people more than others” (p. 88). While she is easing the matter for him, Nahr is complicating it for all the society once she gives the way out by “taking society and religion out of the equation” (p. 88). Thus, by such exclusion, she incites Mohsin to cross the social morality

restrictions and laws while building his own sexual identity. Nahr confesses that she herself has been a lesbian when she was young. While she is hanging out with her "group of stunned fourteen-year-olds" (p.24) friends and talking secretly about marriage and sex, her close friend Suad Marzouq tells them that "adults kissed with their tongues" (p.24). Since they think that she is lying and as they are curious to know about this forbidden subject, they dare to "practiced on each other" (p. 24). Doing this, Nahr subversively indicates that "I'm not a holy woman" (p. 70) and this privileges her to violate this sexual taboo.

Catherine's journey towards transcendence is empowered by Zeus' "brute blood" ((Yeats, 2000), line 13) that is now going through her veins. Catherine shows this brutality when she does to David what Leda's giving birth to Helen of Troy did to the Greek Civilization. By the time Helen turned to be a pretty princess an awful war began because of her, and it consequently caused the burning of Troy and the collapse of the Greek Civilization. With the brutal blood that goes in every cell inside her, Catherine transforms into a "god damned woman (p. 35) who steps further to rob David of a symbol of his masculinity when she burns the book he has just written. In the patriarchal tradition, the pen according to (Gilbert & Gubar, 1988) Gilbert and Gubar is considered a "metaphorical penis" (1988, p. 3) . David, who is depicted as "being a writer" (p. 74), is doubly empowered by owning both the physical and symbolic phallus. Having power over artistic discourse facilitates the path for David toward the domination of his male narrative over that of Catherine. While writing about "a story that happens in Africa when he was about eight years old" (p. 79), David documents his adventures throughout the African wilderness with his father to hunt an elephant for his expensive tusks. This hunt, depicted as a "butchery" (p. 103), embodies the white man's colonial history in Africa. David feels proud to be part of it once he depicts himself and his father after their hunt for the elephant as "heroes" (p. 103). This documentation is a privilege granted to David through which he is empowered as he writes "from an inner core which could not be split" (p. 93) to impose this heroic masculine narrative.

Catherine is excluded from any representation inside it. When David starts to "write he forgot about Catherine" (p. 21) either by making her go to sleep or by writing when she is out. Her exclusion provokes Zeus' brutal blood in her veins and pushes her to burn David's book and clippings in the "big fire" (p. 112). She makes the burning more

humiliating when she burns them “in the iron drum with holes that Madame uses to burn trash” (p. 12) to disregard and diminish his writing which leaves him feeling that he is “completely hollow. It was like coming around a curve on a mountain road and the road not being there and only a gulf ahead” (p. 110). The ruin of his masculine narrative constructs the first step towards the raise of her subversive “wonderful [feminine] narrative” (p. 117) which she forces David to “write it for [her]” (p. 113).

Simultaneously, Nahr from inside her cell in Israel “had waged a long battle to gain writing utensils” (p. 28). She has been denied her right to write her narrative when “the guards had ignored all [her] requests for pen and paper” (p. 112). This narrative spans over twenty years to portray her own life while going through horrific and traumatized experiences in her refuge in Kuwait. Nahr feels deeply obliged to write this narrative “to pass the long lonely time inside the cube, to mark her place in this loveless world, and simply to declare that she has amazingly managed to survive” (p. 361). Being truly “a revolutionary” (p. 204) woman, she never gives up and creatively she “used [her] bodily fluids to write on the wall” (p. 112) of the cube her triumph declaration. By an extremely feminine touch, Nahr rebelliously writes with her “menstrual blood” (p. 112) through which she distorts the walls of her cube which metaphorically stands for the masculine narrative.

Catherine punctuates her gender transgression by associating herself with wakefulness rather than sleep. Sleep and its relatedness to females have been discussed from a gender-based perspective. (Zhang & Wing, 2006) argue that gender has a significant role in sleep, and in which female sleep is depicted as immanent since it’s the one which is reported to have a higher rate of sleep problems. Since society tends to view sleep as an inactive or lazy mode (During & Kawai, 2017), the passive victim of patriarchy is depicted in the fairy tales as Sleeping Beauty. The depiction of the woman in Sleeping Beauty goes in harmony with the patriarchal discourse. When being put to sleep, she lies passively at the bottom of abjection just as a dead person who is stripped of power and agency (De Beauvoir, 2011). Since “Consciousness is a part of wakefulness” (Levinas, 1978, p. 62), Catherine’s subversive wakefulness is a refusal to have an unconscious self that lacks agency and free will. While metaphorically “the sleeping *I*, is a dead *I*” (Nancy, 2009, pp. 18-26) that is humiliated and depicted inferiorly, David describes Catherine while she is sleeping as “a small animal” (p. 23). Through such matching, she is deprived of her

