

Displacement, Alienation, and Intergenerational Conflicts in Arab Diasporic Literature

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Abstract—This study explores the themes of displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflict in Arab diasporic literature, highlighting their influence on identity formation and the lived experiences of characters in the diaspora. Displacement, both physical and emotional, is central to these narratives, as characters confront the challenges of adapting to new environments while preserving ties to their cultural heritage. Alienation arises as a consequence of divided identities, with individuals struggling to reconcile their Arab roots with the cultures of their host countries. Intergenerational conflict further complicates these dynamics, as first-generation immigrants seek to preserve traditional values while younger generations strive for autonomy and adaptation. The study presents a comparative analysis of key works by Arab diasporic authors, including Randa Jarrar's *A Map of Home*, Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*, Hanan al-Shaykh's *The Story of Zahra*, Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love*, and Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*. Through the lens of postcolonial, psychological, and acculturation theories, this research examines how these literary works portray the intricate interplay of identity, cultural preservation, and generational tensions. The findings reveal that Arab diasporic literature reflects the complexities of migration, illuminating broader themes of cultural adaptation and belonging in a globalized world. Additionally, the study identifies areas for future research, including underrepresented voices and the role of language in shaping diasporic identity.

Index Terms—Arab diaspora, intergenerational conflict, cultural adaptation, postcolonial theory

I. INTRODUCTION

The Arab diaspora has a rich and complex history, shaped by various political, economic, and social upheavals that have forced millions of individuals to leave their homelands. The Arab world has witnessed waves of migration due to war, political instability, and economic hardship. As a result, Arab diasporic communities have emerged globally, often residing in Western countries such as the United States, France, and Canada, among others. These migrant communities face unique challenges, which are explored in Arab diasporic literature, particularly through themes of displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflicts.

Arab diasporic literature offers profound insight into the experiences of migration and exile, revealing how individuals navigate their new identities and negotiate between their native and adopted cultures. Displacement refers to the physical and psychological uprooting of individuals from their homelands, alienation is the feeling of disconnection from society and self, and intergenerational conflicts describe the struggles between first-generation immigrants and their children. These themes are central to understanding the complexities of diasporic existence and will be explored in this study through a close analysis of key texts.

Displacement is one of the defining characteristics of diasporic life. It involves not just the physical relocation of individuals from their homelands but also the emotional and psychological processes that accompany such a transition. For many Arab migrants, displacement is often driven by traumatic events such as war, political oppression, or economic crises. The loss of home, the rupture of familial ties, and the absence of a stable socio-political environment can leave lasting scars on the psyche of the displaced. In Arab diasporic literature, displacement is portrayed not only as a literal removal from one's homeland but also as a metaphor for the alienation and dislocation experienced in new environments. Writers such as Hanan al-Shaykh and Rachid Boudjedra highlight how the loss of home becomes a central theme in their works. Al-Shaykh's *The Story of Zahra* (1986), for instance, delves into the struggles of a woman displaced by the Lebanese Civil War, exploring the emotional costs of uprooting and the longing for a home that no longer exists.

Alienation, both from the host society and from one's own cultural identity, is another recurring theme in Arab diasporic literature. The concept of alienation, as discussed by scholars such as Marx (1844), Weber (1922), and more recently, Said (1978), involves a feeling of estrangement or marginalization in a foreign society. For many Arab immigrants, the sense of not fully belonging to either the home country or the adopted country creates a liminal space in which they struggle to assert a cohesive identity. The alienation of Arab diasporic characters can be observed in the works of writers like Leila Aboulela, whose novel *Minaret* (2005) follows a young Sudanese woman navigating her identity in London. The protagonist's internal conflict reflects the alienation many Arab immigrants experience in the diaspora, caught between the traditions of her homeland and the secular, often hostile environment of the West. Moreover, the alienation of the body and language is a significant theme. In works by authors such as Ghassan Kanafani and Samira Azzam, the characters frequently encounter challenges in expressing themselves and maintaining connections with their past. The

linguistic divide between Arabic and the host language further complicates the emotional experience of exile, contributing to a sense of fragmentation and loss of self.

