

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
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DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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**OPTION: LITERATURE AND
CIVILIZATION**

Trauma and Displacement in Leila Aboulela's

Minaret

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for a Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

CONDIDATES:

Barkat Iman

Hamrit Fatma Zahra

Supervisor:

Ms . Khaoula Rebahi

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Barkat Iman

Hamrit Fatma Zahra

Ms. Laouidji Karima	University of M'sila	Chairperson
Mr. Sahed Bachir	University of M'sila	Examiner
Ms. Rebahi Khaoula	University of M'sila	Supervisor

Dedication

To my perfect father and my loving mother.

To my brothers and my little sister.

To my dear teacher and friends.

And to my dear uncle Fateh.

-Iman-

Dedication

To my wonderful Mother and my gorgeous Father.

To all my family members and all who loves me.

-Fatma Zahra-

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is for all the panel of examiners who will examine our work.

Abstract

This dissertation explores how trauma is constructed in relation to displacement through Leila Aboulela's selected work, *Minaret* (2005). Aboulela in her novel provides an authentic and rich content to explore the life in Sudan after the British colonization's lefts. This life was characterized by multiple harsh practices rooted in the Sudanese community which led to displacement and trauma experiences among people. This study is actually discussed through a descriptive analytical approach for portraying the issue of displacement and its effects on the subject. The present research aim is up to highlight how the representation of trauma in literature is undertaken and discuss the topic of trauma and how it is formed. Thus, the research is made up of two main chapters. The first chapter is theoretical and deals with a socio-historical and a conceptual framework. The second chapter highly tackles the two themes in which the novel is analyzed. Aboulela presents the experience of a Sudanese woman in a western society, the protagonist Najwa examines an experiences of Migration and traumatic events that are caused by a series of events started with colonization. Therefore, psychoanalysis can serve as a helping guide to analyze the target themes of displacement and trauma. By the end, the study concludes that Trauma and displacement are strongly related in *Minaret* and that psychological traumas can be a result of displacement. Moreover, Aboulela's examining the drastic changes in the characters' lives, and showing how to escape trauma and providing the positive and negative effects of displacement, Make *Minaret*, to some extent, an interesting piece to study the diaspora literature and the effects of displacement on "the other".

Key words: displacement, Trauma, diaspora literature, "the other".

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century saw huge population movements toward western countries; this resulted in creating a new group of people, Diasporas, who are formed as a consequence of political developments, such as the end of colonialism. Therefore, Diasporas, came from the word “diaspora” which is a very broad field of study, its writers are overwhelmed with issues such as colonialism, language, migration, exile, home, memory, and identity. These issues are portrayed in Leila Aboulela’s writings. This research provides a nuanced reading of her second novel *Minaret*.

Due to the movements of migration, literary productions have marked a great shift of attention especially diasporic literature. This latter consists of representing and depicting immigrants’ life in western society where Arab issues cannot be denied or excluded. Accordingly, Arab women writers have shown a great commitment to voice their experiences as migrants in Diaspora. A simple definition of diaspora literature would be works that are written by authors who live outside their native land. The term identifies a work’s distinctive geographic origins.

Leila Aboulela who is a Sudanese- Egyptian- English writer who was born in Cairo of a Sudanese father and an Egyptian mother in 1964. She grew up in Cairo, moved to Khartoum where she received her education and graduated in 1985. In 1990, she moved to Scotland where she started to write while looking after her children. Between 2000 and 2012, she lived in Jakarta, Dubai, and Doha, but she is currently living in Aberdeen, where she wrote her second novel *Minaret*. Her work is heavily influenced by her own experiences as an immigrant to the United Kingdom and the hardships she experienced during the transition.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This dissertation investigates the concept of displacement and trauma and how they are used by Aboulela in her work, linking from the form to the content. Therefore, through an analytical reading, the current study aims at highlighting the diasporic elements in *Minaret* by means of exploring its major themes: migration, racial discrimination, trauma experience. It also attempts to demonstrate the damaging effects of displacement on the psychology of the characters.

This review aims at identifying the multiple works done by scholars so as to study and analyse Aboulela's *Minaret*. This is in order to justify the gap that is to be filled by this study. Each scholar has chosen to examine *Minaret* from a particular point of view. Compared to other African writers and novelists such as Chinua Achebe and Ngugi Wa Thiongo, the Sudanese writer Leila Aboulela has not been given much attention from literary scholars and critics. A number of researches have examined her works. As soon as she was long listed for the orange prize, many scholars and researchers have become interested in studying the literary works of the little-known writer Leila Aboulela.

In 2016, the African scholars, Boukharri, Sarra and Achiri Samya in their Master dissertation "*sometimes a shift makes me remember: displacement, identity and religion in Leila Aboulela's Minaret*", considers *Minaret* as a kind of migration literature work, analyzing Leila Aboulela's *Minaret* (2005) in a way that evokes culture, identity, and religion for the sake of finding migrants' lost identity after being a subject to displacement effects. By, questioning the reality behind the process of the cultural change expressed in the novel and its outcomes on Muslim migrants.

While many researchers tried to study *Minaret* from another angle dealing with the theme of trauma, such as Lahrach Lamia, in her Ph.D. dissertation entitled "*Trauma Narrative and Stylistic study in Don DeLillo's Falling man and Leila Aboulela's Minaret*" she try to discuss trauma as not a preserve of immediate postcolonial and colonial imaginations. telling that

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modern expositions in certain post-independence countries give little attention to colonialism as well as its impacts, but they do other forms of trauma. These may include individual and personal trauma of loss, exile and immigration. Since trauma, theory has been developed in a specifically western framework.

The main question that shapes this dissertation is in what way trauma is related to displacement . In order to answer this latter question, a number of sub-questions should be posed. This research demonstrates how Leila Aboulela manifested Trauma and displacement in her novel *Minaret*. This study also examines the reasons that led the protagonist Najwa to fell down in a Trauma, and how could she overcome it. Finally, a demonstration of how *Minaret* can be used as a guide to study the consequences of colonization on the colonized psychologically. To answer the questions raised in this study, we subscribe to use the descriptive analytical approach.

One of the motives behind the choice of this work is that diaspora fiction is an interesting genre of literature. More importantly, Aboulela's *Minaret* is a novel, which tackles issues of our modern-day life. The issues of displacement, trauma, and identity are part of the everyday life.

The objectives behind this study is primarily, to highlight the author's use of Trauma in relation to displacement in her novel *Minaret*. secondly, to analyze the way in which this relation has created the possibility of coexistence between the secular and religious life.

The work is divided into two main chapters, the first chapter, consists of two main headlines, the first headline provides a socio-historical background relevant of the selected work, including Sudan: a post-colonial era, second Sudanese civil war, and immigration movement. The second headline is about the theoretical background this one is dedicated to offer some pieces of information about displacement; trauma and its emergence as a concept related to displacement.

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The second chapter consists of the analytical part of the study in which the novel is subjected to thematic analysis.

**CHAPTER ONE HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND
THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

Introduction

The opening chapter of this dissertation introduces the background for our research. It offers a historical context to the novel which is about to be studied, Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*. Providing historical context to the novel goes hand in hand with the theoretical approaches to apply. Therefore, an overview about the psychoanalysis is essential too.

Secondly, as a prerequisite for this research, the historical context in which *Minaret* is set is mandatory. *Minaret* is written in English and published in (2005). The settings of the novel are located in the two cities: Khartoum and London from 1984 to 2005. This Part manifests the different and main events and circumstances that occurred in the period of writing the novel *Minaret*, showing the history of Sudan at that period and the shared elements with the events of the novel.

Finally, however, the second section is about the theoretical background this one is dedicated to offer some pieces of information about displacement; trauma and its emergence as a concept related to displacement.

I. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

II.1 Sudan: a post-colonial era

Similar to many former European colonies in Africa, the official history of Sudan has been written mainly by Europeans – and this European colonial discourse theorizes that African history, unlike European history, was a product of external influences.