human agency while being connected with animalism. Being the epitome of an American traditional male who “wouldn't like the sort of wife who couldn't sleep” (p. 120), David considers Catherine’s wakefulness a grave threat to his masculine authority. Female wakefulness “endures a dreadful reawakening” (Nancy, 2009, p. 15), harmoniously while Catherine is awake she transforms into “a wild girl” (p. 22) who would disturb David’s comfort.

Catherine acts on David’s representation of her as evil by expressing her wilderness through the “hysteria, false accusations, temperament” (p. 35) which associates with her personality as a woman. Her awakening is an obstacle that reduces his access to writing his masculine story. David writes well only when “Catherine is still sleeping” (p. 20), thus he is excluding her from his world by insisting on her to “Go back to sleep my dearest love” (p. 120). When David ironically asks Catherine “What did you wake up for?” (p. 20), he is implicitly humiliating her role in life by passivizing her female presence which becomes while sleeping “indistinct, and no longer properly distinguishes [herself] from the world or from others, from [her] own body or mind. For [she] can no longer hold anything as an object, as a perception or a thought” (Nancy, 2009, p. 16).

The vague presence which limits Catherine’s role to be the wife who is just lying down and “waiting for [David] in the bed” (p. 6), is actually pinning her female agency to be “precisely limited to a place, to position” (Levinas, 1978, p. 65). Catherine’s refusal of David’s wish to go to sleep is actually a rebel against being deprived of the chance to enjoy every moment of her new good world in which she is “ a great success” (p. 26). She translates this rebel by switching the sleeping gender-based tradition while saying to David “Please sleep” (p. 22). She masculinizes herself when she stays awake with full consciousness. This state of awakening enables her to take control of David and subject him to her femininity. While she is now “taking care of [David]” (p. 22), she feminizes him by sending him to the passive zone of the unconscious.

Likewise, Nahr’s stateless life as a refugee is mirrored in the statelessness of sleep and wakefulness. While living inside the cube, where the nature of time is entirely distinct from the exterior world, there are “no days or nights. Light and dark” (p. 98). Such fragile borders between wakefulness and sleep turn Nahr to be implicitly caught in limbo. Her entire presence in life is caught between the state of consciousness and unconsciousness,

the state of having an agency and being deprived of it. Her attempts to subvert this absurdity by keeping "a sleep and waking regimen" (p. 92) fail and once she is physically "stuck in the Cube" (p. 311), her whole consciousness is stuck as well.

Women's bodies have been recognized in accordance with patriarchal tradition as "a mere instrument or medium for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related" (Butler, Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity, 1999, p. 15). Catherine's subversive scheme starts by turning such a patriarchal-based appearance the other way around, the way "how [she] wants" (p. 15) rather than how David wants. Thereby, she dares to transform her appearance from being a vulnerable passive one that echoes the patriarchal traditions into an active one that reveals her new trans-subversive identity as she is "now a boy too" (p. 9). Catherine's rebellious and challenging declaration that "I can do anything and anything and anything" (p.9) has paved the way for her to do what "No decent girls in this part of the country and even in Paris had ever [done]" (p. 17).

Catherine starts the change in her appearance with her hair. (Smith, 2017) argues that the old tradition for women which was to have long hair had changed in the immediate post-WW1, during which women had taken on men's jobs in factories and other forms of previously masculine domains. Accordingly, dramatic changes in women's rights in America in the aftermath of WWI, Johnson (2018) argues, have paved the way for the flapper's movement to arise. Johnson (2018) defines the flappers as the young women who made a space for themselves to be independent and act on their behalf not their fathers, husbands, or children as women a decade earlier had done. They have exhibited gaining greater gender liberties through their haircuts (Johnson, 2018). The ideal liberated woman at that time used to have as Johnson (2018) argues a new ideal boyish figure simply not as feminine as in the past decade. Hence, women's hair was cut in a bob, not out of practicality, but because it minimized the femininity they would otherwise exude (Johnson, 2018). Hence, short hair has become a marker of gender transcendence (Smith, 2017). Catherine's going to David's barber shop and has "her hair cropped as short as a boy's" (p. 8), and in the same way as David's, symbolizes her obsession with such gender crossing. There is a longstanding bond between a woman's identity and self-confidence and her hair (Malcolmson, 2012). Catherine's short hair "could mean too much" (p. 17) as it strengthens her confidence in her steps towards a new subversive image of her body.