One of the most poignant aspects of the Arab diasporic experience is the intergenerational conflict between immigrant parents and their children, who often find themselves torn between the culture of their parents and the dominant culture of the host society. This generational divide is a common theme in literature that explores the Arab diaspora, as it highlights the differing attitudes and values between the first-generation immigrants and their children, who are born or raised in the West. The first generation of immigrants often clings to the values and traditions of their homeland, seeing them as essential to their identity. The second generation, however, grows up in a different cultural milieu, where they experience both the push of their parents' heritage and the pull of the broader, often more liberal, societal values of the host country. This tension can lead to misunderstandings, resentment, and a sense of confusion about one's identity. Authors like Hanan al-Shaykh and Jabbour Douaihy explore these dynamics in works such as *The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmão* (2016) and *The Vagrant* (2013), respectively, in which the tensions between the desire to assimilate and the obligation to preserve cultural identity come to the forefront.

This generational conflict also manifests in the different ways in which young Arabs navigate their sexuality, religion, and social roles. As noted by scholars such as Selim (2005), the younger generation often feels the weight of both worlds, which can lead to feelings of estrangement from both their parents and their peers in the host society. Arab diasporic literature serves as an invaluable lens through which to explore the themes of displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflicts. These texts provide a rich, multifaceted view of the complexities of migration and exile, offering an emotional and intellectual exploration of how individuals from the Arab world adapt to life in the diaspora while maintaining ties to their roots. By examining these literary works, we can better understand the psychological, cultural, and social dimensions of the Arab diasporic experience.

The analysis of these themes in Arab diasporic literature is crucial for several reasons. First, it sheds light on the experiences of a group often marginalized in mainstream Western discourses. Second, it highlights the emotional toll of displacement and the difficult process of creating a new identity while negotiating the pressures of multiple cultural allegiances. Finally, it underscores the importance of literature as a medium for expressing the nuanced experiences of exile and belonging.

II. DISCUSSION

Displacement in Arab Diasporic Literature

Displacement, often rooted in political upheaval, economic hardship, or social unrest, has profoundly influenced Arab communities worldwide. The Arab diaspora, shaped by historical migration waves—particularly following the Arab Spring, civil wars, and ongoing socio-political turbulence in the Middle East—offers a unique perspective on alienation and intergenerational conflict in literature (Hassan, 2011). Arab diasporic literature, which includes works by writers who have migrated or whose families have migrated, frequently explores the psychological and cultural consequences of migration, the loss of home, and the transformation of identity in a globalized world. These intertwined themes provide insight into the socio-political and personal experiences of diaspora communities. By engaging with these issues, Arab diasporic authors contribute to the broader discourse on migration and identity (Ahmed, 2018).

In Arab diasporic literature, displacement refers to the experience of migration or exile due to political, social, or economic factors, often linked to conflict in the Arab world. This theme is central to understanding the emotional, psychological, and cultural upheavals faced by those uprooted from their homelands. Writers explore the complexities of identity, belonging, memory, and cultural conflict that arise from living between two worlds. Displacement is not merely about physical relocation but also concerns the existential struggle of redefining oneself in a foreign space (Al-Musawi, 2015). The resulting sense of dislocation and alienation is a recurring theme, manifesting in the loss of "home," the trauma of being an outsider, and the challenges of navigating new identities.

Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* is a seminal text illustrating the complexities of displacement and the challenges of reconciling personal and cultural identities. The protagonist, Mustafa Sa'eed, returns to Sudan after years in England, where he experiences both education and alienation. Salih's novel explores how Mustafa's displacement fragments his sense of self, positioning migration as not just an escape from physical circumstances but a psychological transformation (Gana, 2008). His identity remains divided between his Sudanese roots and his European experiences, deepening his sense of internal exile. The novel suggests that displacement can lead to a loss of self and heightened alienation. Additionally, Salih engages with post-colonial themes, illustrating how migration in the context of colonial histories leaves a lasting legacy. Mustafa remains caught between cultures, unable to fully belong to either the Western or the Arab world. Thus, displacement in *Season of Migration to the North* extends beyond physical movement to the emotional and psychological tensions of living between two cultures (Mahjoub, 2013).