The Democratic Republic of Sudan is the largest but least known of the MENA countries (Collins3-20). Its size and substantial economic potential have been obscured by endless

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conflicts in the region. By 1896, the British and French governments both dispatched expeditions to seize control of the Nile headwaters. Following the occupation of Egypt in 1881, the British opposed Egyptian requests to mount a military campaign to regain control of Sudan, not wanting Egypt to incur expenses that would endanger repayment of debts to European financiers. The British decision in 1895 to reconquer Sudan with Egyptian troops and financing reflected the British need to consolidate colonial control and prevent advances by other powers that would endanger their investments in Africa, including Egypt. (Baher 1)

In 1899, Britain and Egypt reached an agreement under which a governor-general appointed by Egypt with British consent ran Sudan (Humphries 644). In effect, Sudan was governed as a British possession (Henehen 92-116). Britain did not occupy Sudan. Rather, it instituted a “divide-and-rule” policy. The UK and Egypt ruled present-day Sudan and South Sudan through a dual colonial government known as the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1899–1956). Britain was the senior partner in this administration, as Egypt itself was politically and militarily subordinate to Britain (Searcy2). During most of the colonial period (1899-1956); Sudan was ruled as two Sudans. The British separated the predominantly Muslim and Arabic-speaking north from the multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multilingual south.

The British had separated the northern and southern Sudanese from each other culturally and socially without separating them politically. As a result, when the British abdicated, the northerners were likely to attempt to assimilate the southerners by force. This, in turn, has rendered a southern resistance movement inevitable. The southern provinces, sidelined during British rule, continued to be marginalized and underdeveloped in independent Sudan controlled by the northerners. Regional differences resulted in a deeply divided and economically differentiated Sudan—an Arab-dominated north, economically and politically stronger than the underdeveloped African south.

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In the end, the British were powerless to impede the coming of independence, but played a major part in preventing either pro-Egyptian or Mahdist forces taking over the country. Holt and Daly remark that the Sudanese greeted independence with some ambivalence, '[which] was a reflection of the continuity not only of the system of government, but also the tenor of politics'... (R Bassil 89–118).

In February 1953, the United Kingdom and Egypt concluded an agreement providing for Sudanese self-government and self-determination (Jal57-155). The transitional period toward independence began with the inauguration of the first parliament in 1954. On 18 August 1955, a revolt in the army in Torit Southern Sudan broke out, (O'Fahey 94-95) which although quickly suppressed, led to a low-level guerrilla insurgency by former Southern rebels, and marked the beginning of the First Sudanese Civil War (O'Fahey 98). On 15 December 1955, the Premier of Sudan Ismail al-Azhari announced that Sudan would unilaterally declare independence in four days' time (Spaulding 24-25). On 19 December 1955 the Sudanese parliament, unilaterally and unanimously, declared Sudan's independence (Loimeier 152). The British and Egyptian governments recognized the independence of Sudan on 1 January 1956 (Spaulding 382). The United States was among the first foreign powers to recognize the new state.

In the postcolonial period in Sudanese history, the country saw a mixture of civilian and military rule from 1956–1964. During the first three years of Sudanese independence, declining cotton prices on the world market revealed the vulnerability of Sudan's dependency on a monocultural economy to external market pressures. The dominant political paradigm at this time is what form Sudanese independence will take.

Since its political independence in 1956, Sudan has witnessed the rise of armed ethnic conflict and regional protest movements that have resulted in great human suffering and the largest number of refugees and displaced peoples in Africa (Idris 26-324) .These protest

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movements have challenged the legitimacy of the Independent Sudanese state, led by Arabized and Islamized elites at the pinnacle of power, to extend and define citizenship rights and responsibilities. the history of Sudan has been tarnished by internal conflict, such as the First Sudanese Civil War (1955–1972), the Second Sudanese Civil War (1983–2005), the War in Darfur (2003–2010), culminating in the secession of South Sudan on 9 July 2011—after which another civil war took place therein (2013-2020).

Actually, the histories and identities of African societies were imagined and represented in opposition of those of Europe. The rich precolonial social and political histories of African communities were either ignored or misrepresented as prehistoric vestiges of “darkness”. Medieval Arab writers and later Europeans shared the same perspective about the history of Africa. Both of these entities presented the peoples of Sudan as comprising two different racial, cultural, historical, and regional categories. People of northern Sudan have been seen as “oriental”, while people of southern Sudan have been presented as “people without history”. Northern Sudanese were deemed “Arab,” Muslim, and civilized, whereas southern Sudanese were considered “black,” heathen, and primitive. These geographical, racial, and cultural identities were, however, products of historical processes, namely, colonialism.

II.2 Second Sudanese civil war (1983-2005)

After gaining its independence from Britain, Sudan's history has centered on a set of conflicts, these conflicts were referred to as the ‘Sudanese Civil war’, which indicates mainly a series of separate conflicts, including the first, and the second civil war and the south Sudanese civil war.

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The north-south ethnic war or what is called the second civil war, was a turning point in Sudan's history, it was a conflict from 1983 to 2005 between the central Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. It was largely a continuation of the First Sudanese Civil War of 1955 to 1972. Although it originated in southern Sudan, the civil war spread to the Nubba Mountains and the Blue Nile. It lasted more than two decades, starting from 1983 until 2005. The conflict has had tremendous effects on Sudanese government and people.

In 1983, Numeiry introduced Sharia law, which included punishment by amputation. That year the second war began in the south, this time fought by the Sudan people's Liberation Army (SPLA). The war is still progress and has probably resulted in some 150 000 deaths, but again no one knows exactly how many (O'balance viii).

The result of the Sudanese civil war were numerous, most importantly the division of Sudan. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2011 has ended the armed conflict. However, The whole country was affected negatively at different levels, the constant conflict has exhausted Sudan's economy, leading to the disruption of development over half a century. On the other hand, it has led to the unification of national identity; the country has also faced critical living standards and huge movement of migration due to harsh conditions.

A chief study of Sudan's civil wars is that historically there were two Sedans: An Arab, Muslim, dominant North, and a distinctly less developed and traditional African South. Although much of the fighting is about political autonomy and access to the South's rich oil resources, the fighting was also about ethnic and religious identity and what it meant to be a fully enfranchised citizen (Paterson 10).

Sudan was, and still, suffering from linguistic, ethnic and religious pluralism. The Sudanese long experience confirmed the impossibility of unity between the north and the south.

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It was about two millions victims of the second civil war, since the government has not succeeded in matchmaking the manifestations of pluralism. The British colonization sought to the division of the country into two parts the north and the south, in order to generalize Christianity and the English language.

The period between 1983 and 2005 witnessed a very cruel crimes including killing, raping, kidnapping, underage arming, town's distraction, bombing, and unforced displacing and property grapping. Twenty-one years of tension led Sudanese people to migrate towards neighboring or European countries. Most victims were civilians, whereas the ones, who were not killed, were dead by starvation. The conflict was between the central government in Khartoum, and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). It started in southern Sudan and spreaded out to other places including the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile region. In 1978 presedent Gaafer Nimeiry wanted to control the newly-discovered oil fields located in on the border region between north and south Sudan. In response, the SPLA, led by Ghon Grang, was formed to fight the central governmentin Khartoum (Momodu 1).

It has been mentioned in an article on *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Nations* that the government fighting against people in Sudan, didn't only lead to the flee of Sudanese to Kenya and Uganda, as well as Ethiopia and central Africa -where they have settled as refugees- but also encouraged the migration movement of highly trained and qualified people outside of Sudan. (2).

The outcomes of the war caused big distortions in: economics, society, education, policy and even people's psyches. The innocent victims were forced to choose between disastrous alternatives: if they flee, they lose their homes, their livelihoods, and their communities; if they stay, they watch these things being destroyed around them. In fact, women and children were the biggest affected. Hunger and disease are widespread and immunization programs had been

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curtailed. Very few school-age children were receiving an education, and children were subjects for kidnapping, arming and abuse from soldiers (El Nagar 9-11).

Thus, Sudan second civil war is seen as one of the longest civil wars in Africa. The Sudanese government continuous attacks and pressure pushed Sudanese people to leave their homelands. Therefore, Migration and displacement were two significant phenomena that characterised Sudan on the aftermath of the war, millions have become refugees in different places around the world, others have been exiled towards European states .However, all of them shared one purpose; the search for security, peace, better living standards and life opportunities.

