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MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED BOUDIAF - M'SILA

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FOREIGN  
LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

STREAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Colonialism and Cultural Patriarchy in Etaf  
Rum's *A Woman Is No Man* (2019)**

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of  
the Requirements for the Master's Degree.

Candidate :

Ms. Belkis YAICHE

Jury Members:

<b>Dr. Houria MIHOUBI</b>	<b>University of M'sila</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
<b>Dr. Mohammed SENOUSI</b>	<b>University of M'sila</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
<b>Ms. Khaoula REBAHI</b>	<b>University of M'sila</b>	<b>Examiner</b>

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**Dedication:**

*To my grandmother, Zineb Maloufi,  
the woman warrior who departed this world at a very young age.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*“My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.”*

*(Quran 27: 19).*

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I want to thank my Palestinian friends for taking me to the core of their society, as well as the heart of all the beautiful sacred monuments we cannot even dare to dream of visiting because of colonialism.

## **Abstract**

The colonial oppression and the traumas of the war partitioned the colonized people into two classifications: a class that, in view of Fanonian viewpoints, has faith in utilizing violence against the colonizer as a genuine right. The second class guides this fury to hurt people of their society and household instead of changing their lives and banishing the colonial from their lands. In her novel *A Woman Is No Man* (2019), Etaf Rum has presented the Palestinian Nakba and its effects on the psyche of Khaled, Yacob, Fareeda, and Mama, who were children when the first Zionist influx evacuated people out of their homes. She has additionally broken the code of silence to tackle domestic violence which is a delicate issue the Arab community is quiet about by shadowing these practices on Isra; her main female character. Rum has acquainted the readers to the daily life of Palestinian refugees after the Nakba and directed the attention towards the destitution and terrible living conditions Palestinians have been struggling with since 1948. By using theories of postcolonialism and patriarchy, the present paper introduces how colonialism and cultural patriarchy are related and how the colonized characters in the novel are so desperate to take their anger using violence in the wrong way.

**Key Words:** colonial oppression, violence, the Palestinian Nakba, cultural patriarchy, postcolonialism.

## **Abbreviations**

<b>ARIJ</b>	Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem.
<b>BWS</b>	Battered Woman Syndrome.
<b>CWP</b>	The Coalition of Women for Peace.
<b>DV</b>	Domestic Violence.
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence.
<b>IPV</b>	Intimate Partner Violence.
<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency.
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.
<b>U.S</b>	United States.
<b>PWWSD</b>	Palestinian Working Women Society for Development.
<b>WAFA</b>	(Wikalat al-Anba al-Filastiniya): The Palestinian News & Info Agency.
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization.

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## General Introduction

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been one of the main subjects that trigger people to study and write about. For quite a long time Arab Palestinian authors, poets, politicians, and historians wrote about home and its tragedies and made their voices heard by translating it to different languages across the globe. Nonetheless, the Palestinian diasporic voices from all around the world raised in order to contribute and strengthen their sense of belonging, as well as to portray the barbaric practices imperialism does in their lands.

Additionally, the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians caused a traumatizing sense of vulnerability, diaspora, and among many refugees, a sense of not belonging to the host land. These feelings are what moved the mass of Arab-American journalists and writers like Ghassan Kanafani, Mahmud Darwish, Khalil Gibran, and others to write about the displaced people, the lost land, and the Zionist schemes of getting a hold of the Middle East region, forming with other writers what they know as *adab al-mahjar; literature of exile*.

Ghareeb and Tutunji state that the remarkable writers and poets within the Arab American journalists rebuked the Balfour declaration and denounced all the unjust practices colonialism subjected Palestinian Arabs to. They illustrate with an example of one of the well-known Arab-American editors and poets; Elia Abu Mady, and his support to the case. Abu Mady, who was a significant Arab American poet and editor of a newspaper named *As-Sameer*, conveyed criticism of British arrangements and wrote poems he recited to express his sympathy and compassion for the Palestinians. The poet expresses his sorrow on the matter of the Palestinian case and the injustice Palestinians endure to in a poem he named *Filastin*, or Palestine. He depicts Palestine as a place known for harmony where satisfied individuals are currently restless because they are confronting the risk of losing their country (425).

Palestinian immigrants and diaspora-born Palestinians regarded press and writing as a tool they could use to connect them to their homeland, that is the reason why they took an interest in it so they would learn more news about the war and be more educated (Ibid 422-

423). In the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, diasporic literature is defined as a wide term envelops literature that deals with encounters of movement and oust, and social or topographical removal, regularly with regards to post-imperialism, yet in addition emerging from dispersals brought about by horrible recorded occasions like conflict and constrained transportation (Cuddon, J., et al. 201).

It is worthy to note that diaspora authors wrote through recollections told by parents and grandparents. These stories were extracted from their journeys of exile and their experiences regarding the horrors of the new colonialism, as well as the waves of Zionist movements. Nonetheless, the Palestinian-American writer, Etaf Rum, attempted to take the mass of readers in her debut novel *A Woman Is No Man* (2019) to the center of the Palestinian homes with a story dependent mainly on her own life and her family's history. By traveling in time between ordinary day-to-day life in Palestine, hard life in refugee camps, and recalling memories of the Palestinian Nakba; catastrophe, as well as the cross-cultural dilemmas of a Palestinian-American domestic environment, Rum tried to understand the effects of Nakba and how this memory with patriarchal ideas may destroy a woman's life.

Rum was born in 1989, in Brooklyn, New York City, to Palestinian migrants raised in refugee camps in Palestine. She was a part of an arranged marriage at a young age, gave birth to two children, and challenged the circumstance in order to enroll in North Carolina State University and raise her children. While teaching literature at a local community college, Etaf Rum started writing a journal based on her own life, to turn it into one of the *Goodreads Choice Awards Best Fiction* and *Goodreads Choice Awards Best Debut Novel*. Rum runs a coffee-book shop called '*Books and Beans*' in North Carolina, Rocky Mount, and a famous Instagram account for the bookshop.

Her purpose of writing the novel is to give a voice to the voiceless and discuss domestic violence the Palestinian women face in refugee camps and as immigrants. Rum has wanted to shed some light on the effects of Nakba on Palestinian people and the traumas that changed

their character. The recent events happening in Palestine and the ethnic cleansing Israel is trying to force on Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in Jerusalem: where an Israeli court issued that 12 Palestinian families must leave their homes and hand them over to Israeli settlers, made Rum post about her heritage as a Palestinian (see appendix A). Rum talked about how her own grandfather died this year without returning to Palestine (see appendix B) to illustrate the horrendous effects of colonialism.

Rum's novel starts in 1990 and ends in 2008 to recount stories of three generations-immigrants. It recounts the story of young seventeen-years old Isra Hadid and her moving from her Mama's little kitchen in Birzeit, Palestine, to Brooklyn to a dull basement saved for her and her new spouse as a bedroom. Isra who always dreams of freedom and a respectful life different from what a woman lives in Palestine, ends up stuck even more with a terrible claustrophobic feeling of nostalgia to the old trees where she used to sit and read secretly *A Thousand and One Nights*. The young immigrant wife thinks about her Mama's words telling her that a woman belongs to her husband's home, and accepts her new life and *naseeb*; destiny, calmly until her voice becomes scarcely heard, then she eventually grows up and stops waiting for her husband's love to turn her attention to her four daughters.

The novel is narrated from different women's perspectives. Each female character is trying to project how their culture is men centric, and portray the abuse a woman endures just because she is no man. The novel tells the mass of readers about its women's different daily struggles and their hopes to live an independent life, free of the patriarchal subjugations and unjust cultural beliefs.

*A Woman Is No Man* uncovers various anecdotes about people who are under imperialism and traumatized by the consequence of the Palestinian Nakba. The women in it are attempting to survive both of the cultural patriarchy and of domestic oppression they end up experiencing. At last, the novel gives a voice to the voiceless to demonstrate that, for sure,

a woman is no man in light of all the patience and courage most of its female characters have shown.

The present paper aims to shed some light on the issue of colonialism in Palestine, cultural patriarchy, and domestic violence. Its target is to understand the roots of violence in the Palestinian character and inspect why the author has feared getting accusations of shaming her Palestinian society when she used the concept of violence in her novel. The work will be divided into two main chapters.

The first chapter will be a socio-historical context and a theoretical background of the study. It will give a presentation to the Palestinian territory, and study an important historical station mentioned in the novel: The Palestinian Nakba and the Palestinian displacement, as well as the colonial violence the Palestinians are subjected to. Since the novel has been written to narrate stories that occurred during provincial occasions; and discusses a clash between two contradicting cultures, the work will trace the postcolonial literary aspects in Rum's novel. This will help to understand the role of these changes in some characters' lives in the studied novel. Frantz Fanon's studies on the colonized people and their understanding to the use of violence will be utilized to understand the Palestinian character and depict how the violence they use is viewed by Fanon's accounts. In order to study the oppressive practices on Rum's female characters, Walby's theory of patriarchy, mainly her views of patriarchy's types, will be used to depict how society and the private environment of someone's living space could lead to severe consequences.

In the second chapter, an analysis will be made to understand colonialism, feminist issues, and the cultural patriarchy found in the novel. The mentioned issues will be discussed in the light of the body of the paper and the used approaches to find out how violence is found within colonized; or post-colonized, Palestinian households, and link the domestic abuse and patriarchal beliefs to historical events

that traumatized the Palestinians, to see women between colonial oppression and cultural patriarchy.

## **Chapter One: Socio-Historical Context and Theoretical Background**

### **Introduction**

In order to make it easier for the reader of this paper to form a background about the changes that reshaped the Palestinian nation, this part will study historical stations that have a relation with the novel and depict the aftermath of the Palestinian Nakba. It will also shed light on some of the unjust practices colonization exposes Palestinians to. Therefore, this part aims to introduce theories related to the present paper. Mainly, a Postcolonial perspective; based on a Fanonian approach, will be utilized to highlight the wiliness of using violence among the oppressed people in colonized nations. These views will be used to make it easier for the reader to understand the roots of violence in the Palestinian personality in Rum's novel. Thenceforth, Sylvia Walby's theory of dividing patriarchy into private and public patriarchies will be introduced in this part to track later on the cultural and patriarchal traditions, beliefs, and gender roles in the novel.

### **1 Middle Eastern Palestine as a Home for Diversities**

At first, the Land of Canaan referred to the district of present Palestine, Syria, and the Western Jordanian grounds. Urbanization began in the fifteenth century BCE, according to old writings and utensils found in the area, yet out of nowhere, and as an outcome of unfamiliar intrusion or climatic changes, the Canaanite urban areas and the metropolitan life vanished suddenly by around 2300 BCE (Armstrong n.pag). At that point, a civilization raised and disappeared in Canaan without many subtleties on the day-by-day life of its kin, and how did the Canaanites figure out how to live and whether they established a legislative regiment or not. Anyhow, in the sixteenth to the twelfth century, the Canaanites began to form their ruling powers over the area and focused on an Egyptian province they would later call 'Palestine' (Krämer and Harman 3-4).

Krämer and Harman state that newcomers of the so-called Sea People; and called by the Philistines, settled in Canaan both peacefully; and by the use of power, inhabiting the waterfront plain from Gaza to Mount Karmel (Ibid 3-4). The name of the area had changed with each new triumph and the Philistines' redesigned to give the land the name the present world knows as Palestine. The Romans, who took over the land and reconquered it, stifling the Jewish rebellions in the two first hundreds of years CE, renamed the land Palaestina, and then named it Pleshet in Hebrew, or Philistia in Latin. Its occupants called themselves as the Philistines, after its second thousand years BCE, in an effort to isolate the large numbers of Jews whom they banished from their territories.

By 1881, around 90% of the Palestinian society (about 450,000 Arabs) were Muslims, while the rest population divided among Christians and twenty-five thousand Jews. A small portion of the Jews, with various social classes, possessed the Old City of Jerusalem, while 20% percent of Middle Easterners lived in small towns like Gaza, Nablus, Hebron, and Jaffa. The other 80 percent lived in agribusiness towns that structured around seven to eight hundred villages (Ibid 2). The population became Arabized and most of Palestine's populace became Muslims. A British registration reported in 1922 that Muslims made up 78.3 percent of the populace, Jews 11.1 percent, and Christians 9.5 percent, yet, by the 1990s, more than 93.4 percent (more than 6 million) were Sunni Muslim Arabs (Sabella 421). An expected 89 percent of the population comprised of Muslims, about 8 percent Christians, and Jews by 2.5 percent at the beginning of the nineteenth century. These figures had shifted only slightly eighty years later to 87 percent, 9.5 percent, and 3.2 percent, respectively (Dowty 7), because of World War I and the fact that Palestine was a major war zone of the conflict.

The land as indicated by Dowty had religious importance that colored perceptions enormously (14), because Jerusalem is the homeland of the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Kimmerling and Migdal 3). Civic establishments raised and disappeared throughout the years, and the sacred monuments kept appending them to the land

that ended up being one of those areas that worked for Jews, Christians, and Muslims since it appeared to acquaint them with the divine (Armstrong, n.pag).

To the Israelites, Palestine meant the Promised Land God favored Abraham with, as it came in Scriptural writings: “[...] to you (Abraham) and to your descendants after you, I shall give the country where you are now immigrants, the entire land of Canaan.” (Genesis 17:8).

Texts and stories narrated the journey of Moses and the Children of Israel on the borders of the Holy Land. They talked about how they deserved the punishment for disobeying the prophet by wandering away from the Promised Land to start their journey of exodus.

For Muslims, the miraculous journey of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) from Mecca to Al-Aqsa Mosque was one reason that caused Muslims to grow attached to the place. The account of the journey came as a Surah of the Holy Quran, named Al-Isra'a; The Journey by Night, to give Muhammad a powerful contention to persuade his people to have faith in Allah' power and His heavenly message:

“Glorified be He who took His slave (Muhammad) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid-al-Harâm (at Makkah) to Al-Masjid-al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem)‘ the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him (Muhammad) of Our Ayât (proofs). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seen.” (Quran 17:1).

The term Jerusalem indicated not only a land of origin, but also an increasing feeling of a common past and future (Kimmerling and Migdal xxvi). Among Muslims, the sense of nostalgia for mosques was a consequence of the persecution the heads of Quraysh treated them with. After the Israa of the Prophet, they valued a place they have never set a foot in, yet their spiritual and religious beliefs and the full trust on Muhammad (pbuh) made them yearn to the third-holiest city. Al-Aqsa Mosque was the second Masjid built on earth. Abu Dharr narrated, “I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, which Masjid on earth was built first?’ He said: ‘Al-Masjid Al-Harâm (the Forbidden Mosque; in which fighting is forbidden).’ I said: ‘Then which?’ He said: ‘Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa.’” (Muslim 15).

Jerusalem's al-Haram al-Sharif encases both the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque. Thousands of Muslims from all over Palestine venture there during the holy month of Ramadan, and likewise venerate in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, where the tombs of the Prophets are, including that of Ibrahim (Sabella 421). One of the holiest sites in Judaism is the Temple Mount. It is a site of prayer and pilgrimage (Mattar 197), and it was the former location of the Second Temple of Jerusalem, which was annihilated by the Romans (70 CE). On its borders, the Wailing Wall, which is one of the most important extant religious sites in the world for the Jews, and the last vestige of the Second Temple, comes. Furthermore, it is the site of today's Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, which is one of Islam's holy cities (Malek and Hoke ch.26). During the time of Caliph Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan, The Dome of the Rock was constructed and historians believe that it is the same one in which Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac, and the same one the Prophet Muhammad ascended on.

## **2 The Palestinian Territory under Zionist Schemes**

By the late 1800s, Palestine attracted the attention of the Zionist movements, which thought about Uganda and Argentina as potential sites to set up a Jewish homeland after being a part of the Ottoman Empire for quite a long time. The conviction that the Jews are God's favorites and His chosen people stirred up their expectations to get to the Promised Land after a long period of outcast (Abu El-Haj 22). At first, they arranged their return in 1878 by purchasing small grounds inside the Palestinian lines from truant property managers and absentee property owners to build up land for the Jews with guarantees that they would not be a hindrance or a disagreeable intruder who might raise a state inside the Palestinian territories.

At that point, the Zionists began to get to the Palestinian lands by displacing the original peasant inhabitants (Ibid 22), and the new influx of Jewish outsiders took more than 750,000 displaced people's properties and settled in the homes of the Palestinians who could not return. After settling in, Arabic names of old cities and places modified, and new Modern

Hebrew names came instead (Masalha 2-3). Apparently, the main aim was to control the territory and change its historical legacy to make it a pure Jewish property.

The Jewish fantasy of setting up a permanent place for the Israelis to stay and claim the holy land of Palestine as their legal right had changed the entire history of the Middle East. James Balfour, the foreign secretary, pronounced his support on behalf of the British government through a letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup>, November, and passed it through Lord Walter Rothschild to the Zionist Federation, claiming the Jewish right to establish a Jewish homeland in the colonized Palestinian lands (Regan, n.pag.).

The Balfour Declaration in late 1917 revived the Jews fantasy after the arrangement made with the grand mufti of Mecca Haj Amin al-Husseini. This arrangement was about giving British assistance to set up an assembled free Arab state, while; consequently, the British demanded the Arabs support and contribution in the rebellion against the Ottoman Empire (Ibid 22). The increasing numbers of Palestinians displaced by the growing population of Zionist settlers added fuel to the anger and frustration that developed because of the thwarted promise of Arab independence, led to the Palestinian revolt from 1936 to 1939 against the British Mandate. Unfortunately, the Zionists crushed the revolt and left Palestinians without the leadership they needed to face the upcoming challenges (Abu El-Haj 22).