Similarly, Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love* portrays displacement through the cross-cultural experiences of two women, Anna Winterbourne and Amal al-Ghamrawi. While Anna is not an immigrant in the conventional sense—she is a British woman who voluntarily travels to Egypt during the early 20th century—her immersion into a foreign culture and subsequent emotional and ideological transformation reflect a form of cultural displacement. Her Egyptian lover, Sharif al-Baroudi, though not an immigrant either, returns to Egypt after spending time abroad, grappling with questions of identity and national loyalty in a colonial context (Halim, 2006). Through their descendants, the novel connects the

personal to the political, particularly in Amal's narrative, which engages more directly with the modern diasporic condition through travel and familial legacy. While Anna and Sharif are not immigrants, Soueif uses their transnational movements and hybrid identities to mirror the dislocation experienced by diasporic individuals. The novel underscores how colonial history and imperial legacies construct forms of cultural negotiation that resonate with the immigrant experience—emphasizing memory, hybridity, and longing for home (Moore, 2012).

To further ground this exploration of displacement in the lived realities of Arab immigrants, Randa Jarrar's *A Map of Home* offers a complementary perspective. The novel follows Nidali, a young girl of Palestinian-Egyptian heritage who migrates with her family from Kuwait to the United States during the Gulf War. As Nidali navigates adolescence in the American post-9/11, the novel confronts the emotional and cultural fragmentation of exile. Her experience of displacement includes both a literal migration and the metaphorical struggle to claim identity amid conflicting familial, religious, and national influences. Jarrar's work adds depth to the theme of displacement by illustrating the ongoing identity negotiations that occur in diasporic lives, particularly among second-generation immigrants.

Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* further explores displacement through the life of Khadra Shamy, a Syrian-American woman navigating the challenges of being a Muslim immigrant in post-9/11 America. Kahf's novel examines both the psychological and social dimensions of displacement as Khadra struggles between her parents' traditional Syrian values and the American culture she is trying to embrace (Orfalea, 2014). This tension intensifies in the wake of 9/11, when Khadra becomes increasingly alienated due to racial and religious discrimination. Beyond physical migration, Kahf presents displacement as an emotional struggle for identity, shaped by societal marginalization. As in other works of Arab diasporic literature, *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* illustrates how displacement is not merely about changing locations but also about the ongoing quest for belonging and recognition (Abdelrazek, 2007).

Scholars have long recognized displacement as a central theme in Arab diasporic literature. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) underscores how colonial dynamics shape the experience of displacement, arguing that Arab migrants in the West are often viewed through a lens of stereotypes and exoticism. Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994) introduces the concept of hybridity, explaining how diasporic individuals create new identities through cultural interaction. Nair (2009) expands on this, examining how Arab diasporic literature reflects the continuous negotiation of identity amid political and cultural upheaval. Through these perspectives, Arab diasporic writers use displacement as a framework to explore migration, home, and the fragmentation of identity.

Alienation in Arab Diasporic Literature

Alienation is a pervasive theme in Arab diasporic literature, arising from displacement, cultural fragmentation, and existential estrangement. It is not merely a result of migration or exile but a complex psychological and cultural process that underscores tensions between identity, belonging, and assimilation. According to Said (2000), alienation in postcolonial literature reflects the struggle of individuals who feel disconnected from their homeland yet cannot fully integrate into their new environment. Moreover, alienation in this literature manifests in various forms; cultural, social, emotional, and psychological, shaping the narratives of many Arab diasporic writers (El-Ariss, 2013).