I.3 From migrants to citizens: Arab migrations into the UK in the 21st century

Migration has been used by postcolonial theorists as a “metaphor” for displacement and is viewed as “a site for interrogating fixity in identity” (Naguib 22). According to Salman Rushdie, one’s displacement either linguistically or socially has given him a new perspective on life and reality. The migrant recognizes that “reality is an artefact” and refuses all “absolute forms of knowledge” (23). To put it simply, the migrant who has come across diverse cultures has no certainty about the things around him.

The 20th and 21st centuries, for instance, share a link of ‘migration’ that is originated long time ago in History, activated more in the 20th century, and boosted intensely within the 21st century, which knew a unique shift in migrations from the Arab countries. The Arab migration to Britain is not a recent phenomenon; rather it had its origins long time ago. During the Middle Ages and within a time when crusades and successful Islamic expansion coincided, Britain and the Islamic world’s encounters and interactions speeded up.

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Arabs form a great part of Muslims migrating to Britain. "*Britain's First Muslims*" is a book written by Fred Halliday that tries to investigate historically the First Muslim and Arab existence in Britain. According to Halliday, the 1970's and 1980's marked a pick for Arab migrants who were about half a million people (1). This increase, in fact, explains a necessity and an increasing need in the immigrants' homelands. Europe at that time was the only opened gate for the ex-colonized countries. At this point, Halliday mentioned the Egyptian and the Iraqi revolutions respectively in 1952 and 1958 which were a model for the involvement of the Arab activists from both countries in Britain(2).

Accordingly, the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer nations are formed not only on the colonized land but also on the colonizer's one especially within the post-colonial period. Most of the political refugees from the Arab world found their escape in London. It was their minaret in Europe that assures protection and liberation to act independently from the persecution they met in their mother countries. This view is expressed in Halliday's words as, "London has been a heaven for refugees from all over the world since the early nineteenth century and few of the upheavals in the Arab world can have failed to contribute to the number of political refugees in Britain"(2). In addition to this category of Arab migrants, "Britain does not have a moral duty to accept immigration". This is one of the starting statements written by Anthony Browne in his book "*Do we need mass immigration?*" Just before this, Browne claimed that his intention is not to write an anti-immigration report yet his book cannot deny the opposite.

Despite all the shortcomings, that mass-immigration may bring to the host country, one cannot disregard the advantages and the benefits that legal and organized immigrants may add to a country that is not their original one. This good side can easily overwhelm the negative one. What proves this view is simply the same stable positions of both countries: the migrated from and the migrated to countries. Immigrants mostly leave their place of origin because of the luck

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of opportunities, poverty, and improper life conditions, and logically this makes their homeland on the bottom of the developing pyramid. Regardless to the immigrants effective or ineffective integration in the exotic societies, being on the top of the pyramid had never changed for those leading Western countries.

What is interesting about the British politics is that it is open to people who may agree or disagree in all the debatable issues that matters the country. In Browne's report, the *Financial Times* along with *Time magazine*, immigration to Britain seems very welcomed and fruitful to Britain. , The *Financial Times* declares that 'Europe needs immigrants—skilled and unskilled'. *Time Magazine* informs its readers that large-scale immigration to Europe is 'inevitable', that Europe cannot survive without it" (Browne 1). Despite Browne's real intention behind including these two claims, it is true that Britain needed immigration to give it a huge work force and to fill its needs in Science, Technology, Industry and other fields. Immigrants can do any type of work without complaining because of their massive need. For that, Britain used them to fill all the 'unwanted' job positions that the British themselves looked down.

Overall, there is a reciprocal exchange for both, the British Government and the migrants residing in Britain. The migrants are known by waves and classified by phases. The same source of this report believes that migrating Muslim communities in Britain came in four stages. The last of which include the newest migrant wave of those originally born in Britain. This generation was preceded by the migration of the weakest classes in any society: women and children. Before them, a wave of what the report named "chain migration" that formed the inexpert labor of migrant's community. These three phases came after the first Muslim migrants who were the forerunners of the present Muslim migration community (8).

Following the country's independence, Sudan was characterized by several conflicts political instability, economic and environmental degradation, lack of sustainable forms of

livelihoods, famine and population displacement. These factors, behind first and second civil wars, resulted insignificant waves of internal and international displacement and made Sudan an important emigration, transit and immigration country, both for economic and forced migrants (Cantisani 16-18).

II. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

II.1 An overview about displacement

Migration, displacement, and exile are prevalent themes in postcolonial writings. Whether in migration, displacement, or exile there is a journey from one place to another. This journey, however, can be done either voluntarily or involuntarily depending on the reasons that push the person to change his place. During this journey, the migrant, the displaced, or the exile encounters many questionings related to his/ her identity and home.

Sociologically speaking, Migration, in its most basic definition, means moving permanently from one place of residence to another without actually crossing national borders. Thus, migration is distinct from immigration, which refers to the permanent movement of people from one state to another. By migrants, we mean refugees, immigrants, and anyone who takes up permanent residence somewhere other than their home country.

The concept of displacement can be studied from multiple angles. Originally, displacement takes place at the geographical level when a person is forced to move from one place to another one, which is unfamiliar to him. Nevertheless, displacement is not only about a loss and about absence of a place, but also, a loss of context. This context is one that is located physically and non-physically in our daily life. It is the one, which makes the person able to interact and communicate with others. The person feels at ease and at home due to this context.

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In his article *The Meaning of a Place in a World of Movement*, anthropologist David Turton argues that: “Displacement is not only about the loss of a place, and the pain and bereavement this entails. It is also, and inevitably, about the struggle to make a place in the world” (21). Turton believes that displacement also involves the construction of a new place with characteristics of the former place, in which the displaced maintains links to imagined or real places of belonging and recognizes the new places based on familiar aspects.

Along with this displacement, the displaced starts to raise questions about the real meaning of home. According to Boym, home becomes an issue for the person only when he loses it. As soon as we “experience the first failure of homecoming”, we commence to ponder the connotations of home (Naguib 31). Douglas Porteous claims that only travellers are able to understand the meaning of home due to their temporary sense of homelessness which pushes them to try to recreate it. Prior to migration, any person gives a fixed and simple definition to home as the dwelling or the house in which one lives and does not think outside the “limits and borders of her or his experience”.

Home for a migrant is something more than a place of residence. Kabachnik et al. explain that home is thought of as a place of security and belonging (5). Everyone needs home so as to strive and go through the difficulties of life. It is the comfort zone where we can find ourselves in harmony with others. Home is “dense with sensual experiences: specific sounds, colors, smells, shapes, conversations, and practices that distinguish it from other places” (Leontis 14). Home should not be condensed to merely a place of residence rather it is supposed to be where the heart is. One can feel and live the sense of home even when he is distant from his place of residence.

Therefore, Home is a place to which one develops a strong feeling of belonging. It is “an inner geography where the ache to belong finally quits, where there is no sense of ‘otherness’,

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where there is, at last, a community” (Friedman 189-212). Feeling at home, is to be on familiar ground; to be at ease; to be relaxed and comfortable, and to be in harmony with the surroundings.

Whenever we discuss the theme of migration or displacement, we must discuss the issue of memory. This latter has been used by migrants as a healing tool to recall their past times. Leyla, Al-Maleh, sees that “memory becomes a pretext that frames the content of the authors’ experiences, and a pretext to construct a dual or juxtaposed picture of their mental and emotional make up” (37). When postcolonial authors write about their migration experiences, they, like any other migrant, use memory as a form of therapy.

As soon as migrants move to a new area, they start to build their new home. The first real significance of home results from the contact between subject and place; Home is the result of ongoing meaning investment in an environment that people personalize and identify with through some degree of control.