## **2.1 Diaspora and the Birth of the Refugee Problem**

After the Balfour Declaration, the catastrophic times that had fallen upon the Palestinian people opened the doors for a journey of exile and migration while other Palestinians tried to revolt against the Zionist influx. The restless efforts of preventing the foundation of an Israeli state had failed, and the Arab forces from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, who attempted to stop the new imperialism, lost the war on May

15. Because of this failure, Israel extended its boundaries and the number of Arab refugees augmented within months.

The invasion uprooted around 400,000 Palestinians from their properties in August 1948, and compelled them to escape to neighboring Arab countries seeking refugee (Manna' 87-88). This displacement demonstrated that it contradicts the Zionist plausible excuses of returning to the land that has no people to build up a state on its properties. To expel serene Palestinian villagers from their homes, Zionists used ruthlessness, committed mass homicides, rape, and torment with the intention of clearing the land and making it free from the Arabs. Fields and corpses were burnt, and the *fellaheen*; farmers, who owned the lands were lined against the walls and sprayed with bullets, executed with their families, or gathered and shipped away from their hometowns.

The Palestinians who fled their homes leaving behind lands and friends thought that it will be simply a matter of few days then they would get back to their properties. Tragically, generations have been born and died without returning to their hometowns. After the British withdrawal from the Palestinian territory, the Zionists brutally attacked the region causing enormous damage and losses. The peaceful Palestinians took few supplies and rush to the neighboring towns to wait for the assaults to stop, however, the Zionists raided the villages with their bulldozers, and erased them destroying with this the Palestinians' hope of what they call '*The Right of Awda*'; the right of return. Villagers who dreaded executing and women's assault were discouraged to remain in their homes due to the slaughters occurring in close by towns; like the Deir Yassin massacre in the edges of Jerusalem.

In fact, the ethnic cleansing of the holy land made Palestinians attempt to save whatever remains left to them of their old culture. The first Zionist waves considered women the primary target to use to debilitate the Palestinians standing in the colonizer's way. In Deir Yassin massacre (9 April 1948), individuals were slaughtered, their bodies were burned,

children were butchered, and the civilians who did not die of the shooting were exposed to torment. Zionist troopers assaulted Palestinian women and young girls, and people accounted news of mutilation. The surviving townspeople found themselves taken in a Jewish victory parade over Jewish neighborhoods in Jerusalem then executed. Rather than covering the slaughter; where more than one hundred Palestinian men, women, children, and elderly individuals were brutally killed, Israel used it to evacuate other villages undermining their occupants with a comparable fate to Deir Yassin's.

In spite of the protests, Ben-Gurion did not respond, nor get moved by the fact that intellectuals like Martin Buber and 'Akiva Ernst Simon view the massacre as a dark and shameful stain on the honor of the Jewish people (Morris, *Refugee* 393). They see that it is better until further notice to leave the place where there is Deir Yassin crude and the places of Deir Yassin vacant, as opposed to do an activity whose emblematic significance boundlessly offsets its commonsense advantage. In fact, the settlement of Deir Yassin whenever did a simple year after the wrongdoing, and inside the customary settlement system, will comprise something like endorsement of the butcher (Ibid 393).

In remembering the slaughter, Pappé quotes the testimony of Fahim Zaydan; who was among the children the Zionists lined up against the wall and sprayed with projectiles when he was twelve years at the time. Zaydan witnessed his family's murder and portrayed how Zionists murdered peaceful women during the slaughter, among them his own mother:

They took us out one after the other; shot an old man and when one of his daughters cried, she was shot too. Then they called my brother Muhammad, and shot him in front us, and when my mother yelled, bending over him - carrying my little sister Hudra in her hands, still breastfeeding her - they shot her too (90).

Al-Hajj Abu Salim is a witness to the barbaric practices the Jews utilized against Palestinians. His village, Saffuriyya, "was one of the first villages Israeli forces bombarded from the air" (Ibid 152). He told about how the raids targeted the caves women and children sought refuge in. Sadly, his own mother was a victim of a bomb that hit her when "she was

trying to enter the Church of Annunciation” (Ibid 152). His father fled with his son’s pregnant wife to Reina village where they took refuge for a few months with a Christian family. The family shared with their Muslims’ hosts their food and clothes since they did not have time to assemble their belongings (Ibid 152).

A portion of the escaping people did not have the opportunity to look behind while running away from the Zionists who forced occupants to leave undershooting, “without packing any of their belongings or even knowing what they were doing” (Ibid 95). Thus, cement buildings replaced the tents the Palestinians used as impermanent shelters for thousands of the inside-refugees. Life in the camps was full of difficulties and people attempted to adjust using primitive instruments, worked in modest positions, and with so little food and supplies, they continued living in camps hoping to return one day to where they really belong. Some original occupants learned, used the new settlers’ language, and worked among them, while a major part chose to live on the edges of Gaza and the West Bank (Sa’Di and, Lila 77). The number of the displaced Palestinians had never decreased, and interestingly, in 1950, about 750,000 refugees migrated from the Palestinian territory, and in excess of six million Palestinians have been living in what they call today by the diaspora.

## **2.2 Palestinian Women and the Issue of Checkpoints**

The entire essence of the Palestinian space has changed since 1967 (The Six-Days War) with the spread of countless checkpoints and the building of an Apartheid Separation Wall, making life and movement harder for the Palestinians. A position paper of *The Coalition of Women for Peace* (CWP) (2015) stated that more than 2,000,000 Palestinians in the West Bank are “divided between dozens of fragmented enclaves, which are surrounded by a system of roadblocks, walls and checkpoints, as well as by Israeli settlements and roads designated for the exclusive use of Israelis.” (4).

According to the military system, Palestinian are not permitted to travel easily because of their identities and their absence of a Jerusalemite *hawiya*; identity. To keep on living in

Jerusalem or visit it. This system of identities and division barriers has made the population living in a diaspora within the boundaries of their country, denied their essential privileges of medical care, schooling, employment, financial and topographical freedom, adding to having a home and family. Due to the closer of large areas in the West Bank, Palestinians find movement within their towns so difficult since these spaces require incredibly uncommon passage permits: The Israeli-only roads, the Israeli settlements' locale regions, the Seam Zone between the Apartheid Wall and the Green Line; the Jordan Valley; and Jerusalem and country regions around it (Ibid 4).

Like any Palestinian citizen, women who pass through checkpoints face “physical hardship and the constant risk of harassment. They are delayed for long hours, often without food or water, endure verbal or physical abuse, such as stripping semi-naked or being slapped, punched or kicked, shot, and in some cases killed” (Ibid 11-12). Palestinian women “grow up learning that their own communities are limited in their capacity to protect them from this violence.” (Ibid 12).

CWP passed on some testimonies of Palestinian women who were exposed to humiliation while crossing the checkpoints proving that, in a society where a woman's reputation is very important, this reputation of a woman is at risk for ruination just as her family. A 67-years-old Palestinian mother of six tells the CWP about the harassments women encounter with in their daily lives just because they have no citizenship in their country: “I am originally a refugee from a village in the Triangle area (in Israel proper). I married in the seventies. I am a resident but have no citizenship.” (14). The mother reports how, for a Palestinian female, crossing a checkpoint is one of the society’s daily terrors, especially when they are the ones who are in charge of their household’s errands:

“I pass the checkpoints quite infrequently – a few times a year for personal affairs and shopping. But mostly, I try to avoid crossing the checkpoints. Every time I cross a checkpoint, I am delayed. They search all the products I buy. As a woman, I feel

humiliated every time I cross a checkpoint, just as I feel in many situations in my daily life as a Palestinian woman” (Ibid 14).

Rijkea and Mincaa state that the experience of passing through Israeli checkpoints, which they consider as key sites that impose the presence of the colonizer, had been present in a limited number of research projects; despite the fact that the checkpoints have become a daily ritual Palestinians cannot avoid in their daily lives (43).

In September 2015, a 19-year-old girl died at the so-called Container checkpoint close to the flashpoint of Shuhada Street, near the center of Hebron. According to eyewitnesses and camera footage, the martyred university student Hadeel Salah al-Hashlamoun approached a gathering of intensely armed Israeli soldiers with body armors and was yelled at in Hebrew, which she did not understand, then was shot dead several times. The veiled girl, according to the coordinator of ‘Youth Against Settlements’, did not want to be searched by a male soldier and tried to make her way back out of the checkpoint, however, two soldiers with rifles hindered her direction (Beaumont).

Witnesses affirmed that al-Hashlamoun responded to the soldiers’ orders to open her bag. At the point when she took out the bag she held from under her hijab to show its contents, the soldier started shouting and ordering her to stop, and then shot the girl in the leg. After that, ten bullets penetrated Hadeel’s body. Camera footage pictured the injured girl laying on the ground with a bloodstain on her hijab (Lazareva and Akbar).

A video taken during the incident showed that a soldier pulled Hadeel roughly by her legs from under the barrier, and left her to bleed to death for half an hour, while the other Israeli soldiers stood to watch her die and prevented any clinical assistance to reach her. Hadeel was at a 5 meters’ distance from the soldiers when they shot her dead, yet Israeli authorities claimed that the girl was unable to cross the metal detector that started signaling when she drew close to it, and that the girl was intending to stab the soldiers by a knife. *Youth*

*Against Settlements* posted a picture of the bag's contents: a book, a cell phone and no trace of the knife Israeli soldiers asserted that she possessed (Ibid).

A new wave of activism started, and the Palestinian nation discussed an upheaval of a third Intifada, making the soldiers speculate on any bystander and kept a watchful eye on checkpoints. The Israeli soldiers shot bullets taking lives on a normal premise, and claimed that they would not shoot live projectiles on the off chance that they were not in genuine peril. Just like al-Hashlamoun, the forces shot other Palestinian youngsters in a cold blood, without showing any sort of threat to the soldiers or the settlers.

On October 17, Israeli forces shot a sixteen-year-old girl, named Bayan Ayman Aseeleh, out of the Ibrahimi Mosque, when she refused to let a male soldier check her in one of Hebron's checkpoints. Israel detained Bayan's body for days, and took off the bulletin set as a memorial for the martyred girl. Seventeen-years-old Dania Arshid was trying to go to the same Mosque to pray when a soldier checked the bag she held and started yelling at her to take her knife out of its hiding. A witness claimed that Arshid kept insisting that she did not have any weapon on her, however, the soldiers shot near her leg, and then she took her out of sight when the shooting started. The soldiers left Arshid to bleed to death after receiving 8 or 10 bullets. The forces did not permit the Palestinian ambulance to access the area, and the girl's body faced the same fate as well for weeks (Paq).

After a toll of deaths and attacks, the Israeli authorities secured their boundaries and raised the numbers of soldiers to protect their citizens. Around 34 Israelis died in almost 300 attacks, while about 200 Palestinians were killed. Soldiers detained or injured other Palestinians. Saccol sees that on the off chance that one thinks back on time, these kind of practices rehashes the same thing consistently since the thirties, when influxes of Jews escaping from Europe turned around themselves on what the Zionists call the Promised Land. Before very long, for sure, every one of the conflicts battled among Israel and the Palestinians incited incredible sufferings for the last mentioned, while the previous dynamically acquired

strength, just as progressively involved bits of land. This colonization proceeded until the present time, when unforgiving political fights battled, both at the public and global level, to stop the development of new settlements in the West Bank (76).

It is worthy to note that the motives behind the assaults were a progression of Israeli violation of human rights against women and children, adding to the attacks and insults on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, plus the kidnapping and murder of the Palestinian teenager Mohammed Abu Khdeir who was beaten then burnt alive in July 2014.

### **2.3 Israeli Strategies in Colonizing the Body and Space**

With the spark of the new Intifada (2015), Israel destroyed about 100 constructions; half of them were residential and housed more than 200 Palestinians. The colonial system consistently demolishes the homes of Palestinians involved in attacks, regardless of whether they executed the attacker or not, that is why rights groups have denounced house teardowns as being collective punishment (Ghorbiah). Palestinians receive notes to clear their homes because, according to the Israeli claims, they either have no permissions to build there, the land on which the home is built is an Israeli right, or to punish the Palestinians for any anti-Israeli practices and banish any uproars or subsections from the Palestinians.

For the Palestinians, the physical notion of home guarantees security and wellbeing. This concept opens the door to welcome their guests and close on the face of unwanted interlopers. The dread of losing their homes is talked about by Palestinian females in the middle of the conflict zones, not concealing the fact that these, believed-to-be-safe, homes in the middle of the night are being viciously entered and searched after getting their doors barged down. (Sousa et al. 208-209). Women living in refugee camps portray home-attacks as normal events since no home has been spared, and because all the daily presence of the soldiers is felt even when they do not see them (Ibid 208-209).

The demolishing system knew a widespread after the spark of the attacks in 2015, and the first two homes destroyed by Israel were of two Jerusalemite Palestinians, residents of Jabal al-Mukabir town, led two separate attacks on October 13. On December 15, the Elyan family got an administrative order to demolish the family building that contains of three apartments owned by Haj Khalil Elyan and his sons, including the family of martyr Baha Elyan.

The order sent to the whole building accompanied claims identified with the ownership of the land of this building to Israel, and sent a special order to Baha's family (POICA). In fact, the demolition order came when the family was trying to claim back their son's body for burial, which makes the bulldozing of the home seem like a kind of punishment to the family, in which the Israeli occupation would repress through it any further attacks led by other youth. The second home the Israeli authorities cemented was of Alaa Abu Jamal, who had an old mother, a wife, and three children. The psychological punishment played its role in Abu Jamal's passing away when Israel refused to give the Abu Jamal family their son's body, however, the masses were not discouraged and turned down the Israeli hopes that the attacks would stop making the system look for other ways to punish the masses.

Sousa, et al., see that the Palestinian home has failed on giving the necessary protection for its occupants; particularly women. The researchers see that, due to the demolitions of the Palestinian houses, as well as the political and colonial factors, they concluded this from women's narratives of persistent surveillance towards the security their living spaces could afford them. Sousa, et al., think that the physical space, which is supposed to be a shelter for its owners, lost the concept of security and protection to the Palestinians: "home is no longer a refuge of privacy and autonomy but rather a place of fear and insecurity, a transformation that incited frustration among the women" (208).

The Israeli strategy of demolishing does not spare homes in Al-Ama'ri camp. A couple of years ago, in August 2018, the Israeli forces demolished the Hamaid's family home; for the

third time: the first run-through was in 1994 and the second in 2003. Um Naser Abu Hmeid, the owner of the home, revealed to Wafa Agency (2018) that she has received a note to clear the home in preparation to demolish it when Israeli forces accused her youngest son of throwing a stone on a soldier. Although, the concept of home means protection and safety for all human creations, the Israeli strategies have abolished this notion by intruding with force this supposed to-be peaceful space.

It is true that the first influxes of Zionist movements traumatized the Palestinians and bruised their memory with the loss of loved ones; who actually still do not have respectful graves their families would pay homage to, and nobody could deny the way Israel presents the Palestinians to psychological torture. This procedure intends to suppress the Palestinians' resistance against the oppressor, and erase the names of the individuals who left a mark on the conflict's history from the Palestinian memory.

Budour Hassan sees the strategy as taking a stab at forcing control over Palestinian bodies, burial sites, and space (*Fighting*, n.pag). Khalili, in her book *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration*, considers giving fallen casualties of the war proper places to rest in as an act of rooting that person to his/her land. According to her: “The burial of the body in the soil of a place territorializes the person and ties him or her to that soil, and if that soil belongs to the nation, then the “man–land” relationship at the core of nationalist ideologies is reaffirmed in the burial.” (135).

For more than forty years, Israel kept about 253 corps in numbered cemeteries, while their families did not have the right to know where their children's bodies are, or even to know the reason of the detention of a dead body. In fact, the bodies play a role as a winning paper to put pressure on liberation movements in military exchanges, and a kind of psychological tournament that would push, according to the Israeli hopes, the Palestinians to abandon their case.

Dalal Mughrabi, a Palestinian militant refugee who came from Lebanon and led an attack against Israel with twelve other fighters in 1978, still, to this day, does not have a known grave. The pride Israel took when they killed Mughrabi did not show when the matter comes to her body. In fact, it is believed that the body is buried in Israeli numbered graves. Although, when a Lebanese liberation movement; Hizbullah, enlisted Maghrabi's remains to be handed over in a military exchange, the assumed grave to be of Dalal's was empty and, according to DNA tests, the received remains were of unknown martyrs.

In the twentieth century, the clash of Jerusalem's families to recover, grieve, and cover their killed kids is important for the battle against Israel's arrangement of reconnaissance over open space and bodies. The Israeli endeavors to force power over a city and individuals in resistance is not limited to the living bodies and living spaces however reaches out to the dead as well. (Hassan, *Fighting* n.pag). The movement of claiming back the martyred bodies reached the media with the new *habba*; uprising, with a timid presence in foreign and non-Arab media. Israel too in excess of 80 bodies as hostages, some of them were released after marches, protests, and strict conditions; that strictly state the place of burial and a limited number of mourners.

At first, and with the beginning of the new uprising, more than ten Jerusalemite families did not have the time for grief because they entered a battle with the oppressor to claim back their children's bodies. The Palestinian lawyer Muhammad Elyan, who started raising awareness among the Palestinian society to take their martyr's bodies, after the kidnap of his own son's body, describes what all the families in this situation are going through:

More than a hundred days have gone, and I couldn't sit with my wife and three (remaining) children at one table together and realize that there is an empty chair no longer occupied by Bahaa, [Elyan told Budour Hassan] we have had no time to discuss his absence because our entire lives have revolved around getting him back (Ibid n.pag).

Elyan sees the policy of kidnapping the bodies and holding them as hostages as a strategy Israel uses to punish the youth, as well as their families. He told *The Electronic Intifada*: “We are being deprived of our right to mourn, and Israel is using the dead bodies of our children to break us, yet the issue is not receiving a fraction of the coverage and attention it deserves.” (Hassan, *Uprising*). To the time being, bodies of Palestinian martyrs; some of them died in 2016 (see names in appendix C), are still waiting to be released and nobody truly knows whether they are still in Israeli morgues or have been buried in numbered graves.