Arab diasporic writers explore alienation through diverse narrative forms, from personal memoirs to fiction depicting the lives of migrants, refugees, and their descendants. As observed by Nouri (2017), this sense of estrangement often stems from the inner conflict between preserving one's cultural heritage and adapting to the norms of the host society. As a result, writers portray protagonists caught between these expectations, navigating cultural dissonance and societal pressures. For instance, in *A Map of Home*, Randa Jarrar examines the alienation of Nidali, a young Arab-American woman grappling with her identity. According to Alghamdi (2018), Jarrar's work highlights how cultural hybridity contributes to alienation, as Nidali becomes increasingly distanced from both her parents' traditional values and the American culture surrounding her, leading to a profound sense of isolation. Additionally, Jarrar's work explores the racial and cultural dynamics that deepen Nidali's alienation. As noted by Alsultany (2012), post-9/11 narratives often depict Arab and Muslim characters facing intensified discrimination, shaping their experiences of alienation. Similarly, in *Disorder of the World*, Amin Maalouf examines alienation through a protagonist torn between his Arab heritage and Western education, illustrating intellectual estrangement from both cultures. Through this lens, Maalouf critiques the social and political forces that contribute to this isolation, highlighting how globalized societies often fail to fully accept individuals from marginalized backgrounds (Darraj, 2014).

Beyond personal experiences, alienation in Arab diasporic literature is analyzed through post-colonial and critical race theory. Fanon (1963) argues that alienation results from colonialism, as colonized individuals internalize feelings of inferiority. Similarly, Bhabha (1994) introduces the concept of "hybridity," describing how diasporic individuals develop identities that are neither fully of the host culture nor entirely rooted in their native one, reinforcing a sense of in-betweenness. Al-Shraideh (2020) further asserts that Arab diasporic literature frequently engages with these theories to contextualize identity struggles within historical and sociopolitical frameworks.

Philosophically, alienation has been explored by Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus, who define it as isolation from the self, society, or others. In the context of Arab diasporic literature, this concept encompasses both emotional displacement and social marginalization (Hassan, 2011). Ultimately, alienation extends beyond physical migration, capturing the internal struggle of reconciling cultural identity with societal expectations. As a result, protagonists in these works often exist in a liminal space, belonging fully to neither their original home nor their new one.

As Bensmaïa (2015) suggests, this state of being “neither here nor there” is a defining characteristic of alienation in Arab diasporic literature.

Intergenerational Conflicts in Arab Diasporic Literature

Intergenerational conflicts are another key theme in Arab diasporic literature, as they frequently emerge when younger generations, born or raised in the diaspora, struggle to reconcile their parents' traditional values with their own aspirations for adaptation and integration. According to Ahmed (2018), such conflicts often arise due to differing perceptions of identity, where younger generations seek autonomy while their parents emphasize cultural preservation. As a result, tensions develop regarding cultural identity, values, and expectations. For instance, Leila Aboulela's *The Translator* explores the intergenerational conflict between a young Sudanese woman, Sammar, and her more traditional father. In this novel, Sammar, who has been educated in the West, adopts secular, modern values, which directly clash with her father's insistence on preserving traditional Islamic beliefs. As observed by Hassan and El-Ariss (2020), this generational divide is often intensified by political and religious contexts, making it a poignant depiction of the struggles faced by immigrants caught between their heritage and the pressures of assimilation.

Moreover, Aboulela's work highlights how younger generations in the diaspora often feel compelled to negotiate their identities, balancing personal autonomy with filial duty. As Said (2019) argues, diasporic narratives frequently depict young Arab protagonists grappling with dual identities, torn between Western individualism and familial expectations. In particular, Sammar's conflict takes on a spiritual dimension, as she must navigate the tension between her secular beliefs and her father's religious expectations. Similarly, Arab diasporic literature more broadly provides valuable insights into the psychological, emotional, and cultural challenges associated with displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflict. For example, writers like Tayeb Salih, Ahdaf Soueif, Mohja Kahf, Randa Jarrar, and Leila Aboulela illustrate the complexities of identity formation in a diasporic context. As noted by Al-Musawi (2021), their works explore how migration and displacement impact not only individuals but also their relationships with family and society. Thus, these narratives contribute to a broader understanding of the experiences of Arab migrants, emphasizing the tensions between home and belonging, as well as the generational struggles that arise from cultural negotiation.