One major element in constructing the sense of home is time. The subject’s gradual investment in space alters the experience of place and hence creates a home in the new location. Logically, the novel area in which the migrant has just reached cannot yet be considered as home due to the lack of the two essential elements in creating the meaning of home: time and familiarity. The migrant attempts to escape his sense of homelessness either by “familiarizing the unfamiliar” and therefore constructing a home in his new space or by becoming nostalgic to what Marcel Proust calls “times past” and thus believing that home is found only in the place they left behind.

Migrants, especially those who were obliged to escape their homelands, are much attached to their home. They “keep an idealized image of home as a paradise they were forced to flee, and never manage to entirely adopt their new dwellings. As such, they share feelings of solitude,

estrangement, loss, and longing”. This idealization of home is considered one of the most important characteristics of the migrant culture.

II.2 Emergence of the concept of trauma in relation to displacement

An estimated 45.2 million people in the world have been displaced from their homes and have fled to another country (Edwards 1-2). Some are driven by poverty or persecution, and others are displaced by natural disasters (1-2). They flee their homelands in search of safety and security; however, in their host country, many are confronted with significant challenges. People who are displaced from their homelands often struggle with ongoing poverty, poor living conditions, economic exploitation, discriminatory treatment, and even homelessness (Reed 250-265).

In addition, many mental health difficulties are highlighted among those populations such as High levels of post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, as well as other mental health issues such as psychosomatic disorders, grief related disorders and crises of existential meaning (Copping et al 53-60), Actually, For many who are displaced, trauma is central to their experience prior to, during, and post-migration (Foster 71, 153-170).

This high prevalence of mental health problems is not surprising. Refugees are typically exposed to a multitude of traumas. Despite the fact that its name comes from the Greek word for "wound," or "trauma," as it is presently defined, the subject itself is difficult to discuss.

Trauma is a frequently disputed topic across all disciplines and extensively understood in numerous forms, a specific definition and meaning of trauma looks inconclusive and imprecise.

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Though the specific definition of the phrase trauma varies depending on the context and discipline chosen, all sides of the discussion agree that if trauma is a wound, it is most certainly one of a very special sort.

In general, the literature explained and examined the factors, which influence trauma among refugee populations both pre-, during - and post-migration. The trauma experienced by refugees during these three stages of migration has been referred to in the literature as the “triple trauma paradigm” (TTP), where “through each of these stages the refugee or asylum seeker experiences and re-experiences the traumatic events that vary during each stage and depend on the particular adverse circumstances and situations they confront”. (Ringler et al 82)

It is not only what is lost in leaving one’s home but similarly the migration experience itself which necessarily disrupts family and cultural systems and separations from the family and ethnic community, Arriving in Europe, and often not necessarily to the country of their choice, some refugees arrive and are fighting to stay, yet some soon discover that things are not quite as expected and realize they must either go back or proceed to another destination (Gkionakis 73-79). Nathan argues that the experience of displacement is necessarily traumatic—as the “cultural envelope” can no longer hold traumatic, non-elaborated or psychically ‘indigestible’ experiences. (75)

Refugees and migrants who come to Europe declare that they experiences difficulties in post-migration life , difficulties which were significantly associated with a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder , The most common difficulties in life were found to be “the feeling of uncertainty and fear for the future”, and, to a lesser extent, other difficulties such a widespread sense of injustice and feeling unable to control events.

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After months or years of suspended and uncertain lives, this is a period where refugees are required to quickly adjust and integrate into their new environment. During this transition, many may lose access to benefits (accommodation, social services, financial aid, etc.). As refugees, they are now expected to fully participate in a new sociocultural environment and locally reconstruct their lives, all the while maintaining their cultural identity. During this stage, new stressors specifically related to this stage of the migration journey may be encountered. Saechao and colleagues , for example, identify six primary stressors during the post-migration phase: economic hardships, discrimination, acculturation due to language differences, enculturation, parenting differences, and finding suitable employment.

As noted by Goguikian Ratcliff (2009), a plethora of studies exist which convincingly demonstrate that psychological, social and cultural difficulties encountered in the host country after arrival have a more significant impact on mental health than pre-migration exposure to traumatic events.(185–196), Therefore, Post-migration experiences, such as unemployment, insecure residency, fear of repatriation, and social discrimination have similarly been shown in the literature to be significantly correlated with mental problems in refugees.

In a recent review of the literature, Kartal and Kiripoulos (2016) note that the relationships between traumatic events, migration, and mental health outcomes upon arrival in the host country are complex and poorly understood. Acculturative stress within the sample of refugees they examined was associated with greater experiences of cultural loss and nostalgia. This loss itself was found to exacerbate Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms. They suggest that the influence of post-migratory demands on mental health differs not only based on the individual's acculturation process alone.

It also depends on the characteristics of the local context reflecting the acculturative preferences of the host society.(11-287) The authors highlight these findings as a confirmation

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of Berry's (Berry, 1997, 2003; Sam & Berry, 2010) acculturation model, which delineates the mechanisms through which the host society affects the acculturation process of refugees by imposing either encouraging or less desirable acculturative strategies, which in turn influences mental health.(Berry 5-34; Berry 17-37) This model has been confirmed elsewhere in the literature: multiple comparative studies examining correlations between the post-migration context and refugees from the same country of origin yet who have resettled in different countries convincingly demonstrate the significant effect of post-migratory factors on symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder , Kartal and Kiropoulos (2016) assessed a sample of 138 Bosnian refugees resettled in both Austria and Australia. After controlling for age, sex, and exposure to traumatic events, acculturative stress associated with post-migratory experiences predicted severity of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Acceptance of the host society matters. (11-287)

In the process of migration, refugees suffer numerous losses, such as economic stability, familiar surroundings, and relationships that hinder their ability to thrive in their new place of settlement. The literature highlights one of the most powerful stressors experienced by refugees after arrival in the host country as being social isolation, typically associated with ongoing family separation, loss, and a breakdown in familiar social and community structures.

The literature also indicates that while refugees of both genders are exposed to stressful events to a similar degree, twice as much women develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in response to these experiences (Alpak et al 45-50). however, Tekin and colleagues (2016), have noted that gender differences in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder prevalence may simply be a question of how trauma manifests: their study revealed that women with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, reported flashbacks, hyper vigilance, and intense psychological distress due to reminders of trauma more frequently than men, whereas men with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder reported feelings of detachment or estrangement from others more frequently than

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women. Whether or not women experience more symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or whether they just experience it differently, remains open to debate. (56-285) However, the literature consistently highlights gender as a significant factor influencing the experiences and subsequent mental health status of refugee women.

Contemporary writings in some post-independence nations (in Africa and elsewhere) are no longer concerned with colonialism and its continuing ramifications, but with other forms of trauma such as individual and personal trauma of loss, exile and immigration as is the case for the novel examined in this thesis, which is Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*. Since trauma theory has been developed in a specifically Western framework, we intend to extend the field of study through an exploration of this African text.

Conclusion

The first chapter of this thesis addressed the historical context in which the novel was written, first discussing Sudan as a postcolonial era, then moving on to the second Sudanese civil war, which altered the history of Sudan and its people. The trend that caused the majority of people to 'displace' to Britain. Second, we discussed displacement and trauma, as well as the relationship between the two concepts. And, how trauma is presented as a result of the significant challenges and mental health difficulties caused by displacement.

CHAPTER TWO
STUDY AND ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL

Introduction

The second chapter of this dissertation is purely analytical; it offers a postcolonial reading of Aboulela's *Minaret* (2005). First, this chapter discusses how displacement is portrayed as a result of the conditions that the country was going through. It clarifies the protagonist's experience of migration. It also explains how Britain in which the novel is set presents a fertile ground for Muslim stereotypes and otherness. Moreover, this chapter depicts the displacement as a traumatic experience for the protagonist in which displacement causes Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

I. Displacement as a consequence of postcolonial and political conditions

The colonization process expanded over the twentieth century to include many different nations all over the world. For instance, Sudan cannot be excluded from that process. By the end of that century almost all of Europe had let go of their colonial rule altogether. Even if this might seem like good news in terms of one's freedom and sovereignty, the long period of colonial rule had quite some negative effects on the post-colonial societies. Colonial rule has left its marks on all the post-colonies, however yet, the harsh effect on Sudanese people is the loss of their unification as the country split up and it is no longer unified. In *Minaret*, Leila Aboulela sheds the light on the postcolonial and political effects of colonialism on Sudan that lead to displacement.