Since the flapper often "calls to mind a lavishly dressed woman in a masculine fashion" (Johnson, 2018), Catherine completes her trans image in a similar way. She takes off the skirt and wears shorts and a "fishermen's shirt" (p. 3). When she walks "around the village" (p. 3) in the daylight and in front of the public, Catherine brings into the center her subversive identity with full visibility and agency.

Meanwhile, Nahr harmonizes with Catherine when she also transcends the feminine clothes that are imposed by patriarchal traditions. Following a conservative Palestinian Arab and Islamic female tradition, Nahr is required to hang her "pants, dresses, shirts, and underwear" (p. 35) very close to the balcony "in the inner lines" (p. 35). While the outer lines that are near the street are specified for her "brother's jeans and shirts" (p. 35). This exclusion of her garments from the outside world reveals that in such a tradition feminine garments are seen as stimulators of instincts and sexual desire which in consequence could ruin the family's honor and bring shame. Thus, to exclude the ghost of honor's violation, Nahr's feminine clothing is kept "hidden from the lustful eyes of adolescents and men" (p. 35), and confined inside the walls of her house. Guy and Banim (2000) argue that identities are expressed through dress, thus, women's choice of clothing implies awareness and agency and it as well suggests that they consciously comply with or subvert their social norms (Guy & Banim, 2000). Nahr shows her discordance through a subversive scheme that strikes her patriarchal traditions the fatal blow. The moment she rebelliously dresses in an erotic "little red dress" (p. 64), she sets free this shameful dress from its confinement inside the four walls of the house into the dirtiest "secret apartment in Salmiya" (p. 81) where honor has no representation. This rebellious step is mainly directed at her father who has lost his sexual honor as well as his family while hanging with prostitutes. Nahr equalizes with him and plays a similar role when she becomes a disgraceful woman when she engages in prostitution.

Nahr's erotic little red dress is her most daring medium towards her transcendence. Wearing it is "pivotal in altering the course of [her] life" (p. 64) as it has deeply affected her entire life by putting it on the sinful track of "Prostitution" (p. 76). Personifying "A revolutionary whore" (p. 364) named Almas, Nahr's cheap red dress which is "hugging [her] waist, squeezing [her] tits together like they were going to burst" (p. 64) is squeezing out at the same time her "renewed, reinvented" (p. 36) identity. With "a glass of liquor in

[her] hand" (p. 76) and her erotic dance with men, Nahr "the devil's temptress" (p. 61), is drinking for her multi-feminine triumphs.

Nahr transcends the Arab-Islamic traditions of morality that sanctify women's honor. This transcendence is conspicuous in her audacious confession that "I [am not] an honorable woman" (p. 76). In her traumatizing displacement where "Honor is an expendable luxury" (p. 210), she finds her shelter in the "margins of honor" (p. 104). While sitting in "Um Buraq's Lincoln Continental" (p. 49) on her way to her sinful and disgraceful sexual parties, "[her]body was relaxed in the car, [her] heart open to the world, warm and full of love" (p. 49). She obtains this satisfaction after avenging the sides that provoke her humiliation and vulnerability in just one scene. While wearing the red little dress, she embodies the role of Zeus as Catherine does, and feminizes Abu Moathe who is a "bank branch manager" (p. 76) and a son of an important Kuwaiti military general. Whereas Zeus treated Leda callously and viciously after he had finished his rape of her by falling her down from his mighty wings (Yeats, 2000), Nahr does the same after having sex with Abu Moathe. While empowered by the tempting effect of her red little dress and in a humiliating scene, she forces him to fall and "kiss [her] feet" (p. 80). Thus, I argue that Nahr the "abnormal and vicious" (p. 129), transcends Abu Moathe the "devil" (p. 87) who embodies the devilish pillars of her traumas in Kuwait.