### **3 Colonialism and Postcolonial Literature**

Postcolonial thinkers and scholars like Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Albert Memmi emerged to examine the connection between the colonizer and the colonized. They additionally considered the language of the colonizer and the dialect of the colonized, the cross-cultural dilemmas and the hybrid identities, sense of belonging, and violence, to uncover the reality in regards to the Western colonizer. They worked on directing attention towards the colonial brutal practices done to both of the colonized land and its natives. Postcolonial scholars use literature as a prime representation of how writing transmits colonial thoughts, which frequently involves a re-perusing of Western writings.

Undoubtedly, the postcolonial literature seeks to recover self-portrayal from cliché depictions in colonial literature and colonial discourses. In order to do so, they reimagine silenced and stifled narratives and attempt to come in terms with the traumas of the colonized people. The issues of identity: individual or national, inspired colonial writings because of the cultural disturbances started by imperialism: disempowerment, dislocation, diaspora, migration (Cuddon et al. 551).

Scholars in the postcolonial literature domain attempt to depict the hideous traumas and results of imperialism, and to fulfill this quest, they write about the brainwashing strategies of the colonizer. Their writings conveyed how the settler uses the alibi of 'civilizing the illiterate

and enlightening the oblivious local individuals in order to conquer. The colonizer guarantees that the primary purpose of entering a country is to lead its people out of their dull and rotten huts, and teach them how to be decent and respectful human beings, not to grab ahold of the country and the prosperous materials the settler lacks. This may appear to have something honorable to do if it was not for the concealed intentions, and the elegant way colonialism began in various nations across the globe. Truth be told, the genuine aim of the colonizer is to root itself among the natives and corner them, so they would leave their places and desert the lands that give what the colonizer's motherland cannot give.

Postcolonialism devoted itself to contemplate European colonialism and its effects on a once-in-the-past colonized nation. It is an interdisciplinary scholarly field that was firstly used by historians after the Second World War to refer to the post-independent period chronologically. By the 1990s, postcolonialism, which covers the terms 'postcolonial studies', 'postcolonial theory' and 'postcolonial literature', has been used by literary critics as an oppositional reading practice to contemplate the impacts of imperial portrayals found in literary texts (Cuddon, et al. 550-551).

### **3.1 Fanonian Perspectives Regarding Violence**

The Black Martinican French psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, Frantz Fanon joined the Algerian revolution and upheld its case through his arguments that energize the will for freedom. Fanon's theories made him one of the pioneers of the decolonization movements that broke out in African colonized nations, and one of the founders of the contemporary postcolonial theory and criticism. His works address the colonized people in their struggle against the French dominion and examine colonial and decolonizing culture (Goulimari 269-270). Fanon did not live to see the Algerian independence and died just a year prior to the triumph (1962), however, his works outlived him to become a document anticolonial scholars

can use. Farag enlisted Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* as one of the "most influential [work among the other post-colonial studies]" (87).

Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth (Les Damnés de la Terre)* (1961) is an uplifting key content with a significant preface by Jean-Paul Sartre (Selden 219). In the book, the postcolonial critics are concerned with the effects of imperialism, for the most part, incorporating its relationship with issues like gender and class; they challenge how colonialists built colonized regions and saw individuals as inferior, furthermore, they analyze how imperialism affects the colonizing countries. They are keen on the more extensive thought of imperialism: how specific nations construct relationships that protect their superiority (Cuddon et al. 551).

Indeed, Fanon's readings and works were about the discriminations of the Blacks, the Négritude movement, and his support to the Algerian Revolution to encourage the oppressed colonized character to turn the table on the oppressor, yet nations under colonialism may use his views as some ideology they could adopt. To decolonize the oppressed land, Fanon encouraged people to decolonize the mind and the soul by getting rid of the toxic beliefs the imperial use to brainwash, then enslave both of the land and its people (Campus in Camps). Fanon sees colonialism as "a systematic negation of the other person, denying their humanity, and forcing them to ask themselves 'In reality, who am I?'" (Walder 117). We find the answer to 'who am I' in the formation of the native land, which seems tangled with its people, and fed upon a collective memory, forming a union similar to the relationship between the body and the soul: none of the two parts of this equivalent could be parted from the other.

Obviously, Fanon supports the possibility of violence and blesses its use against the colonizer in light of all the oppression the natives are exposed to, because he sees colonialism itself as violence in need of equivalent violence to yield (Fanon, *Wretched* 61), he also talked about the "cathartic benefits of violence against the occupier" (Farag 87). Fanon wrote about the catastrophic aftereffects of colonialism on people and how, rather than standing up in the

face of the oppressor, they fight one another and direct the anger buried inside them incorrectly in a manner that would only damage the people of their kinfolk. In regards to the non-violence and coexistence with the settler, Fanon sees and considers the process of peace as a possibility before bloodshed and any irreparable damage (Ibid 61).

### **3.2 Fanon's Colonized People and Violence**

According to Fanon, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, the colonized; Algerian, stows away from his neighbor, the national enemy, and the oppressed does not have the opportunity to loathe the European outsider. However, when he finds himself asking for a little semolina or a drop of oil from the grocer; who will not give him what he needs due to the debts on that customer, the violence inside him motivates him to murder; not the colonial who imposed destitution, but rather the Algerian merchant. Fanon likewise discusses the poverty of the wretched man who would return to his home after a sixteen-hour shift, to find nothing lavish to take his exhaustion with (307).

The central issue in Fanon's works is the psychology of the two parts of the conflict and the consideration the use of violence. He regards it as an absolute necessity to rehabilitate the character of the colonized and dispose of the oppressive practices of the settler. In the preface of Fanon's other book, *A Dying Colonialism*, Gilly considers the age of revolution as a "mankind's way of life today" (1). Anyway, this insurgency, as per him, is gone forever after paving the way for today for "the great masses of man-kind, while still suffering the greatest oppression and the greatest affronts to their dignity as human beings never ceased to resist, to fight as well as they could, to live in combat." (Ibid 1).

*The Wretched of the Earth* portrays the relationship between the colonized and his oppressor. It shows how the settler sees the native and considers him as an unworthy, filthy, and uneducated person, however, this ignorant native works for the master and gets nothing. Besides, the colonizer seems like he keeps forgetting to whom the land belongs. Salaita sees

that decolonization for Fanon is less about physical resistance and actual protection from unfamiliar occupation and more about the psychological expulsion of the colonizer, which is a process that should be possible just through physical resistance (xiii). The disdain the colonizer has gained made him, according to what Albert Memmi, Frantz Fanon, and others have pointed out, wish for the last day of provincial occupation because he; the colonizer, has been haunted by the wish of the local even as he endeavored to invalidate his dark colonial presence and postcolonial literature (Boehmer 78).

Sartre supports Fanon's thoughts concerning violence and views it as an authentic and important procedure to accomplish autonomy and independence (Senoussi, *Mindset* 505). For the use of violence, the colonized people understood that there is no other way to purify their lands from the oppressive system of imperialism. They celebrated the armed liberation movements believing that change would come through violence, rejecting the coexistence with the settler. For Fanon, violence takes two forms: an individual and a collective one and it is regarded as a power on a quest of cleansing the land and freeing the individuals. (Frag 103). Nevertheless, Fanon sees violence as a psychological therapy that "frees the native from his inferiority complex and from despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his [self-respect]." (Ibid 103).

However, in the history of colonialism and liberation, the oppressed colonies revolt using guerillas, suicide-bombers, and other forms that include violence, yet when the West regards Arab revolutionary movements, they consider them as terrorist acts. Edmund Burke (Conflation 40) added the term terrorism, according to Senoussi, to the English lexicon for the sake of describing the French Revolution.

In fact, Saccol sees that the suffering of Gazan people; and the whole Palestinian population, could not be concealed and by considering "the number of casualties and the damages caused by the Operation Protective Edge, it is evident that the Palestinians have suffered the major losses." (76). This proves that the Palestinian efforts of pushing the

colonizer out of their country and claiming back what was theirs from the beginning could not be regarded as terrorism. In fact, Boehmer sees the intrusion of outcast camps in Palestine can noticeably have repercussions for the residents of New York, and an 'assault on America' can inside merely months produce a war on terror on a worldwide scale (249). By comparing the Western conflicts to the ones that concern the Arabs; Palestinians, the meaning of the war differs, because it is fought on an undeniably incorporeal level. Planes bomb from ever higher, more preoccupied heights; the losses of the Western partners are perpetually effectively stowed away from worldwide view; thus called psychological militant suspects, as at Camp X-Ray, Guantanamo Bay, are delivered non-people in manners that global law is feeble to review (Boehmer 249).

Moreover, it is important to note that the urgency of the use of violence Fanon calls for has nothing to do with women's abuse. The colonized person; who fails to preserve his land and identity starts taking off this anger and frustration on people who are weaker than they are. In a case of colonialism, violence put on women is a result to the torn personality and shaken self-esteem the colonized male is suffering from, adding to patriarchal beliefs cultures consider as laws.

#### **4 The Notion of Patriarchy in Theory**

Patriarchy according to Weber is a concept that has a verifiable utilization among social scientists to describe the domination of men in societies (Walby 19). Men-centric domination marginalized women and pushed them to get by on whatever little freedoms the master; man, permits. Moreover, Gender-roles directed attention to men's power, nobility, and prosperity, and excluded women from public life just as the option to lead a normal homegrown life.

In fact, patriarchy is not something that could be marked as a certain nation's conviction or way of living, on the grounds that, in contrast to what the Westerners say about Muslims and Islam, it is present in Judaism and Christianity in forms that do not have any

other way to unread the patriarchal perspective on it. According to Abu-Lughod, discussing patriarchy is a very difficult task (6). The liberal feminist Okin thinks that all cultures are patriarchal because patriarchal violations do not seem to exist in public, so attention would not be given to the issue to the point where courts would discuss women's rights (Ibid 84-85).

#### **4.1 Forms of Patriarchy**

Walby (1990-1991) theorizes patriarchy, dividing it into six measurements that deal with paid work, family creation, culture, sexuality, violence, and the state. She likewise made a differentiation between the different forms patriarchy possesses by classifying them into private patriarchy and a public one "in terms of the relations between the structures and, [...] in the institutional form of each structure." (178). Subsequently, Walby asserts that the two forms resemble a unified emblem that holds the six distinctions altogether in it (Ibid 178).

Private patriarchy is the case when the oppressor is the father or the spouse inside a domestic environment, controlling the family creation, and prohibiting women from socializing, however, the oppressors profit from all the advantages. Therefore, the limitation of movement for women and forbidding them from openness to public life outside the household makes them privatized in space where the patriarchal oppressor is (Walby 178).

On the other hand, public patriarchy confronts women who gained the advantage of entering public life with a minimization that does not shame or defame the oppressor. In social life, women are attempting to survive the patriarchal discriminations and the roles the society sees as, exclusively, a woman's role. Walby expresses that women have an access to both public and private life here, yet the connection between these two forms is different (Ibid 178). She has also pointed out that women are not completely excluded from this space, yet their progress is viewed as something a man could easily do and be innovative in, by which she implies disadvantaging any change a woman may bring (Ibid 179).

## 4.2 The Issue of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence (DV) is one of the most horrendous issues the world has been silent about, particularly in conservative societies. It is any activity by an individual that makes actual mischief at least one individuals from their nuclear family. For instance, it can include battering of one accomplice by another (accomplice misuse), brutality against kids by a parent, or viciousness against seniors by more youthful relatives (VandenBos 330).

In silent societies, women do not report any kind of violence practiced on them because of their dread of the exposure to negative criticism, or the pressure put on them from their families and the society. The issue is not restricted to a certain society or a community “[women] who have experienced domestic violence come from all walks of life. Social class, family income, level of education, occupation, and ethnic or racial background make no difference.” (Roberts 69), however, it is so regular with a terrific spread to the point where legislative principles began to convict the practices and consider them crimes.

To illustrate with, through insights taken from U.S. Census (2010), Xu and Qiang affirm the idea of violence being a public issue and their use of Asian societies is one model. They consider domestic abuse to be a typical issue within Asian cultures; as in many cultures, since a large number of women within Asian American communities have been enlisted as victims of domestic violence (51). Luckily, awareness and concerns have been developing within Asian communities, just as in other ethnic communities, by the rise of feminist criminological research in the 1970s (Ibid 51).

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, gender, or religious orientation. It can happen to couples who are married, living together, or who are dating. DV influences individuals of every single financial foundation and educational level (Davis 1). Roberts sees the use of violence against women as something that: “seems to be more visible in the lower class because it is more frequently reported to the police and hospital emergency rooms in

inner-city poor neighborhoods, it is increasingly being recognized as a pervasive problem in middle and upper-class homes as well” (4).

The World Health Organization (WHO) (2002) defines violence as “the intentional use of force or power, intentional or actual, against oneself, another person, a group, or community that results in or has the high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, or psychological harm, [mal-development] or deprivation defines violence. It comprises of “any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure or wound someone.” (Davis 1).

It is worthy to note that the abusers in domestic violence cases are close people to the battered woman; they are male family members like a father, a sibling, or an intimate partner (spouse), who (batterer) has behavioral problems or needs to acquire something forcibly. Unfortunately, the cases of maltreatment of women are increasing around the globe while the protection is so delicate, in light of the fact that numerous criminal justice frameworks disregard the reports in male-dominated societies and choose not to see viciousness especially against spouses and against women all in all (Davis 6). Most the domestic violence occurrences go unreported because of threats the battered women get either from the batterer or from their own families to forestall bringing disgrace upon the family or to shield themselves from additional harm.

### **4.3 Palestinian Women as Victims of Patriarchy**

Domestic violence (DV) has its presence in the Palestinian society, yet, and because of the culture of silence within this conflict zone, there is a huge gap in studies and statistics related to violence against women at home. Wallace sees that the topic of DV “lacks statistical data [because] domestic violence is considered a private [matter] and is not a subject for discussion among Palestinians outside the home.” (140). The violence used within domestic environments is considered as a social taboo which makes the Palestinians deal with

whatever incomes and problems between a batterer and a battered, and think they must be dealt with at home (JICA 19). Between 1996 and 1998, The Society for the Defense of the Family in Palestine received about 525 cases of domestic abuse; physical, psychological, and sexual against women (Wallace 140).

Baloushah et al., studied intimate partner violence (IPV) in Gaza strip and claimed that the use of violence in conflict zones is significantly associated with wars and conflicts (3622). Females were murder victims because of IPV, yet, unfortunately, the authorities recorded these crimes as ‘honor killing’ cases (about 28 women in 2013). Moreover, according to data taken from The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “30% of ever-married women in the West Bank and 51% in the Gaza strip have been subjected to any forms of violence within the household.” (Ibid 3622).

The UN Women Analysis see in a research held about COVID-19 in Palestine that with the spread of the pandemic, “40 per cent of surveyed Palestinian expect an increase in community violence and 33 per cent expect an increase in domestic violence.” (19). They reported that the Palestinian Working Women Society for Development (PWWSD) received more than 510 phone calls asking for consultations, 206 of them were about GBV in a period of less than two weeks; between 22 March – 4 April 2020 (Ibid 19).

Months before the total lockdown and the spread of the world’s awareness to the pandemic, a 21-year-old Palestinian makeup artist, Isra Ghareeb, from Bethlehem, was admitted to the hospital with wounds and bruises to die later affected by her injuries; after being discharged from the hospital on 22 August, 2019 (Giovannetti). A video shared by social media users shows a hospital corridor and in the background a female voice crying and yelling for the police’s help, other male voices heard shouting back insults. According to what people; who knew Isra, posted about the video, the voices were of hers calling for help while male relatives were beating her in the hospital. Ghareeb’s friends affirmed that they recognized the voice as Isra's notwithstanding the family’s denial.

The Ghareeb family claimed that Isra hurt herself when she jumped out of her bedroom balcony, however, Palestinian Attorney General Akram al-Khateeb revealed in a press conference that Isra's death was an aftereffect of a severe respiratory failure resulted from the physical assault they exposed her to. Al-Khateeb likewise affirmed that the alibi of Isra falling was not true and that silence was something the family forced their daughter to keep. He likewise mentioned that, probably, Isra was not even supposed to report the domestic abuse she was living in when they brought her to the hospital (Abueish).

According to her friends, Isra was a confident, beautiful, kind, and strong girl who worked in a domain she loved and earned her own money. Though, the Ghareeb family and their son-in-law; who played the role of the family's spokesman, claimed that Isra was possessed by jinn; Ghosts or unseen spirits, and that he went to recite some Qur'anic verses for her to feel better, that is when she started screaming. To the family's disappointment, a mental health and neurological disorders specialist, Dr. Tawfiq Salman, asserted that Isra's medical record does not have any mental illness, despite of the insistence of the family on the story they told the media. The family claimed that they believe Isra's death was a consequence of a stroke, insisting on appearing innocent to the public (Ibid).

Before the murder, chaperoned Isra, met with her fiancé in a public Palestinian coffee shop, then posted a video on her personal Instagram profile. Nonetheless, it is believed that a cousin reported to the family Isra's meeting with the man and showed them the video as proof, which made Isra's two siblings; one of them was an immigrant student in Canada, and her brother-in-law, beat her savagely to punish her for what they called disgracing the family name. Shockingly, Isra did not commit any transgression that would shame the family, and her death has nothing to do with honor.