Minaret is mainly concerned with the story of Najwa, a Sudanese woman from an upper class family. She is young, shallow, modern girl whose life is completely influenced by the western values; she wears revealing cloths, goes to clubs and parties, and listens to western

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songs. Her father, an important official in the government, provides for his family a happy secure luxurious westernized way of life until they are forced to flee their home country due to political turmoil and seek refuge in London. Her father is arrested and executed on charges of “embezzle [ment]” (Minaret 95) and “corruption” (*Minaret* 58). The author argues that Najwa's displacement is linked to the legacy of colonialism, which has contributed to the political instability and economic hardship faced by Sudan.

Migration, or particularly displacement, before being a cause it is rather a result. According to the case study of this dissertation, it is a result of the change that happened to Sudan society due to colonialism and the print that makes it no longer the same. After the British colonialism had left, Sudan totally changed it became separated between south and north this change expands to many levels: Politics, education, economy and society itself. The change first happens in Politics, then, it expands to touch the economy and social structures. In her novel, Aboulela draws attention to the political reflection of postcolonial Sudan and the still persistent dichotomies between East and West. Aboulela reveals the consequences of the British colonialism resulting in a fragmented postcolonial culture that is politically, economically and socially unstable.

Politically, Leila Aboulela's *Minaret* is a valid portrayal of the real situation that the Sudanese government faced in that period. Colonialism has made Sudan a fragmented nation with competing political ideologies which has led to the successive coup d'étres. The system is corrupt because after colonialism the rule moved from masters to natives. After the independence of Sudan, most of the leaders were chosen according to their status and position in the society, their money and their land ownership. They never cared about their education or background in the past. This reality, which, if it indicates anything, indicates only the capitalist and imperialist thought that prevailed in society at that time and the corruption of the regime in

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Sudan and of their adherence to the capitalist and imperialist system that Britain left before leaving Sudan.

Najwa's father who is presented in the novel as a high-ranking government official and very close to the president of Sudan is one of those who has been chosen without any qualifications to the position they are filling. "think of your father, kids. I started out with nothing, not a father, not a good education, nothing. Now I am going to have my own job "(80). The father is presented as a hard worker since his childhood. After he meets his wife, a dramatic change happens to his life whereby he finds, counting on her aristocratic origins, a bourgeoisie family that lives under the best life conditions in Khartoum. This shift from a poor to a wealthy man helped him get a prestigious position in the government. Actually, Najwa the protagonist started to think about her father work, she says, "[h]e had married above himself, to better himself. His life story was of how he moved from a humble background to become manager of the President's office via marriage into an old wealthy family. I didn't like him to tell it, it confused me. I was too much like my mother" (16). This confession of Najwa about what she knows about her father makes her neither proud of her origins nor comfortable with the fancy life she lives in. The shift from a poor to a wealthy man did not last for a long time. The government, which this father is one of its icons, is accused of corruption and many other serious charges.

Bob-Milliar indicates that the "Western democracy during the colonial era was dualistic, selective and very oppressive... Most African leaders choose the socialist path of development with catastrophic results. Most African states had to fight for freedom from people who claimed to be the champions of democracy."(Miliar1) Thus, when Sudan gained its independence, there was no coherent political ideology; instead, competing ideologies- each seeking power over the interest of the nation. The political atmosphere is the theater on which these conflicting ideologies took place.

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Anti-government movements have been created, each embracing a different ideology and claiming the best for the post-independent nation. The Sudanese society, of this novel, was challenging a very serious period that knew political divisions between who supported the government and who opposed it. Anwar is an example of a radical opponent for Najwa's father; "He probably hated me because I had heard him speaking in a *nadwa* with wit and scorn of the bourgeoisie, Landowning families, capitalists, the aristocracy; they were to blame, he said, for the mess our country was in." (*Minaret* 10), he is an active communist in the university, he is a member of the Democratic Front, the students' branch of the Communist Party. Anwar believes that the bourgeoisie, Landowning families, capitalists, the aristocracy are the ones who should be blamed for the country bad status. He attacks Najwa's father and accuses him of corruption, as he confronts her: "He is taking advantage of his post government, he takes commissions on every deal the Government makes with a foreign company." (42), Anwar is pointing out over and over the fact that Najwa's father was a corrupt political man could not leave Najwa peaceful.

The economic level, in accordance with the political one, which, as it appears in the novel, is also on its way to collapse, due to the capitalist ideology that Britain left behind. Najwa's economic professor is a second example of those who are against the government outstanding ideologies, in the first part of the novel, when Najwa attends a session of economics the professor mentions in the lesson that Rostow's take off is one of the stages that he mentions in his theory titles "Stages of Economic Growth " with the subtitle " A Non-Communist Manifesto," it is overtly political. Rostow is fiercely anti-communist; he models his theory after western capitalist countries, which has industrialized and urbanized. (Jacobs 1). Moreover, "Rostow argues that through increased investment, increased exposure to modernized, Western society, and changes in traditional culture and values, societies will become more highly developed." (1).

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Simply, Rostow wants to popularize the idea that backward countries should follow the example of Western countries in order to become as civilized as them. It is the case in Sudan at that period, where many Western ideas prevail in society, the many Western-like parties and traditions that colour the Sudanese society especially among the rich families that rule the country, such as Najwa's family, whose lives and thoughts are governed by urbanization, in which Najwa's father wants to think only about power and position. His only concern is to secure a wealthy life for his family, exactly like the British one. This is transmitted Thought to his children. During the lesson, we find that Najwa understands what the professor says because the idea that the professor is talking about represents Najwa's current westernized life. Moreover, she wishes that her brother, who is influenced by the life of the West, is attending with her. For him: "we had been better off under the British and it was a shame that they left" (*Minaret*10), he believes that colonialism comes so as to civilize African countries such as Sudan.

Until this moment, the things seem clearer for Najwa, but when the teacher adds "' and now the Marxist criticism of Rostow's explanation for underdevelopment.' So it wasn't true after all" (40). At that time, Najwa makes sure that all the thoughts that prevail in their society and that is led by the government is a negative thought and will lead to collapse. This criticism that is presented during the lesson also reflects the teacher's view, as he said before giving his students a break of 10min for prayer "History shows that not all developed nations have followed Rostow's model ..." (41). The professor's lack of interest in prayer, as Najwa mentions in the novel: "Because he's a communist, he's not bothered about the prayers" (49), this shows that he is presented in the novel as a communist figure; "Outside, I found Anwar chatting warmly with the professor as if they were old friends"(41) Sharing the same ideology with Anwar.

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These two men, in the end, and after the coup that took place, becomes influential in the Sudanese new government, the Democratic Front. Supports the new regime. It is now a populist non-feudal regime where there is no accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of elite. Actually, members of the Front such as the communist lecturer, who has taught Najwa about Rostow's take-off, and Anwar now offer places in the new government. The communist lecturer becomes now the Minister of Finance.

It is more understandable that the cause of the displacement of characters in the novel, at the first stage, is due to colonialist mechanism. Aboulela points out, that colonialism convinces the natives that they are primitives and uncivilized by referring to them as 'Third World' in comparison to the west where it is modern and civilized. Such as Samir, Najwa's cousin, who was the one who holds the first candle of leaving and studying abroad "Atlantic College in Wales" (16). He enlightens the idea for Omar, the one who can never cope within his own culture and wants to cut the ties with Sudan. Randa, another prominent and influencing character in the first period of Najwa's life, also goes through the shifting process. Like Samir, Randa seeks education in Britain.