Catherine achieves economic transcendence as well. While "owning economic roles would ensure woman control over her own person" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 171), Catherine strengthens her subversive transgression by deconstructing her economic relatedness with her husband once she gets "big [checks]" (p. 13) which have been deposited in her account in the bank. She inherits this money from her parents once she gets married, and she doesn't just spend it on her own, but she spends it on David too when she "puts up a substantial sum" (p. 79) for their expenses. With a sense of pride, she demonstrates that it is a must for David to "admit he has lived more comfortably than he did before he married her" (p. 79) to show his gratitude for her profound financial support which contributes to the prosperity of their life. Catherine's biggest investment of her money is done when she uses it to achieve her dream of publishing her own narrative. Since "In the economic area, woman's conquests were stunning" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 180), Catherine's success is parallel. Thus, being "a very great publisher now" (p. 97), guarantees her artistic transcendence as well as economic one.

Nahr draws her economic transcendence similarly to Catherine. While "Woman's social oppression is the consequence of her economic oppression" (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 88), Nahr's life story in her displacement is a clear manifestation. With a strong belief that her vulnerability at the hands of her father, husband and grandmother has led to her poverty and need. Nahr is offered a big chance through Um Buraq "to make a month's salary in one hour" (p. 58). This large sum of money takes her entire family out of poverty. Nahr becomes the "caretaker of the family who has been carrying this family for years. [Her family] would never have made it out if it hadn't been for [her] hard work and smart investments" (p, 119). Being the family sponsor privileges Nahr with economic supremacy reduces her trauma and paves the way for her to stand again on her feet after the collapse of her families.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the diverse patriarchal oppression that Nahr and Catherine endured in their distinct moods of displacement. In her refuge in Kuwait, Nahr falls victim to three patriarchal figures. Her oppressions starts on the hands of her father whose sexual adventures with prostitutes has broken down the family. Then she is victimized by her husband Mhammad who turns out to be gay and an Israeli spy. Her grandmother internalizes the role of the patriarch and contributes to the oppression of Nahr. This three dimensional oppression leaves Nahr smashed and subordinate. In parallel, Catherine fell victim to her husband David who is the embodiment of the 19th-century patriarchal norms. These traditions victimize Catherine by portraying her as inferior in comparison to David's supremacy. Her vulnerability to David is demonstrated in being sexually, artistically and economically subordinate to her husband. Nahr and Catherine subvert boldly their gender norms. Nahr has adopted indecent and violent feminine conduct that violates the Palestinian social and sexual norms. While she owns elevated skills in belly dance, Nahr utilizes the erotic effect of her dance to subjugate the Kuwaitis and to decolonize herself from the Israeli occupation. Nahr has transcended sexually, artistically and economically. Catherine manipulates her sexual orientation. She transcends economically and artistically. Catherine associates herself with wakefulness rather than sleep. She also changes her clothes and haircut to by in a boyish style.

3.5 Thesis conclusion

This thesis has built on postcolonial and psychoanalytic feminism theories to bring in a parallel comparison of Hemingway's *Garden of Eden* and Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*. The thesis has clarified Catherine's and Nahr's diverse displacement experiences in the aftermath of WW1 and the Nakba. It has examined how these political conflicts played an important role in turning their safe and stable worlds into places of great danger to them. I have pointed out that both of Catherine, the American expatriate in the French Riviera, and Nahr, the Palestinian refugee in Kuwait, have fallen victim to two diverse modes of displacement. In consequence, they are exposed to diverse traumas in their sites of displacement.

In Derrida's terms, Nahr has been received by the Kuwaitis with conditional hospitality that gets close to hostility, while Catherine has been received with unconditional hospitality which set the stage for her dignified inclusion in the center of French society with full visibility and agency. In addition to being exposed to sexual, social, political, and economic discrimination by her conditional reception in Kuwait, Nahr resembles Agamben's Homo Sacar as she falls victim for a systematic inclusive exclusion policy. The manifestation of this policy is Nahr's exclusion from the Kuwaiti scene while being pushed to live in a ghetto. Catherine's expatriation trauma has not been that different. Catherine has been traumatized by being very close to some military operations on the Mediterranean coast. She faces an artistic disability which prevented her from taking advantage of the unique opportunities by writing them in her own female language. Catherine's suffering spreads as her life becomes absurd life. Being an incarnation of the Lost Generation with its disillusionment, Catherine begins to suffer from a disconnection from time and an absurdity of goals as well as being trapped in a repetitive cycle of actions.

The thesis has examined the divergent patriarchal oppression that Nahr and Catherine experienced in their diverse displacement sites. Nahr has been victimized by the three pillars of her patriarchal society, her father, husband, and her grandmother. Consequently, her life has been left ruptured, inadequate, and disgraced. Meanwhile, Catherine has been victimized by her husband David. Being the embodiment of 19th-century patriarchal norms, Catherine fell victim to David's continuous inferior depiction of her in comparison to his supremacy. His supremacy is translated as being the artistically, sexually and

economically transcendent individual. Catherine has been left behind on the immanence as the one who lacks competence and whose contributions in life are passive and marginal.