The incident moved people making social media platforms flood with pictures and drawings of Isra with hashtags like: #JusticeforIsraaGhareeb, we\_are\_all\_Israa #PatriarchyKills. Angry voices raised demanding to deal with the individuals who were

engaged with Isra's homicide, “[from] Beit Sahour (Isra’s town) to the government leaders, we need laws to protect women!” and bring them to justice (Giovannetti). On her Facebook page, Etaf Rum, the author of *A Woman Is No Man*, questioned the intellectuals, asking them to break the silence and protect females who would just end up murdered like Isra Ghareeb:

My heart is broken today. 21-year-old Israa Gharib was murdered [...] in an “honor” killing in Palestine yesterday. When will we stand up for our women against these terrible injustices? When will we stop pretending the issue doesn’t exist in our community and around the world? #justiceforisraa #screamforjustice, #womensrights #awomanisnoman, #weareallisraa (Rum).

Unfortunately, Isra Ghareeb is not the first or the last victim of patriarchy, social discrimination, and male-centric society. It would be better to say that the fantasy of men's supreme superiority over women is nothing more than societies' handiwork; however, the misfortune is set on the way these societies are claiming to follow Allah’s instructions, and what the prophet did without any real and honest practice of those sacred teachings. The equality of men and women in the creation and them coming from one source; Adam (pbuh), in the Quran and their equality in the Day of Judgment, assumes a significant role in abolishing these thoughts and act as a direct message with the goal for people to quit believing in a fantasy called men's absolute superiority.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted some historical stations that have a relation with the novel, like the Palestinian Nakba and the ethnic cleansing, checkpoints, Israeli crimes, and the diaspora Israel is imposing on people in their state. It likewise introduced the issue of violence within the Palestinian territory against the colonizer by utilizing Fanon’s perspectives of the legitimacy of the use of violence, and examined the shaken personality of the colonized who prefers to harm his partner or people within his space rather than the imperial. The paper introduced the theory of patriarchy in order to understand the oppression of the old-fashioned

cultures and their effects on women, and make it easier to understand violence among Rum's characters.

## **Chapter Two: Women between Colonialism and Cultural Patriarchy**

### **Introduction**

Rum's novel presents social issues like domestic violence, cultural patriarchy, son preference, arranged marriage, and the traumas of the Palestinian Nakba to comprehend the roots and reasons of viciousness in the Palestinian character, and portray how the ethnic purifying and the Israeli oppression have damaged the Palestinian refugees' psyche. Therefore, it presents the complexities the Palestinian society suffers from in labor and the rare existence of financial security, adding to the colonial oppression put on both men and women, as well as the instances of domestic violence are spreading, particularly in poor families. This chapter will study the novel based on the former presented theoretical lenses. It will analyze the traumas of the Palestinian Nakba as well as its post-traumatic effects on the characters, and will likewise study the patriarchal practices on female characters within a domestic abusive environment and see the reasons behind women's oppression in *A Woman Is No Man*.

### **1 Colonial Oppression and the Bruised Palestinian Character**

In Rum's novel, colonial oppression and the traumas of the Palestinian Nakba are present through the way her characters keep bringing up the topic of the homeland. The novel also depicts the difficulties Palestinians face in refugee camps and how they; both of the two genders, are traumatized because of Nakba and the ethnic cleansing they left their homes due to in 1948. The colonized personality of her characters regarding life in refugee camps mirrors the views of one of the Palestinian literary tradition, Ghassan Kanafani, in an interview with Richard Carleton:

RC: Talk, to stop fighting to stop the death and the misery, the destruction, the pain [...]

GK: The misery, and the destruction and the pain and death of whom?

RC: Of Palestinians, of Israelis, of Arabs.

GK: Of the Palestinian people who are uprooted, thrown in the camps, living in starvation, killed for 20 years and forbidden to use even the name Palestinian.

RC: They are better that way than dead.

GK: Maybe to you, but to us it's not. [...]. (qtd in Qutami and Zahzah 73)

Khaled in the novel portrays people in diaspora with all the broken memories colonialism has caused. His memories revolve around how Israeli troopers expelled them from their beautiful home in Ramla during the Nakba. These memories are “like the memories of many Palestinians who survived [the invasion] in 2002, represent a fragment of the ongoing story of [the] occupation and [colonization] Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza (as well as the outside refugees) have lived for over 50 years.” (Bleibleh 2). The old man actually still remembers, with tearful eyes, the soldier digging a rifle on his father's back, constraining him to his knees (Rum 82).

Khaled tells how he lived in the camp and how the nylon shelters were supplanted with concrete ones, “[we] were very poor, [...] there wasn't water or electricity. Our toilet was a bucket at the back of our tents, and my father would bury our waste in the woods. The winters were cold, and we chopped wood from the mountains to make a fire.” (Ibid 352). Bleibleh, et al., portray witnesses about the horrors the Zionist caused to peaceful civilians, through recollections of a surviving Palestinian woman; Zainab, who escaped the neighborhood looking for a refuge in the al-Basatin Quarter nearby as soon as the fighting started. Like several Palestinian families from the region, Zainab returned to find that her house diminished to parts of cement and residue, and there was little to perceive. They lost their homes and belongings because of the Israelis bulldozing processes, in what the Palestinians call *al-Ejtiyah* (2).

The kind of destitution Khaled lived in at Al Ama'ari camp as a youngster recounts what all evacuees went through in Palestine soon after the Nakba. Beginning with the lack of food and supplies to the long queues people stood in, waiting for whatever assist the UNRWA

could give, “[w]e would stand in line every month for thick blankets and bags of rice and sugar. Nevertheless, the tents were overcrowded, and the food was never enough. My brothers and I would go to the mountains to pick our own food.” (Rum 353).

Subsequent to growing up, Khaled’s poverty proceeded even after marrying Fareeda and working in a *dukan*. He suddenly becomes responsible for a woman and children, which implies extra mouths to feed; however, he was unable to give the entirety of their necessities like what the reader discovers later through Fareeda’s memories, “[f]or years I worked in a small *dukan* (shop) outside the camp. I worked until I had saved five thousand shekels (Palestinian money), enough to buy plane tickets for us to America. When we arrived, I had nothing but two hundred dollars in my pocket and a family relying on me to feed them.” (Ibid 353).

Al Am’ari camp where Khaled and Fareeda lived before immigrating to America was one of the UNRWA’s establishments after the Nakba in 1949. The camp is 15 km north of Jerusalem and 1.4 Km East of Ramallah city in al-Bireh municipality in the West Bank district. As indicated by UNRWA statistics (2015), 10,500 refugees from various Palestinian urban communities, including Jaffa, Haifa, and Lydd inhabited the place. The land had olive, fig, grape trees, and vines, and then the green areas vanished due to the establishment of new buildings. The new homes made the camp narrow and activities had become limited, while social conditions became not suitable to provide a good environment for living.

Concrete buildings replaced the temporary tents to turn the camp from a temporary shelter into a permanent residence, while few outcasts left the camp to different urban cities. Notwithstanding, the expansion of growth rates made Al-Ama’ri camp suffers from severe handicaps; like lack of water, wastewater sewers, rusty homes dated back to the 1950s in need of restoration, and irregular constructions. The crowded and unorganized creations of buildings made it impossible to consider establishing other public services other than two schools: a school for boys and another one for girls, plus medical care centers built by the

UNRWA. With the expansion of the populace, the camp does not have any terrains left for agriculture and the portion of the services has become insufficient to cover up every one of the occupants' needs. Poverty, the bad conditions of camps' homes, the efforts of citizens to survive and provide an education for their children, the barriers and, numerous checkpoints made it difficult for the residents of Al-Ama'ri to travel between cities and seek jobs making the inhabitants of the camp in a dire need for living necessities.

On the other hand, Fareeda's life does not differ from her husband's at Al Ama'ri. She continues to recollect the "wounds of her childhood poverty, hunger, [and] abuse" (Rum 138). She keeps remembering the poverty colonialism throw her and her family in when she was just six years of age. Fareeda's youth portrays a big picture of a little girl trying to survive in the camp by abandoning her childhood funny moments, like many other Palestinian children nowadays. She appears as though she had to grow up before her age, doing household chores with her Mama, standing in long queues at the UN station waiting to collect food, or a bundle of blankets to warm them in the harsh winters "wobbling under their weight as she carried them back to her tent." (Rum 142).

### **1.1 Checkpoints and the Palestinian Hawiya**

Israeli infringements are present in the novel. The reader sees them in the endless checkpoints Israel had set on Palestinian land, restricting travel between, and sometimes within, their own cities and towns" (Rum 27). The novel tackled as well how the Palestinian people are unable to travel within their country because of the complexities the military authorities put on the Palestinian *hawiya*; identity, and the obligation of having a permit to go to a specific city under the Israeli rule. To this day, a great deal of Palestinians has not visited Al-Aqsa Mosque at this point in view of these laws, and Isra Hadid; the major female character in *A Woman Is No Man*, is one of them.

When Isra's fiancée, Adam, takes her to the US Consulate General to apply for an immigrant visa, the author reveals to us that her father Yacob could not go to Jerusalem with them as a result of his *hawiya* (Rum 27). Isra on the other hand, and because she is married to an American resident, could pass now and see Al-Aqsa Mosque for the first time:

“Isn't it beautiful?” [...]  
“It is,” Isra said. “I've never seen it before.”  
[...] “Really?”  
She nodded.  
“Why not?”  
“It's hard getting here.”  
“I've been gone for so long, I'd forgotten what it was like.  
We must've been stopped by half a dozen roadblocks. It's absurd!” (Rum 28)

In fact, the permits are not by any means the only burden the Palestinians need to worry about to cross the checkpoints that “[are] manned by heavily armed Israeli soldiers and guarded with tanks; others [are] made up of gates, which [are] locked when soldiers [are] not on duty” (Rum 26). The Israeli badgering and oppression they subject people to. Additionally, the killings and arrests that occur close to any checkpoint make people apprehensive for their women and children, which means keeping away the risk of falling as victims to a bored soldier:

The soldier barked at my mother: “give me your ID,” and I saw her searching for it in her handbag. Then he grimaced and exclaimed half-jokingly, “you are detained.” The place was a checkpoint known as “the container” at the end of Sawahra, a Palestinian village east of Jerusalem. [...] Closure means movement is severely restricted, so there was very little traffic at the checkpoint that day, and the bored soldiers were having fun with us. [...] There was nothing exceptional about this scene—which thousands of Palestiniens experience daily—except for the fact that we are not Palestiniens but Israeli women. [...]” (Dorit 168).

Dorit, talked about the harassment that occur in checkpoints describing these barriers as the most direct contact Palestinians have with Israeli officers. Due to the closure of the movement and the Palestinian development, the daily life of Palestinians, according to her, represents a continuous humiliation (Ibid 168).

Because of the military system's laws, Palestinians are not permitted to travel easily because of their identities and their absence of a Jerusalemite *hawiya*; identity, to keep on living in Jerusalem or visit it. This system of identities and division barriers has made the population live in a diaspora within the boundaries of their country, denied their essential privileges of medical care, schooling, employment, financial and topographical freedom, adding to their rights of having a home and family. Like any Palestinian citizen, women who pass through checkpoints, are in danger of finding themselves victims to "physical hardship and the constant risk of harassment. They are delayed for long hours, often without food or water, endure verbal or physical abuse, such as stripping semi-naked or being slapped, punched or kicked, shot, and in some cases killed" (CWP 11-12).

## 1.2 Memory and the Quest of Preserving Culture

The novel discusses the harsh life Palestinians have been experiencing, since the start of the Israeli occupation because of the ethnic cleansing and exile applied on them. It represents the hard life as well as the nostalgias Palestinians have inside and towards their country. In the view of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Adam tells Isra about his life before leaving for New York, which makes his character appear to the reader as someone who still craves closure to his land just like his father:

"We moved to New York in 1976, when I was sixteen. My parents have visited a couple of times since, but I've had to stay behind and take care of my father's deli."

"Have you ever been inside the mosque?"

"Of course. Many, many times. I wanted to be an imam growing up, you know. A priest. I spent Ramadan sleeping here one summer. I memorized the entire Qur'an." (Rum 29)

In the diaspora, Palestinians made their culture survive by transporting the iconic elements; traditions, values, sense of belonging, they brought with them. Nevertheless, and despite the poverty and the bad living conditions, Khaled represents a person in diaspora with all the nostalgias he has for the land. He is an example of the conservative Palestinians who

lived throughout culture and survived near people of their heritage and roots: “[people] were different back then, you know, [...] [if] you ran out of milk or sugar, then you walked next door and asked your neighbor. We were all a family back home. We had a community. Nothing like here.” (Rum 353). He always seems upset about leaving Palestine, and thinks that the new culture and space they moved in is the root of the problems they are facing in their new life:

“That’s the price of coming to this country, [...] [abandoning] our land and running away. Not a moment goes by when I don’t think of what we’ve done. Maybe we should’ve stayed and fought for our home. So what if the soldiers had killed us? So what if we had starved? Better than coming here and losing ourselves, our culture . . .” (Ibid 84)

Nevertheless, like all the major characters of the novel, Khaled still thinks of the homeland and the traumas the Nakba has left on Palestinians in diaspora. This presentation of loss and grief are portrayed in the neighborhoods the refugees choose to live in on the land of the other, “in the beginning, the Palestinians gathered in the same neighborhoods and villages. They helped each other and married one another, replicating life of their native land, with the same values and social codes.” (Saffie and Agar n.pg).

In fact, the refugees’ desperate need to feel attached to the motherland, and the desire to feel safe within a community they have been living in for decades, pushes them to make this choice, “[we] settled in Brooklyn because it was where the most Palestinians lived, but still, the community here isn’t what it is there. It never could be.” (Rum 353). Khaled is a sample of those who left their homes hoping they would return to them later, when they first came to New York. He had promised Fareeda that it was only a temporary situation, and they would go back home as soon as they make enough money. “But as the years passed, Fareeda knew that day would never come.” (Ibid 161).

Ghada Karmi states that her loss of memory concerning Palestine is a result of the fact that her family stopped talking about the Nakba and the circumstances that initiated this

departure. However, other Palestinian refugees; those who kept the keys of their homes in Palestine, decided to keep their children aware of their heritage by telling them everything about the land and making them know and believe that they have a right to return. These diaspora-born children knew Palestine as though they had lived there (qtd in Punia).

In order to preserve the Arab culture, Khaled keeps the Palestinian collective memory by telling his granddaughters about Palestine, the Nakba, when he plays with them a Palestinian card game; *hand*, so they would learn about their heritage and how an ordinary Palestinian family could be. We can assume that by remembering the Nakba of 1948 the Palestinians are trying to keep their history and untouched collective memory (Ibid, n.pg).

Fareeda grieves the loss of the land in her own ways despite her hatred to the life she has had as a child, as well as the environment of her new home. The reader sees her checking on her daughter's daily outfit to the school and her not allowing the girl do shopping by herself. The mother tries to hold on her culture because, "[if] she didn't preserve their culture, their identity, then she would lose them (her sons). She knew this in her core" (Ibid 161).

### **1.3 Assimilating with the Other**

Palestinian immigrant women wanted their children to speak Arabic despite the hardships they face in the society. That is the reason the characters in the novel use Arabic words like: *Baba (Father)*, *Teta (Grandmother)*, *Seedo (Grandfather)*, *Salaam (Hello)*...etc., to address people they talk to, which means they speak the language inside their home. Fareeda makes sure that she raises her children like proper Arabs, so she makes sure they speak Arabic and always reminds them that they will never be fully Americans:

She did what she could to ease this truth. She made sure her children knew Arabic, that Sarah was raised conservatively, and that her sons, as Americanized as they were becoming, still ended up doing what was expected of Palestinian men: marrying Palestinian girls and passing down the traditions to their own children (Rum 161).

She herself keeps making her culture survive at her American household, which is why she keeps her country's traditions with its traditional *sufra*; table, the way they make chai back home, and the habit of watching Turkish soap dramas instead of Hollywood's productions. Fareeda keeps reminding her daughter to behave like one, then she starts keeping a close watch on the books she reads with Isra and the ideas they would form:

She had to listen with half an ear as she watched her evening show to make sure they weren't up to no good. Once she had overheard Sarah translating a novel about a man attracted to his twelve-year-old stepdaughter, pausing to explain that she had borrowed the book from a friend because the school library had banned it. Fareeda had snatched the book from her at once! The last thing she needed was for either of them to read that sort of Americanized smut. Who knew what ideas it was giving them? (Rum 258).

Just because the narrow space Fareeda allows herself to belong to is full of Arabs, she starts to consider the fact that her daughter needs other women's company to learn their culture. Thus, she sees it important to involve her daughter with the public life and get her learn from other Arab women, "Sarah still needed to learn some culture, and there was no better place to learn culture, Fareeda knew, than in the company of women." (Ibid 256).

Regardless of the safe life Fareeda is living in America, the first thing comes to her mind when she loses control over the matters is her homeland and the possibility that their culture would keep her daughter sheltered. Though, the only picture she has attached to the concept of 'back home' is stained with the colonial's oppressive practices on Palestinians, and the fact that they have lost the land and abandoned it to survive:

Would their daughter have disobeyed them, disgraced them, had they raised her back home? So what if they might have starved? So what if they could've been shot in the back crossing a checkpoint, or blown up with tear gas on the way to school or the mosque? Maybe they should've stayed and let the soldiers kill them. Should've stayed and fought for their land, should've stayed and died. Any pain other than the pain of guilt and regret (Rum 340).

Although Fareeda does not appear to miss home that much, and in spite of her will to adjust to the new life and belong to the surrogate country, she does not like the idea of being

Americanized. She does not even dare to let herself blend with the American society she has come to live with. To her, all the houses appear to be identical, and individuals walking the walkways appear to be identical, as well. This similarity does not set only in the bizarre way they dressed, but on how they move, hurrying across the road like bugs (Rum 142). Fareeda keeps wondering about how it feels to be an American, to know precisely where you are going, each time you leave your front door, and what you would do when you come back.