Therefore, this modern generation who are exposed to the West are the best advocates of the superiority of the West as they compare between both settings, emphasizing the advancement, the more education and the civilization of the West. In addition, the government Blind imitation of the west is one of the reasons that led to the collapse of the father's government that is obviously a corrupt one. By the end even after the execution of Najwa's father, the new government turns to be also corrupt. They asked Anwar to spy on Communist Party activities and offered him money and a car. When he refused, they took him away and tortured him by putting his leg in a pail of ice causing him a permanent handicap. Speaking of government corruption, Anwar said: "That's the tool of torture in the poorest countries in the world... One had to have his leg amputated, others shot, and others didn't have, like [me], a sister

in the police to help [them] escape."(Minaret150).By the both governments end with yet another coup leading to the political instability of the nation. When Najwa asks Anwar of the reasons of such instability, he refers to historyand the era of colonialism when he says, "everything was connected to history and economics."(Minaret152) Therefore, displacement in Minaret is portrayed because of political instability and corruption in postcolonial Sudan.

II. Post-displacement: Harshness of exile

The first thing that comes to mind when we hear the word "exile" is refugees, who are defined as a group of individuals who has been leaved their own countries and could not be able to return their own countries safely, which is the result of various reasons, including war, race, religion, nationality, membership of a specific social group as well as political opinion (Greyling and Campus 27-31). The displacement; will lead to negative impacts on refugees' mental health. This is a fact that refugees could have an extremely high possibility of getting mental health problems. During this process, possible mental effects may be developed due to changing their countries such as fear, sadness, anxiety and anger. These negative emotions may lead to more serious emotional issues, such as depression and suicidal tendency. (Noli and Sundbom 185-191)

Minaret, being a diaspora novel, deals mainly with a Sudanese refugee girl named Najwa, once privileged and secular in her native land and now impoverished in London in Britain suffering from a harsh life in exile and alienation from her homeland and the culture in which she was brought up. The novel "*Minaret*" portrays the challenges faced by Najwa as she tries to navigate her new life in London, including feelings of isolation, cultural dislocation, and

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loss of identity. After, her father was taken into custody and then even hanged. Immediately, Najwa, her twin brother Omar and her mother take refuge in London in the flat they own at Lancaster Gate.

The early days in England are more or less serene, because the protagonists do not immediately notice the drastic change that 'uprooting' constitutes for their existence. It is Naiwa herself who affirms it: "Our first weeks in London were OK. We did not even notice that we were falling. Once we got over the shock of suddenly having to fly out the day after Baba was arrested, Omar and I could not help but enjoy London" (*Minaret*54). Najwa enters a period of crisis that is sudden and filled with desperation regarding what would happen to her life. She states, "There are all kinds of pain, degrees of falling. In the first weeks in London, we felt the ground tremble beneath this. When father was found guilty we broke down, the flat filling with people, Mom crying, Omar banging the door, staying out all night." (59), the family experience a lot of tumbling events in their first weeks in London.

Soon, however, the downward spiral that began with the flight to the English capital engulfs them completely, leading them to hit rock bottom. Omar, who had already used drugs in the past, finds himself in prison for drug dealing and attempted murder. Her mother, psychologically collapsed due to the tragic events related to her husband and son, dies in a clinic after falling ill with leukemia. Therefore Najwa is forced to give up her educational goals after her mother dies and remains alone in a city that is not hers but, forced to go on, she will rebuild a life, decidedly less comfortable than the one lived in Khartoum, but dignified and above all serene. .At this point, the only option Najwa"s thinks available to her is to work as a maid. And when she applies for a nanny position, she confronts just how far she has come down in the world.

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In the background to these important transformations, there is always London, the true co-protagonist of the novel. Very interesting, therefore, is the relationship between these two 'heroines', which the author uses metonymically to express through it her reflections on the dialogue between East and West. London immediately appears to Najwa as the land of freedom, in a significantly contrasting way to her homeland. Alone in a bar, the protagonist says: "I felt silly sitting all by myself, self-conscious. It would not be done in Khartoum for a woman to be alone in a restaurant. "I'm in London", I told myself, "I can do what I like, and no one can see me". Fascinating. I could order a glass of wine. Who would stop me or even looked surprised." (119), in Sudan, where the prevailing patriarchal culture does not allow women certain freedoms, such behavior would have been inadmissible. Najwa finds herself making the same reflections several times, such as when, for example, having carelessly dropped some coins on the ground, she struggles to try to pick them up without appearing indecent: "It was a struggle to bend down and pick up the coins." (120).unlike in khartoum where she can never wear such dress in public.

The problem is that the girl finds herself 'struggling' even to dominate a body, hers, which somehow seems to rebel against the 'containment' that has always been imposed on it. Noticing the admiring looks of a worker, the girl will find herself brooding: "Would he come down to talk to me? Would we become friends [...]?" (121), Najwa's mind and body struggle always ends with a prevailing mind because her traditional principals are strongly influencing her in the new setting.

In London Najwa also finds an old love of hers, Anwar, a political activist at the time of the university, now in turn an exile in the English capital. Their relationship, always rather tormented due to his political affiliation, would have been impossible if they had remained in Sudan, Najwa says: "He put his arms around me because we were not in Khartoum, because we were in Hyde Park and the few people who walked past didn't stay. They did not care what we

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were doing” (153), in London nobody judges them; nobody lays eyes on that couple of foreigners.

Anwar emphasizes too this kind of state of grace favored by the liminal, interstitial condition of displaced persons: “Here no one knows our background. We are both niggers, equals” (147). Significantly, however, precisely what makes them people 'without' a place also makes them, and inevitably annoyingly, people 'out of place'. Najwa herself notes this when she finds herself expressing her unease towards a city which, in appearing insensitive to its problems

What is interesting in this regard is that both in Khartoum and in her early years in London, Najwa was actually regarded by her compatriots as a true westerner, both for her attitude and for the lifestyle, she adopts. She will admit it herself, saying, “They often joked about how Westernized I was.”(212). Twenty years ago, Najwa, then at university in Khartoum, would never have imagined that one day she would be a maid. An upper-class Westernized Sudanese, her dreams were to marry well and raise a family. However, a coup forces the young woman and her family into political exile in London. Soon orphaned, and with her twin brother sent to jail on a drug charge, she finds solace and companionship within the Muslim community.

Najwa changes herself when she breaks up with Anwar, her lover. “One life literally stops, replaced by a completely different one” (Cariello247-255). Anwar is a Communist who has supported the first 1984 Military Coup in Sudan. Then, he is exiled. He gives Najwa a sense of nostalgia, belonging and location for carefree days of university life in Khartoum. Najwa enters into the relationships with him by Western culture standards with him. They have dating, and later sexually intimated. However, Najwa’s relationship with Anwar fails because of having different opinions, Najwa states, “I wanted to know how to live with that, how to be happy with that. Change, he would say, revolution. But I had been hurt by change, and the revolution, which killed my father, did not even do him the honour of lasting more than five years” (*Minaret*151).

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Anwar does not want to marry Najwa because he has traditionally been betrothed to his cousin as revealed in a letter from his sister the painful identity crisis, spiritual up-rootedness and the sense of loss.

The last site of identification for Najwa is Layma's home, where she works. Layma is an Egyptian woman and a PhD scholar in London, who lives with her younger brother, Tamer, an undergraduate student. While serving Layma Najwa maintains friendly terms with Tamer because both share Muslim identity in common with each other. However, the relations of Najwa and Layma are not friendly because Layma is a Westernised girl, having contacts with Arab girls from her class. She dismisses Najwa because of possessing lower class background. Therefore, Najwa identifies with Tamer, who is practicing Muslim Unlike, Najwa and Tamer, Layma identifies herself with secular life style. She fails to marry Tamer because of age difference. She does not dishearten but proves herself strong. The male characters play a significant role in Najwa's life but they fail to provide security and protection to her. Her father, brother, lover, and even Tamer all possess serious flaws in their characters that "disappoint" her (Chambers 111).

The high-level Sudanese lifestyle fades into the past and is a haunting but distant memory. "I've come down in the world. I've slid to a place where the ceiling is low and there isn't much room to move" (*Minaret1*), Najwa says. These words conclude Najwa's narrative and her account of a dream. In the dream she is ill, needs the comfort of her parents' room and their bed, she becomes "sure that [her parents] love [her]," but also sees that "Around us, beyond the bed, the room is dark and cluttered, all the possessions that distinguish us in ruins." (255). She is in a particularly potent liminal configuration with a mysterious past and denied an imaginable future. She is unable to make something of herself. Najwa is daydreaming of the past and not working hard; she constantly dreams of when she is a child living in Sudan in her family's home, comfortable in her parent's care and affection. It seems that, because her higher-

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level identity in Khartoum is based on her father's success and importance, his failure is her failure that she does not seem able to overcome.