Intergenerational conflict refers to the tensions and misunderstandings that arise between different generations of a family due to differences in attitudes, values, and cultural practices. As explored by Karmi (2017), these conflicts are often shaped by the interplay of tradition and modernity, with immigrant parents struggling to uphold cultural values in a foreign environment. In the case of the Arab diaspora, these conflicts are often shaped by the intersection of deeply rooted cultural traditions and the pressures of integrating into a new society. Specifically, immigrant parents tend to carry the cultural baggage of their homeland, which they seek to impose on their children as a means of preserving their heritage. Conversely, the younger generation frequently finds themselves caught between these inherited traditions and the desire to assimilate into the dominant culture of their host country. As noted by Mernissi (2016), this generational divide is often most apparent in disagreements over career choices, romantic relationships, religious practices, and cultural customs. On the one hand, the younger generation may feel alienated from their parents' values; on the other hand, the older generation often perceives this as a rejection of their cultural heritage. Ultimately, this tension fosters an environment of misunderstanding, frustration, and, in some cases, estrangement—issues that are vividly explored in Arab diasporic literature.

The selection of literary texts was essential for capturing diverse perspectives on displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflict in Arab diasporic experiences. Texts were chosen based on their focus on Arab diaspora themes, geographic and temporal diversity, and contributions by prominent authors like Tayeb Salih, Ahdaf Soueif, and Randa Jarrar. These works provided insights into the struggles of first- and second-generation immigrants in negotiating identity and belonging. The primary data consisted of novels written by the selected Arab diasporic authors. These texts were read closely, with key passages identified for further analysis. Each text is examined multiple times to ensure that all relevant themes and subtleties are captured.

Displacement is a central theme in Arab diasporic literature, reflecting the multifaceted experience of migration that goes beyond physical relocation to encompass emotional, psychological, and cultural dislocation. Drawing on postcolonial theory, particularly Edward Said's notion of “imaginative geography” (1978), the diaspora is often depicted as a space of simultaneous estrangement and longing. Characters grapple with the complexity of finding a sense of belonging both in their host countries and their countries of origin—a tension encapsulated in Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity, where identity is shaped in the “third space” between conflicting cultural demands.

In *A Map of Home* by Randa Jarrar, the protagonist Nidali experiences a persistent longing for her ancestral home but cannot fully reconnect with it, nor does she feel at home in the United States. As she reflects on her situation, Jarrar writes, “I was caught between two worlds, and I didn't belong in either” (Jarrar, 2008, p. 108). Here, Jarrar's writing encapsulates the diasporic tension of liminality, where Nidali occupies a cultural “in-between” space that renders her identity unstable. The novel juxtaposes Nidali's youthful rebellion in America—where she cuts class, flirts, and writes poetry—with her father's authoritarian insistence on Palestinian pride and tradition. One telling scene is when Nidali's father forbids her from attending a school dance, saying, “We didn't survive war and exile for you to become an American girl” (Jarrar, 2008, p. 118). This moment is charged with more than parental control—it dramatizes the inherited trauma and the father's projection of cultural preservation onto his daughter's body and choices. Nidali's resistance becomes an assertion of selfhood against generational expectations. Hence, this sentiment captures the emotional and psychological fragmentation

experienced by the first generation of immigrants, as well as the divided identity of their children, who struggle to find a place of belonging in the diaspora.

Similarly, in *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* by Mohja Kahf, Khadra's internal conflict illustrates the generational tension between her desire to embrace American values and her family's expectations of cultural preservation (Kahf, 2006, p. 132). Here, Kahf uses the recurring image of the hijab as a metaphor for Khadra's identity negotiation. In one scene, Khadra looks at herself in the mirror, imagining how she appears to Americans: "an alien in a scarf" symbolic of W.E.B. Du Bois's "double consciousness" (Kahf, 2006, p. 132). The mirror here functions as a literal and figurative device reflecting Khadra's double vision — the internalized gaze of both Arab-Muslim expectations and American stereotypes. Her decision to briefly remove the hijab during college became a radical symbolic act of resistance and self-definition, particularly in a post-9/11 American context. This action also reflects the acculturative stress described in John W. Berry's model, particularly the marginalization felt when neither full assimilation nor cultural preservation offers comfort (Berry, 1997). Her silence in response to her mother's plea—"Your scarf is your honor"—signals the generational rift between autonomy and cultural heritage, deepened by the psychological tension of bicultural identity.