Fareeda's life is an unstopping wheel of routines that involve bearing and raising kids, and doing the daily household chores. However, and despite of the dull and identical life she lived before and after coming to America, she thinks that her life is better this way since it does not have anything to do with the American lifestyle and the corruption within this society. Fareeda who cherishes values and the correct manners concludes that the way the Americans live is the main reason why they end up living alone, alcoholics, addicts, and divorced (Ibid 142).

Notwithstanding his claims that he prefers his daughters not to transform into Americans, Adam makes Isra stop wearing hijab as soon as she moves to America, referring to it by "that thing" (Rum 72), claiming that life has changed for Isra. His claims mean that this piece of cloth, according to his way of thinking, only concerns Muslim women in Arab-talking countries, not all Muslim females "[you] see, people here don't care if your hair is showing. There's no need to cover it up." (Ibid 72). The man who wanted to be an Imam once has changed by the new culture and other factors he sees appropriate to keep on being safe, "People flee to America from war-torn countries every day. Some are Arabs. Some are Muslims. Some are both, like us. But we could live here for the rest of our lives and never be Americans." (Ibid 72), that is why he tries to make his wife believe that they need to live carefully in the new country.

We see the need to belong to the American society and feel like they truly have a place makes Adam assimilate by not taking his religious duties seriously towards his God, as well as the duties Islam assigned him for towards his wife:

You think you're doing the right thing by wearing this hijab, but that's not what Americans will see when they look at you. They won't see your modesty or your goodness. All they'll see is an outcast, someone who doesn't belong. [...] It's hard. But all we can do is try to fit in." (Ibid 72).

On the other hand, Isra tries to steer the topic of religion because, while growing up, she learns that the main piece of her being a Muslim young-lady was wearing the hijab, and that "modesty was a woman's greatest virtue." (Ibid 72).

## **2 Forced Marriage and the Concept of Naseeb**

In her book, *Women in the Qur'an*, Asma Lamrabet sees that marriage is a pact that demands partnership and shared responsibility of equivalent parts. She likewise thinks it is intriguing to analyze how Qur'an portrays the contract of marriage as a *mithaq ghaliz*; heavy contract, with another Qur'anic verse that concerns the commitment of the messengers towards Allah (ch. 33). Marriage is the union of a man and a woman after the agreement of the woman and her caretaker to start a family based on respect, love, care, and giving rights. It is important to point out that marriage demands an understanding in order to accomplish an appropriate climate of living, and to achieve the fundamental conditions for a happy co-existence (Ibid ch. 33). Both partners have commitments based on understanding, responsibility, and faithfulness towards each other to make their marriage a happy and fruitful one.

Regarding to what Lamrabet thinks, it seems like the obligation of commitment is both glorious and sensitive, which requires mindfulness among individuals to fulfill this duty towards other individuals to grant their Creator's mercy. Wadud's reflections on marriage view it as half of the religion that needs a steady appreciation of the agency, full humanity, engaged surrender, and free will of one's spouse, to keep the relationship between the two

spouses. She sees that the relationship ought to be an equal one to produce a unity that requires listening, respecting, honoring, loving, and caring (Hammer 71-72).

In fact, *A Woman Is No Man* is a novel about family. It examines topics like motherhood, son-preference, gender roles, and females double-crossing their gender. The novel spins around young girls getting married to men older than them in arranged marriages without their agreement, or without having their parents consulting them. At the start of the story, we see the suitor from America who seems to be in his thirties accompanying his family to ask for the hand of a 17-years-old Isra and her father's rejection to two other suitors from neighboring towns.

## **2.1 Arranged Marriages and Child Marriage**

Tamari sees that “the choosing of marriage partners for their children” (459), plays a basic role on engagements and family building. However, by the start of the Zionist influx to the Palestinian territory and the crimes committed, people regarded marriage and keeping the Palestinian race so important to the point where they encouraged early marriages. The enhancing tensions and political decisions, putting a stop to the freedom of choice, and making the male heads of the family choose for their children the partner they see suitable to have an access to the family ruled marriage by the start of the Palestinian Intifada. These decisions affected the family building by “[invading it] by considerations of political unions dictated by political expediencies, security, and even love born in the “heat of struggle.” (Ibid 459).

Fareeda reveals to Deya that she had no choice when Khaled proposed for her, “[my] parents never asked me if I wanted to marry your grandfather. They just told me what to do, and I did it.” (Rum 47). She tells her how she and her sister Huda signed the marriage contract without seeing their spouses, and how she wished to be a wife of the smiling man, yet her Mama led her to the thin, tall man with the freckled face.

Stéphanie Latte Abdallah's work on *Marriage and Love in the Palestinian Camps of Jordan (1948–2001)* explains this act of marriage in the Palestinian society. The researcher states that women born before 1938 were youthful at the time of the 1948 departure. A large portion of them were at that point wedded, some pregnant, or with a couple of infants or little youngsters. These women had not chosen their spouses, because their fathers had made the choice, or a sibling or uncle if the father is dead, sometimes even the more distant family has a saying on this marriage. Generally, the women had not seen their husbands before the wedding (48).

Tamari states that these practices should not be counted as a common phenomenon, neither in the society, nor within the Palestinian individual's normal life, because the rise of the Intifada has caused what he calls "[a] challenge to the authority of the Palestinian patriarchy" (459). He sees that this trend has emerged at refugee camps and several villages where they offer women to marry in young ages (Ibid 459).

The issue of child marriage is present through Yacoob's radical decision of accepting the marriage proposal regardless of Isra's age. His agreement comes at once without asking his daughter about her opinion, or even wait for her approval, and despite the laws, the father makes his daughter a part of a child marriage relationship. The Protection Cluster defines child marriage as a formal marriage or informal association before age 18 where girls are the most influenced gender in this case. Despite of regarding this act of marriage as human rights' violation, it stays widespread. Notwithstanding the Palestinian state's approval of the '*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*' just as the '*Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2014*' without any reservations, which both shield children from early marriages. Child marriage in this way stays genuine and presents danger to basic freedoms, lives and health of children in the Palestinian territory, yet some communities still practice it partially because of steady destitution and sexual orientation disparity, which exacerbates by the extended Israeli occupation.

Like any other Palestinian woman after Nakba, Fareeda, who seems to like finding matches for her children, married Khaled when she was so young, “Mama led me by the elbow to the first man and whispered: ‘This man is your home now.’” (Rum 190), and became a mother, when she had quite recently turned fourteen, “I killed them (caused her twins’ death). I didn’t know! I promise you, I didn’t know! I was so young—I had no idea.” (Ibid 310-311). She herself was a child in need for care after living in a camp; that deprived her from all the human needs.

The novel portrays how Mama and Fareeda teach their daughters that a woman's worth sets just in marriage and motherhood, showing the reader that women like them will consistently have a similar perspective regardless of where they lived. Girls in families like Isra’ are viewed as “temporary [guests], quietly awaiting another man to scoop [them] away, along with all [their] financial burden” (Rum 15).

Indeed, immigration and the new life in America seem to fail on changing this mindset, which is the reason why Fareeda considers her own daughter as a burden: “[just] wait until I find a man to take you off my shoulders. *Wallahi*, I don’t care if he’s old and fat. I’m giving you away to the first man who agrees to take you!” (Rum 286-287). Fareeda keeps trying to convince her eldest granddaughter, who has turned eighteen, to sit with suitors she finds for her.

In order to normalize her behavior, she asks Deya to think of any mother they know whether she is fussing about marrying their daughters' off or not, “[you] act like I’m selling you off to slavery! Every mother I know is preparing her daughter for marriage. Tell me, do you know anyone whose mother isn’t doing exactly the same thing?” (Ibid 48). She even attempts to make her granddaughter feel that she is doing her a favor by finding her a man to wed: “my job is to secure your future by making sure you and your sisters are married off to good men.” (Rum 49). She makes the girl try to understand that you do not have to know your partner before marriage and that this kind of marriage is a normal thing:

Arranged marriages are what we do. [...] Just because we live in America, that doesn't change how things are. [...] If you keep turning down proposals, the next thing you know, you'll be old and no one will want to marry you, and then you'll spend the rest of your life in this house with me. [...] You've seen other girls who've disobeyed their parents, refusing to get married, or worse, getting divorced, and look at them now! Living at home with their parents, their heads hanging in shame! Is that what you want? (Rum 49-50).

It is clear that Mama does not love Yacoob who beats her, yet she keeps focused on bringing up her only girl to find acceptance in the society and settle in someone's home. She is attempting to persuade Isra that a woman's place belongs to her significant other's home, "*her bayt wa dar*" (Rum 21). Unfortunately, Mama's strict way of thinking, and her questioning her daughter whether she has raised a bad girl when she asks her about love, banish Isra's dreams and hopes of falling in love and feeling loved. Mama explains to her that women do not need love to make their lives and marriages last, but they need to be more realistic and understand that "there's no room for love in a woman's life. There's only one thing [women will] need, and that's *sabr*, patience." (Rum 20). Fareeda confirms Mama's idea and makes her daughter-in-law give up on her romantic fantasies, "[learn] this now, dear. If you live your life waiting for a man's love, you'll be disappointed." (Ibid 96).

Isra who "had never imagined a life in America" (Ibid 16) suddenly finds herself asked to sit with her American citizen fiancée, Adam Ra'ad, and go with him to get a visa to America. She learns from her mother that the essence of women's creation is to join their men; husbands, and stay shielded under their protection, give them children, and attend to their needs. Isra tries to be the brave woman who accepts her *naseeb*, and loves her husband. In fact, Isra does not have a clue about what life has come up for herself and could never really adjust this reality, but she keeps reminding herself that she would have more power over her life later on, in America where women live in freedom. The idea of moving from Palestine makes her hope that she will have the affection she had consistently longed for, and lead a better life than her mother's (Rum 33).

The marriages in the novel are within a Palestinian community, because we see Fareeda refusing to find her sons wives from the Palestinian-American neighborhood they live in. The Palestinians who came in the first half of the twentieth century, as well as their diaspora-born children, married Palestinian of their community because marrying a person who does not have similar qualities and culture, and who is not of the same community, was something unthinkable. In this way, when the men were of marriage-age, they searched out a partner in their own community. Thus, those who had the assets to make the long excursion back to their country went with the sole reason for finding a spouse. In different cases, they made endeavors with the families of their old neighborhood, who sent their girls to wed a suitor living in America (Saffie and Agar n.pgd.).

In the novel Fareeda appears to be a person who judges people for their own fashion style, for them not feeling ashamed of roaming the streets freely, and for speaking the language of the other country. We can state that her feelings are the first cultural shocked they received. According to Saffie and Agar, the first immigrants encountered a strong culture shock to see another connection between the genders, while people kept inconsistent power within the relationship (n.pgd). This culture shock has played a role in making them judge women out of their community, as soon as they saw the behavior of the women coming out from poor sectors as very different to that of the Arab woman. After that, the judgement and distrust felt by the Arab men towards women was because, in these areas, the women were more liberal than what they utilized to be (Ibid n.pgd.).

Fareeda later on makes her way back to Palestine twice to find decent and more Muslim-Arab wives for Adam then for Omar, not because there is a shortage of Arab girls, but because, according to her, she does not approve of the Americanized personality the young Palestinian girls in Brooklyn have adopted.

## 2.2 The Complexity of Family Ties

Isra who grows up so desperate to feel her mother's love starts to work on earning appreciation and care from other people in her life. Therefore, when she moves to the new Palestinian-American family, she finds a chaotic and a very muddled domestic environment, adding to the dreams the American home has ruined for her: "[it] didn't take Isra long to learn the shape of her life in America. Despite her hopes that things might be different for women, it was, in most ways, ordinary. And in the ways it wasn't, it was worse." (Rum 92).

Instead of living the American Dream, she has hoped Adam would give her, Isra starts making the same Palestinian food she used to prepare in her mother's kitchen, and preparing chai the same way her father used to like. She finds herself treated as a kitchen matte by her mother-in-law who considers her as an extra helping hand running around the house doing errands. However, Isra does not complain or say anything negative about this new enslavement and continues striving to earn Fareeda's satisfaction, "[she] would spend her life with Fareeda. She needed her love, and she would do what was necessary to earn it." (Ibid 113).

Sadly, Isra stops calling her Mama because Fareeda makes her switch to writing letters guaranteeing that calls to Ramallah are too expensive, yet Isra's snowballing outrage makes her quit keeping in touch with her mother, feeling that she has forgotten her, and contemplating whether she is not, at this point, a part of that family:

*Do you think about me? Do you wonder if I'm treated well? Do I ever cross your mind? Or am I not even part of your family anymore? Isn't that what you always said to me, that a girl belongs to her husband after marriage? I can see you now, coddling my brothers, your pride and joy, the men who will carry on the family name, who will always belong to you. (Rum 197).*

At first, her relationship with the man who has become her husband seems like any relationship bounded after a traditional engagement. Sometimes and despite of the long hours Adam spends at work the first day of their wedding night, he comes with a cheerful spirit,

asking Isra to get prepared so they would spend time together roaming Brooklyn's roads. The new couple keep on living a normal life based on respect; however, everything changes when Isra starts giving him daughters.

Adam at the beginning of the novel is pictured the family's black sheep. His brothers rely on him to pay college expenses and provide for the family without doing much themselves, while his mother, who does not see it unfair to put the burden on one of her sons' shoulder, keeps anticipating more from him. Fareeda starts taking his efforts for granted and makes him feel guilty whenever he complains about all what he does for them.

Earning Adam's love becomes Isra's first aim because she feels that her mother would avoided living miserably if she showed her husband some affection: "[she] would love her husband in a way Mama hadn't loved Yacob—she would strive to understand him, to please him—and surely in this way she would earn his love." (Ibid 21). This quest makes Isra keep ignoring all the signs that say, despite of living in a foreign country, she is married in a patriarchal community where men are not allowed to show feelings, love, or even pain since it is considered as a social taboo.

Nevertheless, the social sphere is not the only element to blame for the patriarchal oppression practiced on Isra, but on Adam as well. He is to blame for not clearly standing up to his needs and wants, or refusing what triggers the angry mood within him, "Adam's mood was volatile— particularly when Fareeda gave him a new request, like paying another semester of Ali's college tuition, or when Khaled asked him to work longer hours in the deli." (Rum 152-153). By living this way, and after failing to earn his love in spite of her numerous endeavors, Isra starts living a life full of fear, perceiving the patterns of his behavior, expecting his constantly changing personality, to be prepared to satisfy and please him (Ibid 152-153).

Though Fareeda uses Isra and keeps a watchful eye on her, she fails to do likewise with her second daughter-in-law Nadine. To make matters worse, Fareeda keeps bullying Isra for

her silence and failure to give the family a son, and tries to make her change, so she decides to create a sense of competition at home by finding a wife for her second son. At first when she picked a wife for Adam, she looked for a timid, modest, woman who knows how to cook and clean, something opposite to every one of the impolite women she had become used to in America. Nevertheless, while choosing Omar's wife, she asks for an enthusiastic young woman, making it clear to everyone that she is in search for a girl who is not like Isra. (Rum 162). Surprisingly, and out of the usual, Nadine's character is nothing like Isra's, and instead of satisfying Fareeda's schemes, Nadine "had Omar wrapped around her finger" (Ibid 214).

The only friend Isra has in her in-laws home is Sarah, Adam's sister, who brings her books to read secretly, encourages her to change, and asks her to flee away with her when she decides to leave. The Palestinian-American family home dissolves when Sarah runs away disgracing the family, and making her mother lie to people telling them she has given her daughter off to marriage in Palestine.

Nonetheless, Adam murdering his wife; and leaving behind four young daughters for Fareeda and Khaled to take care of, could not be covered and the news has spread as catching fire reaching Palestine, just as Isra's family. Ali leaves the house with a girl after when Sarah runs away, while there is no mention of Omar and his family after the murder incident. Khaled and Fareeda raise Deya and her three sisters, losing the norm of the large extended family found in Arab households, because for quite a long time they lived just the six of them with no relatives to visit them. The girls keep feeling the sting of loneliness, especially on Eid festivities, when they would sit at home, knowing there was nobody staying with them on these valuable occasions (Rum 47). We see Khaled barely staying at home, leaving Fareeda to boss around her granddaughters and raise them to be the good Arabs she wants them to be, the way she raised her children.

### 2.3 The Dilemma of Gender in Motherhood

In fact, in the Arab society boys are valued and sought to the point where the man remarries another woman, and sometimes divorces the one who has given him daughters, or is infertile. Unfortunately, these men, alongside the society, believe that fertility and not giving the family a boy to carry on the family name is a woman's failure. Along these lines, son-preference in the novel is a genuine shadowing to the society, and it is present in the novel the day Isra gives birth to Deya, "Keep these words close, like a piercing in your ear: If you don't give a man a son, he'll find him a woman who can." (Rum 133).

Although Mama and Fareeda continue talking about motherhood, and urging their daughters to get married and become mothers, they do not seem to love their girls similarly to their boys. Fareeda who accidentally caused the death of her twin daughters by giving them goat's milk instead of breastfeeding them, had thought of them as a failure and disgrace when they were born because of their gender. She thought that Allah blessed her with Adam, Omar, and Ali, one after the other, changing her *naseeb* after the twins' death, yet when she gave birth to Sarah, she has believed that the twins' ghosts are haunting her life. The reader never sees her grieving the baby girls for a long time, but rather her feelings of dread were of Khaled punishing her for the girls' death or the jinn haunting her life.

Fareeda calls Isra's firstborn baby a *balwa* the first day she comes to life, making Isra remember how Mama used to consider her a burden on the family's shoulder. This mentality makes Isra understand that the idea of giving females a better life in America is nothing but an illusion, "Any lingering hope that America would be better than Palestine fell away at that moment. A woman would always be a woman. Mama was right. It was as true for her daughter as it had been for Isra." (Rum 133).