Through Najwa's new phase of liminality in London, she has been separated from her upper class comfort, security, respectability, and family. In London, not only is Najwa cut off from her family suddenly, her relatives also mistreat her. Her uncle's wife, Eva, who, instead of helping Najwa obtain a respectful job, turns her into her housemaid and even pays her less than what she would regularly earn for the same job elsewhere. Najwa's cousin, Sameer, cuts his relationship with her and her brother since he turns out to be more successful socially, economically, and academically. The way Najwa's relatives treat her on the basis of their socio-economic privilege while in exile mirrors her previous unsympathetic treatment of those who were from a lower social class than hers back in Khartoum. Najwa becomes the under privileged among other Sudanese relatives and friends from her past in London, and thus their treatment of her differs on the basis of social and economic status. Although she is at times around them, she is separated from them. In this condition, everything seems to be ambiguous. She does not feel like she belongs to London, since she still feels a sense of alienation, loss, and detachment from her surroundings.

III. "Who I am, who I was and what I've become!"

This passage in part two shows how much Najwa is afraid if someone knows her past and her present life. Always there is a threat, which forces her to claim that she is Eritrean or Somali. The fear of being known, of being blamed, abandoned or even being exiled again.

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Nostalgia haunts Najwa frequently, when she used to go to parties, to university and to holidays with her family. How she used to live a rich life where she gets all what she wants, she used to live to achieve her desires. In her life in Khartoum, Najwa, the daughter of a high ranking government official, can drives the car where only minority of women drive cars and in university less than thirty per cent of students are girls. When Najwa first represents herself to the reader, it does not seem that she is the maid suffering girl, but a person who will never suffer in life. Najwa herself does not seem to believe that she may face such tragedy; this is manifested in the first part where she says: "I understood the line 'I've lived to bury my desires'. But I did not know from where this understanding came. I had a happy life ... There was nothing that I didn't have, couldn't have. No dreams corroded in rust, no buried desires. (Minaret 13), Najwa who comes from old bourgeoisie family, the one who dances at the American club disco in Khartoum, is completely different from the new maid Najwa, the one who is accused of theft by her employer Lamyia. Her life literally stops, replaced by a completely different one. The dreams are corroded in rust and desires are buried.

Leila Aboulela Writes her novel in a very simple and understandable style, Minaret is written in first person. The conversation between characters, internal thoughts of Najwa and the portrayal of details, places and feelings.

The protagonist lives a traumatic experience started with the exile and the events that follows it. The causes of psychological trauma of Najwa are : her father is accused of corruption so they are forced to be exiled to Britain, her mother's death, her brother is prisoned because of drugs and her boyfriend Anwar lets her down.

The victims of psychological trauma often may be silent, withdrawn and unself confident, that is the case with Najwa "but I become fragmented and deflated in discussions; Inever know

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which point of view I support. I find myself agreeing with whoever is speaking or with the one I like best” (74).

Psychological trauma can be known through flashbacks. They interrupt the consciousness. After getting over trauma, memory recalls the past events; it is involved with conscious retrieval of information. Lois Tyson in his book “*critical theory today*” states that “the unconscious is the storehouse of those painful experiences and emotions, these wounds, fears, guilty desires and unresolved conflicts we do not know about because we feel we will be overwhelmed by them”.(12), Along her life in Britain, Najwa always remembers her old life. “On my very first days as a maid... memories rushed back at me. All the ingratiating manners, the downcast eyes, the sideway movements of the servants I grew up with... But I must have been close to them, absorbing their ways, so that now, years later and in another continent, I am one of them.” (*Minaret*78).

The first days in London were safe and enjoyable. Najwa and her twin Omar are completely enjoying, buying clothes, doing grocery shopping, cooking frozen food and doing the things, they used to do in summer, in April. The only one who feels the danger is their mother, she feels their falling from the very beginning.

Perhaps Najwa's trauma starts from the moment she refuses to go to disco with Omar and Samir. The moment she feels that Samir thinks he is all grown and they are still little “we can't go to disco because of Baba”(57), Najwa adds: “ the man's on trial for his life and his children are dancing in London.”(57). or maybe the moment she reads the of her father's trial, which is written by Anwar! The pain starts from these moments; they are the degrees of falling “when Baba was hanged... It seemed to have no end as if we would fall and fall again for eternity without ever landing... We became unfamiliar to each other simply because we had not seen each other fall before” (59). the fact that Najwa, and her family, has not been fallen before is

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the central point of pain. One must experience pain before so that he/she cannot be wounded at that much and face physical and psychological problems. Najwa watches her life parts fall down one by one, alone, in alienation and in a different country and a different continent.

The characters' past and present are unorderly arranged in *Minaret*. The novel is consisted of six parts, each part have a certain numbers of chapters which are not Chronologically ordered. They present a kind of flashbacks. Each part has a certain time, certain events and characters that differentiate from the ones of the other parts. These are one of the most common characteristics of postmodern literary works, breaking up the text or narrative into short fragments or sections separated by space, titles, numbers or symbols.

Aboulela uses fragmented parts perhaps in order to manifest Najwa's fragmented and disordered thoughts. Identity, personality and emotions go through a process of fragmentation when a person faces traumatic experiences; "Fragments are these aspects of ourselves that didn't get to express wants, desires, or needs because they didn't feel it was safe to do so, so they partially detached from the core of the victim and became suppressed. Having said that, this does not mean they're completely gone" (Rachel 1). therefore, psychological trauma and fragmentation reflect each other.

Najwa is always hesitant and afraid to tell someone about her past, she prefers to repress her painful past, "Repression is then called into play when the feelings provoked by experience are felt to be too intense to be accommodated by a mind concerning with keeping the level of excitation or feeling within certain limits" (Garland 15). Thus, trauma is totally an internal stress disorder that occurs within the mind because of a certain external problems that contribute in trauma.

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The only one Najwa feels comfortable and shares her past with is Thamer, Doctora Zeineb's nineteen years old son, "I shake my head and tell him why I am affraid of politics, why I am affraid of coups and revolutions. I start to speak about my father, things I have never said to anyone else. They surprise me by coming out fresh, measured-maybe because it all happened many years ago." (*Minaret* 110). Not only family circumstances, but also social and political conditions contribute to her trauma. And not only the harsh conditions of childhood that cause psychological problems, but also the harsh life of youth does that, especially when the victim has a luxurious childhood life, for this case Herbret Marcuse says: "the psychoanalytic categories do not have to be 'related' to social and political conditions- they are themselves social and political categories" (110).

The traumatic experience of Najwa is suffering from loneliness, bleakness, searching for care and family warmth, she loves her work as a maid just because it makes her feel comfortable, feel that she is in a loving family environment , either in Ankle Nabeel's house or in her late job in Doctora Zeineb's house with Mai.

Najwa's repression of her feelings is a kind of defensive strategies, she is waiting for the right time and the right person to free her thoughts, and this person will never be Anwar who never loses any occasion to criticize her father, her life and her personality. Caroline Garland again manifests: "I am instead going to pick out certain of Fread's ideas which,...The conclusion he reaches is that catharsis cures: once the original events are brought by into consciousness, most importantly along with all the original intense feeling that accompanied it, the symptoms will disappear" (13).

In her whole life, she does not get a restful relationship. All men in her life disappoints her, starting with her father who let her down, her twin who is prisoned and asks her to not visit him, Anwar who is supposed to be her husband but he is not and will not be, and finally Thamer,

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because it is not logical to have a love relationship with a nineteen years old man, he is compatible but inappropriate one at the same time. The cause Najwa feels attracted to Tamer is a need for her, a need for someone who treats her kindly, someone who stands by her and does not care about her past. In addition to that, a religious man, interested in Islam and think deeply, and that one is Tamer.