In *The Map of Love* by Ahdaf Soueif, the theme of displacement is explored through characters who are not only physically displaced but also emotionally disconnected from both their homeland and their host society due to colonial histories and generational legacies. In Soueif's narrative, one character, Amal, reflects on her ancestral past and the challenges of reconciling it with the present: "I do not know where home is anymore" (Soueif, 1999, p. 210). This sentiment aligns with postcolonial disorientation, shaped by Egypt's colonial past. Through the motif of letters and archives, the novel enacts Bhabha's hybrid textual space—a site where identity is interpreted through fragments of memory and legacy (Bhabha, 1994). Amal's act of decoding Anna's journals becomes a metaphor for reconstructing a disjointed identity. Her emotional dislocation, intensified by colonial trauma, is further echoed in Soueif's *In the Eye of the Sun*, which similarly explores national and gendered identities dislocated by imperial and familial forces.

Similarly, in *The Story of Zahra* by Hanan al-Shaykh, Zahra's displacement is more than a physical journey—it is an emotional and psychological one. Zahra's alienation stems from her inability to fit into both her homeland's traditional norms and the liberal, modern values she encounters in the West. As Zahra reflects, "I couldn't go back, and I didn't belong here" (al-Shaykh, 1986, p. 79), this follows traumatic experiences that underscore her fractured psyche. The disjointed narrative mirrors Zahra's internal disintegration, echoing Cathy Caruth's trauma theory, which views unspoken trauma as a rupture in identity (Caruth, 1996). Zahra's silence following sexual assault reflects not just fear, but psychic repression—a means of survival within the oppressive frameworks of both patriarchy and war. Her rebellion becomes a gendered assertion of voice within a space of systemic silencing.

Alienation emerges as a natural consequence of displacement. In Arab diasporic literature, alienation is both cultural and psychological. In *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*, Khadra's reflection—"I was caught between the culture of my family and the one I was learning at school" (Kahf, 2006, p. 215)—exemplifies Berry's (1997) integration struggle, where simultaneous cultural adaptation and preservation lead to identity conflict. This fragmentation is not unique to Khadra; it recurs across diasporic narratives as a recurring psychosocial crisis, a concept rooted in Erik Erikson's (1968) model of identity development, where adolescence and young adulthood become key sites of self-construction amid contradictory cultural pressures.

In *Season of Migration to the North* by Tayeb Salih, Mustafa Sa'eed's journey between Sudan and Britain reveals a profound sense of psychological alienation. Mustafa finds himself an outsider in both cultures: "I am neither of here nor of there" (Salih, 1969, p. 90). This encapsulates the identity crisis that often accompanies migration, as individuals are torn between conflicting cultural expectations and are forced to redefine themselves in the face of both external and internal alienation. The theme of gendered alienation in Arab diasporic literature is significant, particularly in the context of women's struggles to maintain their autonomy in the face of traditional cultural expectations. In *A Map of Home*, Randa Jarrar explores Nidali's alienation not only from the larger society but from her family, especially as she seeks independence and rejects the traditional roles prescribed to her. "My mother wanted me to be the daughter she dreamed of, but I had my own dreams" (Jarrar, 2008, p. 157). Similarly, Zahra's struggles in *The Story of Zahra* reflect a rejection of the gendered expectations imposed by her family, as she seeks a life that balances both independence and respect for her heritage (al-Shaykh, 1986).

The concept of "double consciousness," as described by W.E.B. Du Bois (1903), resonates deeply with second generation characters in Arab diasporic literature. In *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*, Khadra embodies this experience, constantly negotiating her Arab identity in a predominantly Western society. As she struggles to find acceptance in both communities, she states, "I was both foreign and not foreign, both accepted and not accepted" (Kahf, 2006, p. 190). This internal conflict reflects the heightened awareness of "otherness" that many second-generation immigrants experience, leading to a pervasive sense of isolation and confusion about their place in the world.