In spite of the absurdity that has accompanied Deya's birth, Isra discovers that the love she has been dying to earn is the love she feels for her baby: Allah's gift and Isra's *naseeb*. Thankfully, Isra feels like she belongs somewhere, not to a physical place, but a concrete one,

after becoming a mother. Her idea of love changes and she seems to outgrow the romantic fantasies she used to read about and dream of, believing that the love Rumi and Hafiz wrote about in their poems does not mean the kind of love found between a male and a female, but the motherly one (Rum 372).

Just like her mother-in-law, Fareeda prevents Isra from breastfeeding her daughter so she would get pregnant with a son in a short time. Guilty Isra keeps mixing the bottles of milk formulas to her daughter, dreading what the doctor would tell her about the next baby's gender. When Fareeda anticipates a girl in Isra's second pregnancy, and regardless of her love for her daughter, the pressure put on her from her mother-in-law makes her recite a prayer asking Allah to change her *naseeb* and the baby's gender to give her a son, so Adam would love her and see her worth.

Isra ends up with four daughters while trying to conceive a son. She feels that she has failed the girls, so she tries to do whatever it takes not to betray them or make them feel unloved, like what she used to feel while growing up:

“I don't mean to be this way. When I was a little girl, my mother never spoke to me much. She was always so busy. Sometimes I felt forgotten. Sometimes I even thought she didn't love me. But she did love me. Of course she loved me. She's my mother. And I love you, *habibti*. Always remember that.” (Rum 216-217).

Unfortunately, Isra does not show her daughters the affection she has for them so frequently because of her downturn and the mistreatment Adam exposes her to, which is the reason why Deya grows up believing that her mother had never fancied her. Her childhood seems to repeat itself again when we look at her eldest daughter's way of thinking, memories, and melancholy, despite of Isra's efforts not to expose the girls to what is really happening.

## **2.4 Divorce and Reputation**

Hamby sees that the social atmosphere of a battered woman makes her cope with the battering and keep what is happening inside her home in order not to spoil their reputation and their “public identity” (23). People like Fareeda; and the public patriarchal society, reprimand

the divorced women for this failure and accuse them of doing something that pushed their husbands to leave them. The public society, which does not know what is happening behind closed doors, finds it easier to judge a woman instead of putting an end to the battering:

As long as the public still believes they are in a happy relationship, women can claim the desirable social statuses of “married,” “romantically involved,” “happy family,” and so forth. They are also still entitled to perceptions that they are competent and desirable. To disclose abuse, end a relationship, file for divorce—these may eventually lead to a better life, but in the short term they involve accepting the spoiled identities of “victim,” “divorced,” “single mother,” “failed marriage,” and the like (Ibid 23).

The issue of divorce is present in the novel through the story of a daughter of Um Ahmad’s. The reader sees that a divorced woman is not like a divorced man, however, Deya's second suitor was divorced, yet the society does not prevent him from looking for a new wife and starting a new life, in contrast to women whose marriages are finished. We see female characters scared of shaming their families by getting a divorce, which causes them to bear their husbands' abuse and all the maltreatment they present them to, or accept the first marriage proposal they get. At the point when Fatima, Umm Ahmed's daughter, gets a divorce, Fareeda believes that this would clear the way for her own daughter to have better marriage proposals.

The patriarchal perspectives plainly extracts this possibility and views the reputation of a divorced woman, as well as her sisters, as a dirty and damaged one, “[she] must have done something wrong. [...] Poor, poor Umm Ahmed, having to look people in the eye after her daughter’s divorce.” (Rum 217).

In fact, Allah instructed Muslims to give a divorced woman the rights given by Him. They are to be treated with *maarouf*; respect, and *nafaqa*; monetary rights, on the off chance that there is a child between them. *Nafaqa* in Islam implies spending on somebody and providing the necessities he/she needs. In marriage, it means the obligation of providing for the spouse so that she would live a decent life, so she would not wish for what the others

possess or suffer neediness, particularly if her husband can spend on her. It is important to say that when Islam stated the obligation of this act, it included all women and did not exclude the rich or the one who can provide materials for herself. However, the husband of Umm Ahmed's second daughter, Hannah, murders her when she asks for a divorce, “[he] says he doesn’t know what happened. They found him standing over her body with a knife.” (Rum 322).

Although women with Fareeda's perspective exist, there are women like Umm Ahmed, who appears to be more open to side with her daughters even if they wanted a divorce; she did not forestall Fatima, and she would not quit censuring herself for Hannah's death thinking that she might have done something to save her daughter from that wretched marriage. Fareeda believes that she would not have the option to permit Sarah to do likewise and thinks that Hannah's murder is Umm Ahmed's fault since she appears to forget that “no matter what any woman said, culture could not be escaped. Even if it meant tragedy. Even if it meant death” (Rum 341).

In the novel, Fareeda represents society and its public patriarchal prejudice. She does not accept people with thoughts not quite the same as hers or other cultures, and does not see the bad in her actions but blames anyone who does not act like her. In order to make the culture that was born under colonial oppression and old-fashioned beliefs survive, Fareeda betrays her gender by venerating men and considering that bringing up children is exclusively a woman’s role. Instead of making her son quit battering his wife, she orders Isra to conceal her bruises with foundation so no one would see her shame:

“What happens between a husband and wife must stay between them. Always. No matter what.”

The next time Adam left bruises, Isra covered them herself. She had hoped Fareeda might notice her efforts, that it might bring them closer somehow, maybe even back to the way things were in the beginning, before Deya was born. But if Fareeda did notice, she didn’t let on. In fact, she pretended as if nothing had happened, as though Adam had never hit Isra, as though Fareeda had never covered her bruises. It bothered Isra, but she willed

herself to remain calm. Fareeda was right. What happened between a husband and wife must stay between them, not from fear or respect, as Isra had initially thought, but shame (Rum 214).

It is a fact that when someone lives a sad life, or is traumatized with a wretched experience, they make an effort to live and stand up for what the life they want, and change what they have been through. Nevertheless, Fareeda seems to side with the cultural beliefs she grew up believing in. She does not even stand up for her daughter, and fortunately, she could not impose her ideas on Deya.

Though Umm Ahmed is a Palestinian refugee, her perspectives of culture differ from her friend. By looking closely, we can assume that she is a person who rejects the old culture and comprehends that Islam is a religion of love and harmony, and that women are valued in it. Um Ahmed sees that women have rights to enjoy and thinks that Fareeda “wasn’t religious enough, [because] she shamed girls too much” (Rum 263).

Indeed, in patriarchal societies, women are the first to blame when something occurs. When a battered woman, with children, seriously thinks about getting a divorce, she risks losing support from the society as well as the family of the victimizer, along her custody rights and babysitting, plus children’s financial and educational support (Hamby 23). In fact, the society closely examines a woman’s honor and reputation, while it allows men to do whatever they please. This allowance comes as a result to their gender and the patriarchal ideas that do not segregate a man who carries out unlawful crimes according to the laws and forbidden in Islam.

“Victimized women may struggle with personal values to commit to marriage “for better or worse” or fear loneliness. In some cultural, ethnic, and religious communities, women who choose relationship termination may face lifelong dishonor” (Ibid 23). However, Islam does not normalize males committing *haram* practices, yet sees both genders as equivalent as far as remuneration and discipline; a man who commits adultery has a

punishment for his transgression as well as a woman in Islamic laws, which means nobody has the option to overstep religious laws and use his gender to defend himself.

### **3 Patriarchy: The Other Face of Colonialism**

Muslim women have been exposed to inhuman practices and been quieted by patriarchal societies and cultures that believe in the supremacy of men and give them indisputably the option to control close female family members' lives in a way that only serves their needs and wants; sometimes with no genuine aim to protect these women's rights. Unfortunately, the man-centric practices that deny women of rights given to them by Islam have been committed in its name, through wrong interpretations of Qur'anic texts, and sometimes with a certain selection of texts and sections, or an intended cut of certain parts of the *ayaat* to make the discourse support such practices. According to Islam's teachings and instructions, Muslim women are to be well cared for, respected, and treated with fairness. The prophet's life with women around him tends to teach men how they must treat their women in a delicate and respectful way.

However, Saleh states that Islam and traditional cultures should not be confused and believed to be the same (35). The Western views towards what occurs in the Middle East area; and the Arab-Muslim world, consider Islam as the barrier that deprives women of their rights and limits their freedoms. Westerners regard women as inferior to men because of the Islamic extreme rules and male-gender superiority. That is why public life, societies, and domestic environments exclude females (Ibid 35).

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (2016) sees domestic violence against Palestinian women as "a social taboo [...] regarded as a domestic problem that is needed to be handled inside home" (19). The violence, as indicated JICA, goes unreported by women because of the patriarchal practices and male gender domination, adding to sociocultural standards. The disguised due to the culture of silence makes the woman keep silent about the maltreatment, altogether not to aggravate the already complex situation worse

(Ibid 20). The society does not segregate wife beating on the grounds that, in view of the patriarchal definitions of the good and bad girl, she simply merits punishment. An examination conducted in 2000 states that 49% of male and 43% of female participants see that a spouse beats his wife because she gives him a reason to do as such (Ibid 20).

The violations done in the novel have never been justified to be Islamic, which implies that domestic violence could happen in religious and non-religious families. To illustrate, we have in one hand Yacob, a conservative man who prays in the mosque with his sons, yet he beats Mama and Isra, and then again, on the other hand, we have Adam and Khaled who turn out to be alcoholic and violent. Regardless of Adam memorizing the holy Quran and wanting to be an Imam as a child, Isra does not see him pray by any means. We can expect that the entire family is not religious enough because not all of its members respect the sacred month of Ramadan and its men go to pray just on Fridays at the mosque. Fareeda as well does not see the purpose behind adhering to the Muslims prayer. Every morning she starts murmuring her prayers asking God to keep shame and disgrace from her family, making Isra wonder for what reason Fareeda does not kneel before God to pray (Rum 94). Instead of staying committed to her religious rituals, Fareeda goes to the mosque when she is in the mood for catching up with the recent tattles, laughing at Isra's questions about the way she prays, "[what] difference does it make how I recite my prayers? This is what's wrong with all these religious folks these days. So hung up on the little things. You would think a prayer is a prayer, no?" (Ibid 94).

The character's detachment from religion, the constant mention of culture, and by returning to the Islamic teachings and the investigations of Muslim feminists, we can demonstrate that the issue is not in Islam's laws but in the convictions people esteem more than religion. In the novel, it is obvious that people dread the society more than their fear of not following Allah's commands.

Fareeda does not permit her granddaughters to head off to college not because Islam forbid schooling for women, since women in the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had their share of learning and teaching knowledge. This prohibition is a result of her upbringing, and the thoughts that issue a woman's place is at home. Thence, the reader sees how Fareeda does not even go to the nearby supermarket to get what she needs, and the only place she goes to is Umm Ahmed's home; in the same neighborhood as hers.

Going back to what may cause male abuse to women and comparing it to the male characters of Rum's novel, the reader finds a kind of oppression put on the novel's men as well. Destitution, outrage, patriarchal societies, and provincial persecution made men in the female characters' lives use violence against them. Rather than coordinating this violence against the colonial oppression or making it a motivator to carry change to their families and the society; as per Fanon's perspective of the oppressed colonized character, men in the novel are utilizing their women as punching sacs they can take out their anger on.

### **3.1 Male Dominance**

Okereke and Racheotes see that Muslim women are compelled to obey their husbands, fathers, guardians, or other male family members because of the interpretations people give to *Sharia*. These interpretations play a major role in giving men the utmost power over women. Worst, they expose women to the threat of domestic abused when they fail to fulfil the duties they have towards them because they regard this failure as obedience (9).

Nowadays Muslims use the concept of *qiwama* to underestimate their women or silence them. Therefore, these practices come through the confusion or intended disregard of the genuine meaning of the concept. In Arabic, the word '*Qayem*' means somebody who is standing as a guard or an attentive watchful eye on something valuable all together not to lose or abuse it. Based on this definition, the task for men is to take a full consideration of women under their protection, serve their requirements, and do whatever they cannot accomplish by

themselves. *Qiwama* means the predominance of men over women, and the verse that deals with the concept is an illustration of the misinterpreted Qur'anic exegesis.

Lamrabet discusses the patriarchy in the comprehension of this notion and sees that “[the] term *qiwama* has often been translated erroneously as ‘superiority’ and the patriarchal reading has even elevated it to a state of despotism and rendered it a sacred privilege of the Muslim man.” (ch. 33). It is important to note that *qiwama* is certainly not an honorific title given to men, but a tough responsibility they need to fulfill and well-protect, yet patriarchy puts women in Rum’s novel under strict and prejudicial mentalities.

Men in the novel believe that they have the upper hand and can do anything they desire since they are the breadwinners, adding to the fact that their gender is more predominant. Adam, after prohibiting Isra from wearing hijab, stops taking her out of the house, leaving her under the mercy of his mother who keeps her all-day stuck in the kitchen doing chores. He, the *qayem* on his wife, objects at once when she asks for his permission to take baby Deya in her stroller and go out like the other normal women:

“Go out to Fifth Avenue on your own? Surely that’s out of the question. [...] You want to take a stroll down the block? Sure. But there’s no reason for you to be out on Fifth Avenue alone. A young girl like you on the streets? Someone would take advantage of you. So many corrupt people in this country. Besides, we have a reputation here. What will Arabs say if they see my young wife wandering the streets alone? You need anything, my parents will get it for you. [...] *Fahmeh?* Do you understand?” (Rum 156).

The patriarchal society sees men’s transgressions, drinking liquor, and abusing females as minor trespasses, and women around them appear to ignore those practices because they simply cannot scrutinize a man. When Isra looks at his eyes and see how red they were, she prefers to keep thinking the best of him because he simply works so hard to provide for her and the family, “For a moment she thought perhaps he had been drinking, but she quickly dismissed it. Drinking *sharaab* (alcohol) was forbidden in Islam, and Adam would never

commit such a sin. No, no. He worked too hard, that was all. He must be getting sick.” (Ibid 156).

Patriarchy and son-preference in the novel make Fareeda attempt to cover up for her son’s crime, and give excuses for Isra’s murder “[...] she never really blamed Adam—had forgiven him, even [...]” (Rum 298). Still, she and Khaled could not forgive Sarah who runs without them understanding or knowing why “She and Khaled had erased Sarah from their lives completely, as if they had never had a daughter, as if she had committed the grossest of crimes. She was so afraid of the shame the family would face that she had never even questioned it (Ibid 298).

On the other hand, Khaled claims that he could not forgive Sarah because of his pride, but Deya blames this on gender and male preference: “[because] she’s a girl? Is that it? Because she was only a girl and she dared to shame you? Would you have forgiven my father if he were still alive? Tell me, would you have forgiven him for killing my mother?” (Rum 328).

When Omar and Ali leave her alone, Fareeda thinks that they are not men enough. The patriarchal culture considers a man lacking manhood when he regards his wife as a human being, not a slave, and shows his love and affection. Sadly, the same mothers who spoil their sons are the same ones who might turn against them when they do not follow oppressive cultural traditions. For instance, Fareeda who endured numerous extreme things for the sake of her children pushes her son Omar to blame her for oppressing him and his wife. Fareeda oppresses Omar and Nadine by demanding that he needs to show his wife her place as a woman, put down his foot, and asking him to become more ‘manly’, “[she] remembered Omar saying how controlling she was, how he couldn’t even be nice to Nadine in her presence, how he had to pretend to be tough, *manly*. How much he hated the word manly, he had said, almost spitting as he did.” (Rum 297).

Deya answers the question of whether Islam supports patriarchy or not. She thinks that they are far from being Islamic because of all the unjust human practices people commit towards each other and towards the other; women.

### **3.2 Nameless Women**

The majority of the novel's women are nameless. For instance, Isra's mother does not have a name we can refer to her with, that is why she refers to her as Mama all the time. In the novel, and while growing up, Isra's community denied women the luxury of having names to be identified with and no married woman was called by her first name. The community refers to her mom as Umm Waleed, mother of her oldest child Waleed, and never Sawsan. Indeed, even her auntie Widad, who had never borne a child, does not seem to enjoy having a name, but always referred to as Mart Jamal, Jamal's wife (Rum 67).

Not giving women proper names to identify them with in the novel shows to what extent the society considers having women's presence in public as a taboo. That is why relating women's existence to men in their lives; husbands or sons, identifies them. This procedure makes women seem like items men possess and use, which shows to that male dominance has invaded the public space Walby has rationalized.

### **3.3 Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence has various sorts and structures, and it does not only refer to physical assaults, yet to other traumatizing forms, however, as per Davis' definition "[abuse may be] physical, sexual, emotional, economic (cutting funds and stopping the financial support), psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person" (1). It could be cultural; generalizing one's culture and forcing your own cultural beliefs on them, religious; changing, or obliging someone to change their religion without being fully convinced of this faith, and verbal as well; it includes name-calling, giving humiliating remarks, and embarrassing.

In Palestine, domestic violence rates are still soaring because of the already bad living conditions. In view of the awful everyday living conditions and the spread of poverty rates in a major bit of the colonized society, women whose spouses do not have a source of financial income or are working in jobs with low compensation, are exposed to domestic violence more than any other woman is:

There is already a higher risk of gender-based violence (GBV), namely against women, girls, and boys, for Palestinians in impoverished communities that are chronically exposed to collective violence and economic insecurity- this includes Gaza, refugee camps, or Area C in the West Bank. (UN Women Analysis 19).