Outlined by de Beauvoir, Irigaray and Butler, the thesis has argued that both Nahr and Catherine have paved the way for their subversive scheme by violating their gender roles and transgressing the female respectable demeanor in both traditions. Nahr has transgressed by behaving rudely and violently inside the school. She has skilfully utilized her erotic dance to decolonize from the Israeli occupation and subdue the Kuwaitis and drain their money. Writing her feminine narrative with her period blood on the walls of her cube has been the tool through which she has transcended artistically. Nahr has dared to cross the sexual taboos when she showed sympathy for homosexuals and when she turned to work as a prostitute. While referring to the Greek Mythology, the thesis has drawn on Yeats' *Leda and the Swan* to analyze Catherine's subversive plan. Catherine has switched her sexual orientation as well as David's and she violates heterosexuality. She gained an artistic and economic transcendence. As gender transgression is connected with consciousness, Catherine linked herself with wakefulness rather than sleep. While personifying a flapper woman, Catherine made her own clothes and hair fashion in a boyish style.

For critics and students of comparative literature and those who are interested in the field of postcolonial feminism, the outcomes of this study might be cited to confirm the arguments that displaced women have managed the transcendence of their displacement traumatic experiences. Nahr's and Catherine's bold transgression of all the prohibited gender restrictions imposed on them by their patriarchal tradition has been the bridge through which they step toward their transcendent lives. Setting aside all racial privileges, the outcomes of this study might be insightful enough and address the human consciousness in the 21st century in order to set the stage for a new and just feminist critique. Through such a fair critique, the Eastern female refugee and the Western female expatriate are set to face each other on an equal footing as they own the same courage and potential that enable both of them to robustly break through the gender restrictions of their own societies to transcend the war traumas and construct a new life with free feminist agencies in their locations of displacement.

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جامعة النجاح الوطنية
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الصدمة وانتهاك الادوار الجندرية في رواية ابو الهوى ضد العالم بلاحب ورواية جنة عدن لهمنغواي

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قدمت هذه الرسالة استكمالا لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في برنامج الأدب المقارن بكلية الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية في نابلس، فلسطين.

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الملخص

تجادل الرسالة بان نهر اللاجئة الفلسطينية في رواية ضد العالم بلا حب (2020) لابي الهوى وكاثرين المغتربة الامريكية في رواية جنة عدن (1986) لهمنغوي تتجاوزان أدوارهما الجندرية لإعادة بناء حياتهما اللتين تعرضتا للصدمة في أعقاب النكبة والحرب العالمية الأولى. تعتمد الاطروحة على النسوية التحليلية النفسية التي حددتها دي بوفوار وإيريغاراي وبتلر، والدراسات النسوية عبر الوطنية، وتستند إلى نظرية سعيد التضادية. من خلال عدسات نظرية المعرفة النسوية للاجئين (FRE) المستمدة من الدراسات النسوية عبر الوطنية، فإن تجاوز نهر للمعايير الاجتماعية والجنسية الفلسطينية هي آليتها الجريئة لتجاوز صدمات ملاذها القسري في الكويت بعد النكبة. من ناحية تضادية، ومن خلال نظرية الاغتراب الذاتي (SIE)، يجادل البحث بأن كاثرين، من مغتربها في الريفيرا الفرنسية، تتجاوز صدمات الحرب العالمية الأولى بالتمرد على زوجها ديفيد. ويتجلى تمردها في تفكيكها للأدوار الجندرية بمعنى أنها تغير حياتها الجنسية ثم زوجها. يتخلل هذا التجاوز الجندري تغيرات في مظهرها ونومها وملابسها وكتابتها. تجاوز كاثرين المزعج هو إعادة كتابة للأسطورة اليونانية، ليدا والبجعة حيث تمهد كلتا المحاولتين الطريق إلى عصور جديدة. بمصطلح فوكو، يتم وصم نهر وكاثرين كنساء مجنونات بسبب تمردهن على القيود الأخلاقية وأنظمة الامتثال في مجتمعاتهن الأبوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النظرية النَّضادية؛ النسوية التحليلية النفسية؛ التجاوز الجندري؛ التعالي؛ أبوالهوى ضد العالم بلا حب؛ همنغواي حديقة عدن.