Intergenerational conflict is another defining feature of Arab diasporic literature. These tensions are often rooted in differing degrees of acculturation and responses to host cultures. In *A Map of Home*, Nidali's yearning for freedom clashes with her family's desire for cultural preservation: "I wanted freedom to define myself, but my family wanted me to be the person they had imagined" (Jarrar, 2008, p. 202). Her parents' desire to reproduce homeland values in exile is part of what acculturation theory identifies as the separation strategy (Berry, 1997), while Nidali leans toward integration or even

assimilation. This mismatch creates emotional strain and identity instability, common among second-generation immigrants navigating conflicting cultural codes.

The expectation to maintain cultural traditions is a burden passed down to the second generation, creating emotional tension. In *The Story of Zahra*, Zahra's rebellion against her mother's insistence on preserving traditional values underscores the psychological weight of these expectations. As Zahra narrates, "Every time my mother spoke of tradition, I felt it pressing down on me" (al-Shaykh, 1986, p. 132). Similarly, in *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf*, Khadra's internal struggle between her parents' traditional values and the liberal American culture she encounters illustrates the emotional challenges of the second generation. As Khadra confides, "I couldn't choose between the two worlds, and that made me feel like I didn't belong to either" (Kahf, 2006, p. 245). This conflict leads to a profound sense of alienation and identity crisis, as second-generation immigrants attempt to navigate the complexities of cultural belonging in both their parents' and host societies.

III. CONCLUSION

The exploration of displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflict in Arab diasporic literature reveals the profound and complex challenges faced by characters navigating between two cultural worlds. Displacement is not only a physical movement but also an emotional and psychological upheaval that creates a deep sense of loss, longing, and detachment. Through the lens of psychological theory, particularly Freudian repression (Freud, 1915) and Cathy Caruth's (1996) trauma theory, we see how characters internalize trauma, leading to fractured identities and emotional silences that echo across generations. Alienation, in both cultural and psychological forms, stands as a critical aspect of the protagonists' experiences, as they find themselves estranged from both their homeland and their host society. This is further illuminated by Erik Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory, where identity crises emerge during key developmental stages, particularly for second-generation immigrants. The theme of intergenerational conflict sheds light on the generational divides within immigrant families, where differing expectations and cultural understandings lead to emotional tension between parents and children.

The application of acculturation theory, especially John Berry's (1997) model, enriches our understanding of how characters respond to cultural dislocation—some through integration, others through separation, marginalization, or assimilation. These strategies profoundly impact their psychological well-being and sense of belonging, as seen in the contrasting behaviors and attitudes across generations within the diaspora. The integration of postcolonial, psychological, and acculturation theories thus deepens the analysis of these themes, offering nuanced insights into the complexities of identity formation, belonging, and cultural preservation in the context of global migration. The characters in these works reflect the broader experiences of the Arab diaspora, demonstrating how intertwined themes of displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflict are with the lived realities of migration. Ultimately, this study highlights the essential role of literature in capturing the intricate emotional and psychological landscapes of the diaspora, providing valuable insight into the personal and collective struggles of Arab immigrants and their families. These narratives affirm that identity is not static but continually shaped by memory, history, trauma, and the ongoing negotiation between cultural origins and new worlds.

Future research should expand on the themes of displacement, alienation, and intergenerational conflict in Arab diasporic literature by incorporating a broader range of voices, including lesser-known authors and contemporary works. Moreover, a comparative approach that examines Arab diasporic experiences alongside other migrant communities could offer deeper insights into both shared and unique struggles. Additionally, exploring the role of digital media and globalization in shaping diasporic identities would enhance our understanding of modern migration dynamics. Furthermore, applying trauma studies and psychological frameworks could provide a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of displacement on individuals and families. Lastly, interdisciplinary collaboration with sociology, anthropology, and political science would offer a more comprehensive analysis of the sociocultural and historical contexts that shape Arab diasporic literature.

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