The victimizer may feel that his companion does not value the endeavors he is making to accommodate for the family at a time where respectful jobs are scant. Adam condemns Isra and assumes that she does not understand his sacrifices:

“You think I don’t want to come home?” he said, waving his hands. “But who else is going to put food in your mouth? And buy diapers and baby formula and medicine? You think living in this country is cheap? [...] I’m doing the best I can to support this family! What more do you want from me?” (Rum 155).

Rather than working on accomplishing his duties towards his significant other, the man starts searching forward for appreciation and considers himself as more superior in light of the fact that he is the breadwinner while the woman in his guardianship is a passive recipient. This act is nothing but restless efforts men do to fix an already broken self-esteem, and them attempting to rehabilitate their manliness and masculinity.

Neediness and the dainty mattress the home contains of, with all the tough labor he does in the fields to provide the little food he can earn for his family, and the displacement that removed Yacob’s family out of their home in Ladd as a child, cause his character to appear as a shaken and self-unconscious one. His tender pride pushes him to take his resentment on Mama when she fails to conceal their poverty before the outsiders so nobody would feel sorry for them or see his poverty, “Yacob [was] yelling at Mama after the guests

left, furious that she hadn't served the chai in the antique set teacups they saved for special occasions. "Now they will know we are poor!" Yacob had shouted, his open palm twitching" (Rum 14-15). Mama on the other hand does not seem to comprehend that Islam has given women privileges and freedoms despite of her being religious. She accepts that the solitary role a woman has in life is to wed, deliver children, and assist to her husband's compulsions.

The repression put on Mama affects her looks making her appear older than her age. She seems reluctant to offer her opinion on something significant like accepting to send off her only daughter to the other part of the world, or even show her joy in Isra's wedding day, so the society would not fault her of being too eager to get rid of her daughter:

Mama sat in the corner of the wedding hall, fidgeting with her fingers. So far she had not left her seat throughout the entire wedding, and Isra wondered if she wanted to dance. Perhaps she was too sad to dance, Isra thought. Or perhaps she was afraid to send the wrong message. Growing up, Isra had often heard women criticize the mother of the bride for celebrating too boisterously at the wedding, too excited to be rid of her daughter. She wondered if Mama was secretly excited to be rid of her (Rum 32).

Fareeda's father used to hit her while growing up. however, after marriage, the man who is supposed to be her home starts beating her even more in a way she has never known before, "beatings that left her face black and blue, her ribs so sore they ached when she breathed, an arm so badly sprained she couldn't carry water for weeks." (Rum 165). In the wake of inspecting Fareeda's memories, we see Khaled works, notwithstanding Israel's restraints and domination to get by in an overcrowded evacuee camp that suffers from shortages of every human necessity. In spite of his efforts to provide a good living environment and materials, Khaled seems to fail, that is the reason his temper alters and his outrage upsurges:

When she had first married Khaled, he would slap her if she even raised her eyes off the ground—pop after pop, until she was as quiet as a mouse. She remembered the early days of her marriage, years before they came to America, when she had lived in fear of his hostile moods, his slaps and kicks if she

dared to talk back. She remembered how he would enter their shelter every night after plowing the fields, enraged at the quality of their life—the hardness of the mattress they slept on, the sparseness of food, the aching of his bones—only to take his anger out on her and the children. Some days he'd beat them for even the slightest confrontation, while other days he'd say nothing, grinding his teeth, fury bubbling in his eyes (Rum 162-163).

It is true that taking care of one child is hard for poor families, however, Fareeda gives Khaled twins and by all accounts adding *balwas*; burdens, on his shoulder, since they were baby girls:

[...] Fareeda hadn't given him the son he had dreamed of, the young man who would help him find food and water, who would help him cope with the burden of their family's loss, who would carry on the family's name. She had given him *balwas* instead—not one but two. She had known, even before seeing the mournful look on his face, that he would be disappointed. She hadn't blamed him. The shame of her gender was engraved on her bones (Rum 309-310).

The need to keep the family lineage, the pitiable life the colonizer has put people through, and the society's discriminations make Khaled take his anger with *sharaab*, alcohol, which is illegal in Islam, then on Fareeda:

“I won't allow you to spend our hard-earned money on *sharaab*. I've endured many things for your sake but I won't endure this. From now on, I want to know what you do with our money.”  
The next thing she knew, Khaled had slapped her. “Who do you think you are talking to me like that?”  
“I'm the reason this family has food to eat.”  
Another slap. “Shut your mouth, woman!”  
“I won't shut my mouth unless you stop drinking,” she said, unwavering. “If you don't, I'll tell your children the truth! I'll tell them that we barely have enough food because their father is an alcoholic. I'll tell everyone! Your reputation will be ruined, and your children will never respect you.” (Rum 165-166).

Holt states that the point behind women's abuse is to dispirit the adversary by striking at its most vulnerable point and reassert male power from an overall perspective (225). The massacres on Palestinian villages cleared the way for the boorish powers to possess Jerusalem, and created 'the refugee problem'. This problem is a result of the displacement of Palestinians in refugee camps inside Palestinian grounds and pushed others to seek refuge

outside the territory. Accordingly, the Zionist massacres on peaceful villages traumatized Palestinians and pushed them to embrace a sense of over-protectiveness towards their wives and women to safeguard their honor.

She describes the Palestinian honor as ‘Achilles’ heel’ and states that the Zionists were well aware of this matter to the point where they used it to help them in eradicating Palestinian civilians out of their villages. To clarify her point, she illustrates with assaults on al-Khisas and al-Dawayima villages where the focused on victims were women and children. (Ibid 227). Though, the idea of protection is not a general rule anyone would use to justify violence, because, according to Peltz, “[the] relationship between the occupation, patriarchy, and gender-based violence is clear: rising poverty and unstable living conditions have placed a tremendous strain on families and extended families, further exacerbating social tensions.” (8). To illustrate with, Abdulhadi, et al. states that at the point when colonizers showed up to the Americas, in addition to the fact that they occupied native land; they additionally forced new constructions that were man centric. Native American women who reserved the privilege to speak for their people have tended to the outcomes of not negotiating with them (58).

After the alcohol incident, Khaled changes with Fareeda and starts working to get his wife and children out of the refugee camp, away from the threats of hunger and colonialism. This change is Khaled’s attempts to preserve his honor and fix a part colonialism has not reached yet.

Thenceforth, after leaving to America, Khaled’s beating appears to stop because Fareeda has become the backbone of the family and the one who shook his conscience awake. The voiceless woman suddenly challenges her husband and starts managing and saving his incomes to buy plane tickets to America in 1967 (Rum 233). When the immigrant family makes it to New York, Fareeda keeps on taking action by saving the money that would open a business for her family:

[She] who had saved Khaled's earnings at his first job, an electronics store on Flatbush Avenue, in a navy-blue shoe box under her bed. She who had become ever more resourceful, limiting the amount of money she spent on food and household items, washing her children's clothes daily so they didn't need more than two outfits each, even baking ma'amool cookies (Palestinian traditional cookies) for Khaled to sell his customers, who were enthralled by the foreign combination of figs and butterbread. Soon she had saved ten thousand dollars in the navy-blue shoe box stuffed beneath their bed, which Khaled had used to open his deli (Rum 233).

Fareeda takes control over her life, but she does not seem to forget all the abuse her husband caused her. She links women's battering to the possibility that there is something serious with men's characters:

She was not surprised when her father came home and beat them mercilessly, the tragedy of the Nakba bulging in his veins. Nor was she surprised when he married her off to a man who beat her, too. How could he not, when they were so poor that their lives were filled with continuous shame? She knew that the suffering of women started in the suffering of men, that the bondages of one became the bondages of the other. Would the men in her life have battered her had they not been battered themselves? Fareeda doubted it, and it was this awareness of the hurt behind the hurt that had enabled her to see past Khaled's violence over the years and not let it destroy her. There was no point in moping around. She had decided early on in her marriage to focus only on the things she could control. (Rum 138)

Later on, she starts taking her stress and frustration in food and becomes an emotional-eater because "[food] was the only thing left that gave her comfort" (Rum 233), yet this would cause her further health problems since she already has diabetes; "[she] was considerably thicker now than she'd once been. But that didn't bother her. In fact, she would spend all day eating if it didn't cost so much. Of course she knew that burying her feelings in food was unhealthy—that it could kill her" (Rum 233). Fareeda concludes that overeating is not more hazardous and killing than finding herself left alone.

As indicated by the American Psychological Association, physical abuse is actual maltreatment or violent behavior by one individual toward another that results in substantial

injury (VandenBos 795). This abuse may include aggressive actions like beating, choking, kicking, using sharp items or tossing them on the abused individual, cutting funds and supplies, starving, stalking, and so forth. At times, physical abuse might be adequately serious to result in permanent damages like traumatic brain injuries or death (Ibid 795). Physical abuse occurs between intimate partners and married couples, parents and children, or older family members and elderly females. There is a huge debate over whether certain common types of physical discipline, for instance, hitting, that is neither malicious nor intended to incur harm could be understood as excessively brutal and subsequently viewed as physical abuse (Ibid 795).

Rather than supporting his wife and working on raising his daughters in a suitable environment a child could live in, Adam changes because, just like his father, he finds himself the only responsible person for maintaining the family business, aiding his siblings, and pleasing his mother with money. The family added another burden to Adam's shoulders and tested his fertility by putting pressure on him to give the family a son to carry on its name. These pressing factors put on Adam from the family, adding to the long hours he spends at work make him start drinking *sharaab*; alcohol. Adam's second brother gives the family the son they wanted, which Adam regards as a failure added to his list, so he blames this on his wife and starts beating her.

Fareeda's daily comments trigger Adam to develop an obnoxious personality and grow more violent: pulling Isra from the hair, choking, and smacking her in any event, even when she is heavily pregnant. Subsequently, Isra learns to predict Adam's moods and braces herself to his beating:

Adam looked away, squeezing the pack of cigarettes tight. Even though he was looking out toward the river, Isra could see it in his eyes: he would beat her tonight. She stared at him, hoping she was wrong, that he wouldn't take out his anger on her. But the signs were all too familiar now (Rum 372).

Some people think battering happens among poor families that regard the pregnant woman and her child as heavy burdens. A man of weak financial income feels helpless because he cannot afford to provide a child's necessities, and with the piling responsibilities he has towards his pregnant wife, he becomes violent. The abusive partner may use violence against his pregnant spouse to cause intended harm; like abortion, in order to get rid of the unwanted child. Nevertheless, the abuser who tries to make a pregnant woman lose her baby either does not want to keep a child and be responsible on his/her well-being, does not feel ready to be a parent, wants to get rid of the wife, or because of the baby's gender. "Violence during pregnancy greatly reduces the possibility that a healthy lifestyle leading to safe motherhood can be reached; instead, a number of negative consequences are likely to result for both the mother and her unborn child." (Jasinski 573).

### **3.3.1. Pregnancy and Abortion**

In fact, women who live in complicated and abusive relationships are more likely to develop depression and mental problems. The trauma and the violence within their daily lives ruin their self-esteem and cause severe problems psychiatrists would stand helpless before. Moreover, women who are victims of domestic abuse may develop a desire of committing crimes by killing their abusive partner or themselves. Some women resort to damaging and unhealthy routines to escape the reality of battering, so they take their anger and frustration in cutting themselves, using drugs, or overeating.

Psychological abuse is a nonphysical maltreatment. It might come in various forms and can be "verbal abuse; intimidation and terrorization; humiliation and degradation; exploitation; harassment; rejection and withholding of affection; isolation; and excessive control" (VandenBos 362-363). This sort of abuse is a pattern of behavior wherein one person deliberately, and more than once, subjects another to nonphysical impairments that are inconvenient to behavioral and affective functioning, and in general mental prosperity (Ibid

362). Walker gives paradigms of other various approaches to assess for psychological abuse, and according to him this happens “because most people feel that they have been taken advantage of, ignored, humiliated, embarrassed, or in some other way psychologically maltreated” (Ibid 68).

Regardless of her not turning twenty-five yet, Isra becomes a mother of four daughters completely reliant upon her. Due to the physical and psychological oppression, the woman develops a violent pattern that pushes her to abort her baby as soon as she finds out that she is expecting a fifth child, overlooking the prohibition of abortion in Islam, “[she] had not planned to keep the baby. As soon as the white strip turned red, she had stood at the top of the staircase and jumped off, over and over again, pounding on her belly with clenched fists.” (Rum 371), daring not to tell a soul about this pregnancy, “[she] hadn’t told anyone that she had gotten pregnant last month, not even Fareeda.” (Ibid 371). The violent environment at home makes Isra commit this crime with a belief that she is saving someone; either sparing herself the horror of birthing a fifth girl, or saving the baby from coming to a family where females are seen as a burden if it turned out to be a girl.

It is important to point out that abused pregnant women are in danger of giving birth to a disabled child. To talk more about the problem of abuse on pregnant women, we can illustrate with what the president of the National Women's Studies Association, Deborah Louis, wrote to the Women's Studies Electronic Bulletin Board. Deborah stated that we could consider battering and domestic abuse against pregnant women as one of the main responsible effectors for birth defects (Sommer 12-13). The president of the National Organization of Women, Patricia Ireland, affirmed that the idea and stated that domestic violence is “the number one cause of birth defects.” (Ibid 13).

Apparently, the psychological abuse Isra suffers from makes her consistently sad and depressed, so she starts to think that she is possessed: “Mama. Something dark lurking in me. I feel it from the moment I wake up until the moment I sleep, something sluggish dragging me

under, suffocating me. Why do I feel this way? Do you think I am possessed? A jinn inside me. It must be.” (Rum 345). Thus, she develops a habit of sitting on her window and keep silent to develop a sense of vulnerability, fear, and anxiety disorders fostered by what scholars call ‘Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS)’.

Firstly, in the mid-1970s, scholars founded the term to describe the psychological impacts that happen to women who were victims of domestic violence and assaulted physically, sexually, and psychologically by a close accomplice (Walker 63). VandenBos sees that the syndrome is “the psychological effects of being physically abused by a spouse or domestic partner. The syndrome includes learned helplessness in relation to the abusive spouse, as well as symptoms of post-traumatic stress.” (110). To make it clear, the problem with reporting physical abusive behaviors and occurrences is in the difference between the damage a man may cause to a woman and the violence a woman may use against a man.

Walker sees that women report small incidents like kicking the partner while sleeping as violence, yet men do not admit the damage of their abuse. He additionally gives a model of how violent incidents brought about by men may not consider as battering incidents to the man. Walker's given example is of a man pushing his partner; forcefully, out of his way and she fell down and gets injured. He sees this used difference in gender report as an overwhelming one since certain examinations overestimate the amount of aggressive behavior used by women and belittle the amount used by men in a relationship that contains domestic violence (Ibid 67).

### **3.4 The Effects of Violence in Giving a Voice to the Voiceless**

When Isra touches a change within her personality and reaches self-growth, she finds a timid voice to talk to herself with. After all the tensions she has been put through, she finds out that keeping your thoughts to yourself is damaging, and that you would never change your life by being the quiet person, but rather she needs to act to stop the manipulation of the

society and her fears of Adam. From the very beginning of her life in America, Isra comes to this new country loathing the culture that discriminate women, and wanted to raise her voice to correct all the wrong ideas her mama has taught and treated her with:

Listening to Sarah, Isra wondered if this was what it meant to be an American: having a voice. She wished she knew how to speak her mind, wished she could've said those things to Mama: that girls were just as valuable as boys, that their culture was unfair, and that Mama, as a woman, should've understood that. She wished she could've told Mama that she was sick of always being put second, of being shamed, disrespected, abused, and neglected unless there was cleaning or cooking to be done. That she resented being made to believe she was worthless, just another thing a man could claim at will. (Rum 118).

When Adam chooses to get them out of school to study at an all-girls Islamic one, Isra who has gotten used to his battering decides to stand up for her girls. She accepts that her main aim in life is to secure her daughters' future that is why she decides to save the girls from carrying on a similar fate to hers no matter what:

"I'm afraid for our daughters," she repeated when Adam said nothing. She could tell that he was startled to hear her speak so boldly. She was startled, too—even with all her practice—but enough was enough. How long was she going to let him silence her? No matter what, he was going to beat her—whether she defied him or submitted, whether she spoke up or said nothing. The least she could do was stand up for her daughters. She owed them that. (Rum 360).

The mother now is face-to-face with a drunk husband who does not accept the idea of a woman contradicting him that is why he beats her mercilessly causing her serious wounds on the head and other bruises:

[Adam] crossed the room in three long strides and grabbed her. "Adam, stop! Please. I'm only thinking of our daughters." But he didn't stop. In one smooth movement, he shoved her against the wall and slammed his fists against her body over and over, her stomach, sides, arms, head. Isra shut her eyes, and then, when she thought it was over, Adam grabbed her by the hair and slapped her, the force of his palm knocking her to the floor. "How dare you question me?" Adam said, his jaw quivering. "Never speak of this again." Then he left, disappearing into the bathroom. On her knees on the floor, she

could barely breathe. Blood leaked from her nose and down her chin (Rum 361).

Although the aggressive behavior is getting wilder, Isra finds herself willing to stand up for the girls and help them secure a good life, “But she wiped her face and told herself she would take a beating every night if it meant standing up for her girls” (Ibid 361).

Unfortunately, the environment Isra and Adam lived in is ruled by social prejudices, that is why Fareeda and Khaled did not try to control their violent son and always blame Isra for his moods and misery. The patriarchal mentality controls Khaled and makes him accuse Isra, when she runs out of her bedroom’s window, of running away with some man at night. He turns a blind eye on the violent behavior his son has adopted and keeps seeing the bad on a woman:

“Tell me, where were you going? Who is that man?”

“I—I don’t know. He was just trying to help,” Isra said. “I was scared. My head wouldn’t stop bleeding. ... It won’t stop.”

“That’s no reason to leave the house,” Khaled said. “How do we know you weren’t out with some man?”

“Man? What man?” Isra curled up in the back seat. “I wasn’t with anyone. I swear.”

“And how do we know that? How do we know you didn’t sneak out with some man and now you’re calling us to come get you?”

“I’m telling the truth!” Isra cried. “I wasn’t with anyone. Adam hit me!”

“Of course he did,” Fareeda said, flashing Khaled a look.

“We don’t know anything,” Khaled said. “Only a [whore] leaves her house in the middle of the night.” (Rum 370).

By the end, by connecting a memory Deya recalls of her parents to the last chapter of Rum’s novel, we can assume that Adam killed Isra when he met her and the girls in the subway while she was attempting to run away:

At the end of the tunnel, she could see a bright light, fast approaching. It was the train. She gripped Mama’s leg as it swept by. When the train stopped in front of them, the doors opened, and there stood Adam. He rushed over to them, wrapping her in his arms. Then they went to the park, all six of them, a family (252).

The murder happened in the room Isra watched her daughters grow up and play in, and the one in which she read books and wrote letters, under the roof of the home she dreamed of

finding a different life in. When Deya connects bits and pieces of her recollections of her mother, stories her aunt Sarah tells her, and the unsent letters Isra wrote to Mama in Palestine, she finds out that her mother tried to give them choices she was unable to enjoy, like the right to education, and live in charge of an ordinary life.

Despite of Isra's dreadful death, the novel ends by telling us that she reached a self-growth she has never dreamed of, and her silence caused her daughter Deya to stand up for herself, her sisters, and her dead mother. The author gives the female characters different voices to rebel against the custody and imprisonment of cultural beliefs and unjust male dominance.

## **Conclusion**

By the end of the novel, the main female characters break free from the patriarchal cultural traditions that belittle women. Isra tries to run away with her daughters after finding her voice and discovering self-growth. She finally reaches womanhood and grows out of the shell she has been hiding in all these years just because she has understood that her daughters deserve better chances than she does. Later on, Deya enrolls in college and changes her *naseeb*. She even finds the courage to confront her grandparents and make Fareeda stop forcing her to get married. Fareeda likewise asserts that she has changed, giving an understanding of the possibility of demolishing the old-fashioned cultures and patriarchal ones. We can conclude that the patriarchal practices found in Muslim cultures and within colonized societies have nothing to do with Islam, and that the Arab cultures need to focus on applying Islamic teachings in order to banish patriarchy and free their countries from imperialism.

## General Conclusion

In her novel *A Woman Is No Man*, the Palestinian-American novelist, Etaf Rum, challenged her fears and broke the code of silence to discuss a sensitive issue the Arab world is quiet about. Since she is a diaspora-born Palestinian, Rum acquainted her readers with the start of the Zionist influx and the ethnic cleansing by portraying life in a refugee camp, and the repercussions of the Palestinian Nakba. The novel likewise presented the patriarchy found in both of the homegrown family, and the public life a woman is attempting to get by in.

The first chapter of the present paper attempted to study the Jewish dream of setting up a Jewish country in Jerusalem that denoted the start of a new chapter in the Palestinian history: The Palestinian-Israeli struggle. For sure, this contention started with ruthless slaughters of Palestinian people and a traumatizing displacement; Nakba, that ousted entire families out of their villages, tortured people, and made them live on reviving their hopes of their return's possibility. It also presented Fanon's support to the use of violence and how the colonized always chooses to use it the wrong way by supporting patriarchy and causing both of the private and public traumas a woman would experience.

While writing her debut novel, Rum feared breaking the code of silence, not because she is afraid of judging her people, but because the culture of silence is grabbing a stronghold of societies in the whole Arab world not just in Palestine. The second chapter studied issues related to the body framework of the paper, as well as the effects of the Palestinian Nakba and its consequences on a Palestinian domestic environment rooted in refugee camps. It also studied patriarchy through the narrations of the main female characters, and analyzed the main themes of the novel to conclude that the Palestinian and Palestinian-American characters in Rum's novel gave up to patriarchal ways of thinking. Unfortunately, they could not stand up to protect their land, but found it easier to take this snowballing anger on people weaker than them: women.

The present paper proved that colonialism traumatized people and made them ready to take part in fierce acts; at home or against the oppressor, and made those who did not have the courage to direct violence against the oppressor cherish the patriarchal convictions instead of making a change in their colonized space. It also linked colonialism and domestic abuse that seem like a patriarchal attempt to rehabilitate a man's masculinity after losing their pride by losing their land.

To conclude with, the few previous conducted studies of the novel focused on women's fights against oppressive practices, without linking or viewing Nakba and the colonial oppression as reasons for the change within the Palestinian character and environment of the novel. The researcher hopes that studying the novel as a postcolonial piece of literature and by linking the abuse women are exposed to in it would open doors to further analysis and researches to understand more the tough combination colonialism and patriarchy form.

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## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX A

My entire life I've been told that who I am is not real. I've been told that the birthplace of my parents and grandparents is not real, that Palestine is not real. But we will not be erased.

Before I am an author, bookstore owner, or entrepreneur, I am a Palestinian. I am the daughter of Palestinian immigrants. I am the granddaughter of Palestinians who were robbed of their homes and identities, who have been living in a war zone for over seventy years, in exile or under occupation, displaced from their ancestral land and left stateless. But we will not be erased.

I'm writing this while feeling so powerless. I want to help my people but I don't know how. I feel so ashamed of the tremendous privilege I have being born in this country while Palestinians are living without dignity. My grandfather died this year without ever returning to his land. He died while living in exile in a country he did not belong to. He died never being recognized for who he was: a Palestinian. There is so much pain in my heart knowing this. There is so much work that needs to be done.

What's happening in Palestine is not complicated. It's Israeli military occupation, settler colonialism, and ethnic cleansing. This not about Judaism. Judaism is not Zionism. This is not about religion. This is about humanity. This is about basic human rights.

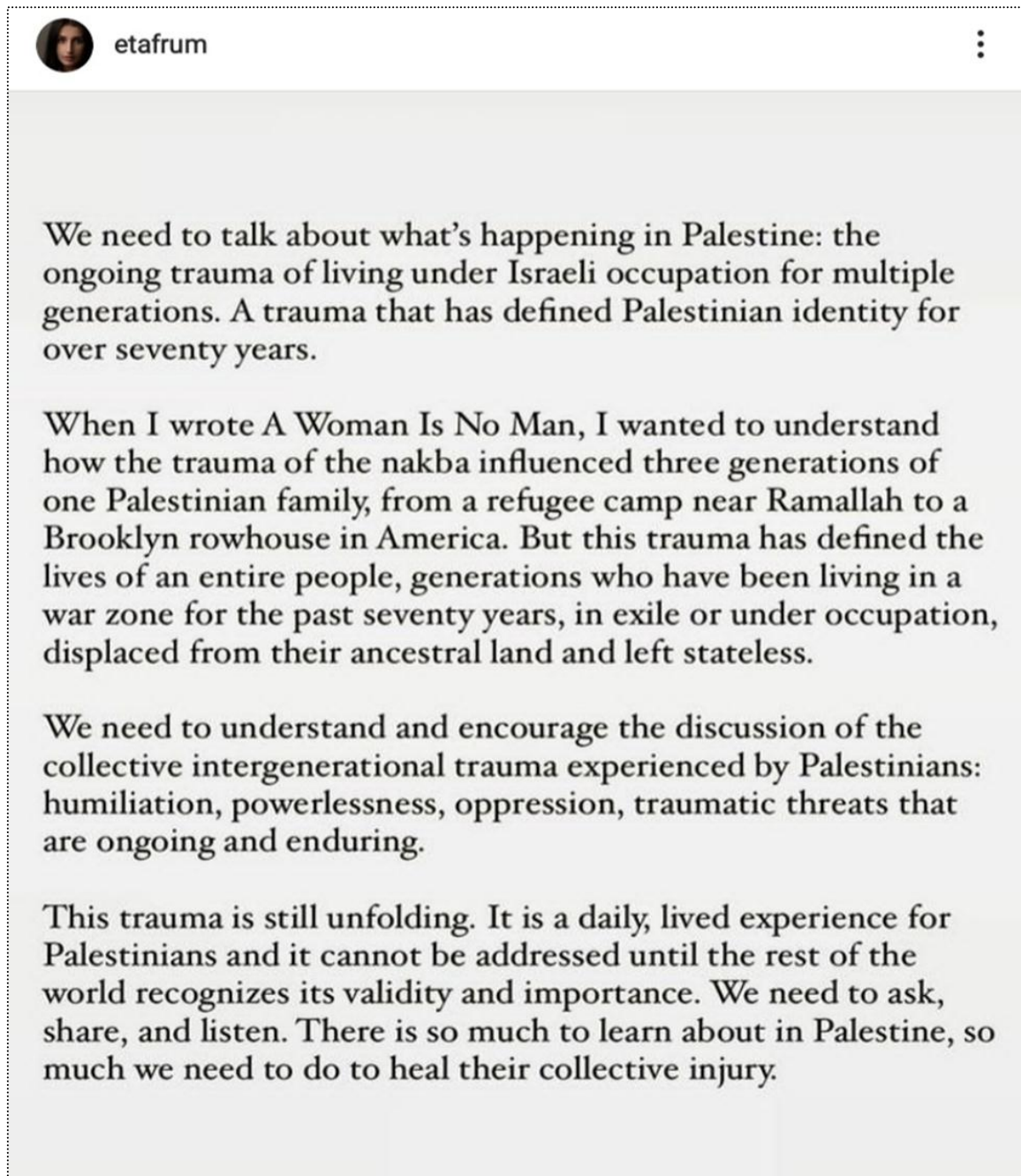
I stand with Palestine. I am filled with shame. I have so much work to do.

#freepalestine #savesheikhjarrah

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## APPENDIX B



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## Appendix C

	Name:	Hometown:	Detention:
01	Abdul Hamid Abu Sorour	Bethlehem	18.04.2016
02	Mohammed Al-Tarayrah	Bani Naim	30.06.2016
03	Mohammed Al-Faqih	Dora Al Khalil	27.07.2016
04	Rami Awartani	Nablus	31.07.2016
05	Misbah Abu Sobeih	Jerusalem	09.10.2016
06	Fadi Al-Qanbar	Jabal Al-Mukabber Jerusalem	08.01.2017
07	Adel Ankush	Deir Abu Mishaal/ Ramallah	16.06.2017
08	Osama Atta	Deir Abu Mishaal / Ramallah	16.06.2017
09	Baraa Ibrahim	Deir Abu Mishaal / Ramallah	16.06.2017
10	Alaa Abu Arab	Gaza	10.30.2017
11	Shadi Al-Hamri	Gaza	10.30.2017
12	Bader Mosbeh	Gaza	10.30.2017
13	Ahmed El Sebakhi	Gaza	10.30.2017
14	Muhammad Al-Buhaisi	Gaza	10.30.2017
15	Ahmed Ismail Jarrar	Jenin	17.01.2018
16	Ahmed Nasr Jarrar	Jenin	06.02.2018
17	Abdul Rahman Bani Fadl	Aqraba	03.18.2018.
18	Mosab Al-Saloul	Gaza	03.30.2018
19	Muhammad al-Rabay'ah	Gaza	03.30.2018
20	Atiya Al-Amawi	Khan Younis	04.30.2018
21	Youssef Al-Amawi	Khan Younis	04.30.2018
22	Abdel Dayem Abu Msameh	Gaza	05.06.2018
23	The prisoner Aziz Owaisat	Jerusalem	20.05.2018
24	Ramzi Al-Najjar	Khan Younis	04.06.2018
25	Khaled Abdel Aal	Rafah	02.07.2018
26	Mohamed Tariq Dar Youssef	Cooper	26.07.2018
27	Hani Al-Majdalawi	Gaza	20.08.2018
28	Wael Al-Jabari	Hebron	09.03.2018
29	Etaf Saleh	Jabalia	09.09.2018
30	Ramzi Abu Yabes	Dheisheh	26.11.2018
31	Saleh Barghouti	Cooper	12.12.2018
32	Ashraf Naalowa	Shweika / Fajr.	13.12.2018
33	The prisoner Fares Baroud	Gaza	06.02.2019
34	Amir Darraj	Kharbatha Al-Misbah	04.03.2019
35	Youssef Anqawi	Beit Sera	04.03.2019
36	Yasser Shweiki	Hebron	13.03.2019
37	Omar Abu Laila	Al-Zawiya/Fajr	20.03.2019
38	Mohamed Abdel Moneim Abdel Fattah	Khirbet Qais	03.04.2019
39	Youssef Wajeeh Sahweil	Abwein	05.31.2019
40	The prisoner Nassar Taqatqa	Beit Fajjar	07.16.2019
41	Hani Abu Salah	Khan Younis	01.08.2019
42	Ahmed Al-Adeni	Deir Al-Balah	10.08.2019
43	Abdullah Al-Ghamri	Deir Al-Balah	10.08.2019
44	Abdullah Al-Hamayda	Deir Al-Balah	10.08.2019
45	Rashad Al-Badini	Deir Al-Balah	10.08.2019
46	Alaa Al-Harimi	Bethlehem	16.08.2019
47	Prisoner Bassam al-Sayeh	Nablus	08.09.2019
48	Raad al-Bahri	Tulkarm	19.10.2019
49	Badawi Khaled Masalma	Beit Awa	30.11.2019

50	Abdullah Abu Al-Nasr	Khan Younis / Fajr	18.12.2019
51	Muhammad Hani Abu Mandeel	Central Governorate / Gaza	01.22.2020
52	Salem Zuwaid Al-Naami	Central Governorate / Gaza	01.22.2020
53	Mahmoud Saeed	Central Governorate / Gaza	01.22.2020
54	Fakhr Abu Zayed	Beitunia / Ramallah	02.17.2020
55	Muhammad Al-Naem	Khan Younis	02.23.2020
56	Sufyan Al-Khawaja	Ni'lin	03.22.2020
57	Ibrahim Hijazi Halasa	As-Sawahrah	04.22.2020
58	Baha Al-Awawda	Deir Samet	05.14.2020
59	Fadi Samara Qad	Abu Qash	05.29.2020
60	Ahmed Erekat	Abu Dis	23.06.2020
61	The prisoner Saadi Ghrabli	Gaza Strip	08.07.2020
62	Ashraf Hassan Atallah Halasa	Al Sawahrah	17.08.2020
63	Muhammad Damer Hariz	Deir Abu Mishaal	20.08.2020
64	Samir Hamidi	Tulkarm	10.10.2020
65	Bilal Rajabeh	Nablus/ Iraq Al-Tayeh	04.11.2020
66	The prisoner Kamal Abu Waer	Jenin	11.11.2020
67	Mahmoud Omar Sadiq Kamil	Qabatiya	12.22.2020
68	Ahed Abd al-Rahman Qawqas	al-Khelil/Beit Ummar	05.01.2021
69	Child Atallah Rayan	Qarawat Bani Hassan-Salfit	01.26.2021
70	Muhammad Hussein Amr	Halhul- Hebron	31.01.2021
71	Abdullah Khaled Mohammed Daabbas	Shweika	07.05.2021
72	Muhammad Ayman Fathi,	Tulkarm Camp	05.07.2021
73	Muhammad Rawhi Hammad	Silwad	05.14.2021
74	Shaher Abu Khadija	Kafr Aqab	05.16.2021
75	Islam Ascetic	Hebron	05.18.2021
76	Wafaa Abdel-Rahman El-Baradei	Hebron	05.19.2021
77	Zuhdi al-Taweel	Kafr Aqab	05.24.2021
78	Muhammad al-Najjar	Nablus	13.05.2021
79	Jamil Al-Amouri	Jenin	10.06.2021

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## ملخص

أدى القمع الاستعماري والصدمات الناجمة عن الحرب إلى تقسيم الشعوب المستعمرة إلى طبقتين: طبقة تؤمن بأن استخدام العنف ضد المستعمر حق مشروع استناداً على وجهات النظر الفانونية، وطبقة أخرى تقوم بتوجيه هذا الغضب إلى إيذاء الناس في مجتمعهم وأسرهم بدلاً من تغيير حياتهم وطرد المستعمر من أراضيهم. عرضت عطا فام في روايتها "المرأة ليست رجلاً" (2019) النكبة الفلسطينية وتأثيراتها على نفسية خالد ويعقوب وفريدة وماما الذين كانوا أطفالاً عندما قام أول غزو صهيوني بإجلاء الناس من منازلهم. من خلال روايتها قامت فام بتعريف القراء على الحياة اليومية للاجئين الفلسطينيين بعد النكبة وفتت الانتباه نحو العوز والظروف المعيشية الرهيبة التي يعاني منها الفلسطينيون منذ عام 1948. فضلاً عن ذلك قامت الكاتبة بكسر حاجز الصمت لتتناول موضوع العنف المنزلي الذي يعتبر مسألة حساسة لا يزال المجتمع العربي يلتزم الصمت تجاهها من خلال تسليط الضوء على الممارسات التي تتعرض لها إساءة الشخصية الأنثوية الرئيسية في الرواية.

ومن خلال استخدام نظريات ما بعد الكولونيالية والسلطة الأبوية قامت هذه الدراسة بتتبع جذور العنف التي تحتويها الشخصية الفلسطينية المستعمرة بتسليط بعض الضوء على الجرائم المرتكبة ضد الفلسطينيين، كما طرحت فكرة ترابط الاستعمار وثقافة السلطة الأبوية وصورت مدى يأس الشخصيات المستعمرة في الرواية مما جعلهم يواجهون ذلك الغضب المتراكم باستخدام العنف بطريقة خاطئة.

**الكلمات الرئيسية:** القمع الاستعماري، العنف، النكبة الفلسطينية، السلطة الأبوية، ما بعد الكولونيالية.