In her book "Perceiving Pain in African literature", Zoe Norridge says: "many emotions, from love to envy, happiness to nostalgia, are recognized as fundamentally subjective. What is at stake in the representation of pain that carried such an urgent call to be seen on its own terms? The immediately apparent answer is that pain is often either a result or a cause of the denial of another person's voice"(2); Norridge argues that pain often happens when the ones who has injured do not have the right to decide their fate or reveal their pain. Thus, the pain becomes more severe and exhausts their minds. Norridge adds: "The child has no say in their own excision ceremony; the civilian casualties of war are literally silenced by violence in death or denied the opportunity to speak their pain "(2). Najwa has no hand in the coup and their displacement, in her father's trial, in her mother's illness, nor in her brother's prisoning. She cannot accept the tragic events easily, therefore, it takes years of suffering from a damaged mind to heal and restore her inner peace.

Displacement is the main reason of Najwa's trauma. For Najwa her life has completely displaced, it has transferred from one situation to another. Usually, there are no visible signs on the person who live traumatic events, but she/he may has serious emotional problems or mind damage since the center location of pain is the mind; "a part of my brain still thought, it's all a mistake, a nightmare" (94). The symptoms of the victim may include; repeated memories and flashbacks, nightmares, the fear of the repetition of the traumatic events, isolation, withdrawal... etc. Najwa lives all of these symptoms.

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How can someone be healed in the same environment he received the pain in? Being in the same mood cannot help the memory to forget the traumatic events. Najwa's wounds have healed by the help of faith. Faith is the home where she finds her peace and healing. The traumatic experience of a person may often contribute to overcome her/his fears and create a stronger personality, but not in all cases are included. Najwa's experience helps her to acquire the Islamic spirituality and free her repressed emotions.

IV. Najwa's faith before and after the exile

Displacement is a transfer of places or feelings form one situation to another either voluntarily or involuntarily. In her own life experience as a Muslim, Leila Aboulela moved from an Arab country to a western one. And from a religious Islamic culture to a secular one. Her search for her own spirituality is highly reflected in her novels; especially *Minaret*, Leila Aboulela and Najwa have mostly the same life experiences: displacement and its psychological effects, which cause trauma.

Aboulela is probably trying to defend Muslims and how they are portrayed in the west in general and in Britain in particular. At the same time, she is trying to show that displacement and migration do not erase identity. Therefore, it is possible to coexist in the new settings. It is all fine whenever Muslims do not leave their principles behind, when finding democracy and better standards of living, they must not throw their faith away.

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Displacement in *Minaret* has two different effects: negative and positive. The negative impact is embodied mainly in Anwar and Omar. While the positive one is embodied in Najwa and Tamir 'gaining faith' and Randa and Samir 'gaining success'.

Anwar, in a hand, is the male protagonist who hates everything related to the west "Our country is beautiful. Why do you go to Europe and not to see your country instead?"(*Minaret*35) "Why do you only listen to western music?"(36). However, after the second coup in Sudan, he is forced to go to Britain. Surprisingly, he admires the western life "the west is very impressive...Everything is organized. Everyone has a part to play."(136). In fact, Anwar considers Islamist government in Khartoum as his enemy. He likes to point out its faults by writing critical articles. His views on religion are definite he hates fundamentalists. He is liberal and admires the freedom he finds in London. Najwa sees him as: "Anwar was clever but he would never be tender and protective." (175). unlike fundamentalists and religious men who are careful, loving and protective but are stereotyped as backward and strict, Anwar is not tender or protective.

Anwar uses the term "modern" and "modernism" as an Opposition to religious and cultural values, the loss of Najwa's virginity is very normal because they are in London and no one cares about them, nothing changes, she just becomes Londoner. When Najwa feels guilty and uncomfortable with their relationship, he tells her she is backward and that marriage is evil and not modern (Yavaş Bulut 86). Anwar uses Najwa for her benefits, money and sex, under the umbrella of "modernity". Their "love" relationship is not supposed to end with marriage because he is not serious in this relationship. He knows very well Najwa's weaknesses, her ambition to marry and build a family and her inspiration to the western life.

The novel starts with Najwa's looking up the minaret of Regent's park Mosque, that is the minaret that will host her survival, her new religious identity. Aboulela's novels reflect the spirit

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of Islam; "Aboulela has opened the world of Muslims, and particularly that of Muslim women, that for many western audiences has been closed, encrypted or barely visible "(Mukherjee and Zulfiqar 163),in addition, it reflects the culture of Sudan as a colonised country and celebrates the traditional values; " Aboulela wants the reader to think of Muslim culture and Muslim societies not as "others" but as an equal civilization running in parallel to western civilization. "(163)

She tries to defend Muslim values and deny the way Islam is portrayed in western media. It is not a veiled women or a bombing suicide, relatively, Aboulela celebrates Arabian and Islamic culture by using terms in Arabic for example: Arabic proper names like Omar, Zrineb, Lamya and Um waleed, Arabic food like baqlawa and basboosa, Arabic countries like Egypt, Sudan, Kuwait and Iraq and finally, Islamic terms like *azan*, *hijab*, *tajweed*, *surat Ar-rahman*, *wudu*... etc.

Her portrayal of Islam, religion and Hijab is not perfect and ideal. Aboulela shows both the positive real image of Islam, exactly veil, and the negative stereotyped one. Najwa, at the beginning in the first part of the novel is settled in Khartoum in 1985, is not committed to religion, but she always feels guilty about this; "the sound of *azan*, the way the words sounded went inside me,... it went to a place I didn't know existed. A hollow place. A darkness that would suck me in and finish me" (*Minaret*30). Moreover, Najwa admires the veiled girls studying in the University of Khartoum. She is impressed by the students who perform their prayers and always sits and watches them praying.

On the other hand, in the opening part of the novel, the veiled women who cover their body head to toe. "I turned the page of an old of an old time magazine. Khomeini, the Iran-Iraq War, girls marching in black chadors, university girls... A woman held a gun. She was covered head to toe, hidden" (28). Randa, views the veil as backward and the women who wear it "are

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retarded "(28), and cannot work in a labor or play Tennis! Another situation in part three in London, when Randa is in Edinburgh University, she has no relationships with other Sudanese, in her opinion," So many of them are Islamists. You know the type, the wife in hijab having one baby after the other "(99). Unlike Randa, Najwa is never annoyed by Islamists, the servants in her house in Khartoum whom she listens when they pray, the students praying in university, and Ali, Wafaa's husband, who is "tender and protective".

In the late twentieth century, Islamists were described as "fundamentalists". The term can have both negative and positive interpretation. In the fifth part of *Minaret* Najwa states that: "It wasn't fundamentalists who killed my father, it wasn't fundamentalists who gave my brother drugs" (229). Aboulela is trying to prove that the Islamists are innocent of the crimes they are accused of.

Najwa has a sexual relationship with Anwar in London, even if she is uncomfortable, but she knows that it is "haram" having a relationship outside marriage. She waits for Anwar to marry her, the thing that will never happen. "This empty space was called freedom" (161); Najwa is free, doing whatever she wants inspired by the western culture, but she is not happy. When Najwa realizes that Anwar will never change his negative attitude toward her father, in addition to his obsession with being always right and not accepting any criticism. She is forced to take distance and to leave him (Yavaş Bulut 90).

Najwa takes a very long journey to discover her faith and restores her traditional values, she is a symbol of a Muslim female who struggles to find herself, her rest and to wash her sins. Najwa's guilt has haunted her from the very beginning, "what do we know? We do not even pray. Sometimes I was struck with guilt" (*Minaret*28). The problem is that she is not ready yet, she needs religious awareness, or perhaps she is waiting for someone who holds her hand and free her from bleakness and numbness. That one is Wafaa, the Muslim woman who has

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shrouded her mother and phoned her every time asking her to pray and go to the mosque. For this case Anne-Sophie Roald manifests in her book "Women is Islam: The Western Experience": "there has been insufficient awareness of the Muslim woman's relation to Islam... Separation from their native countries and feelings that they are aliens in a foreign culture may push many muslims to define themselves first and foremost as Muslims"(9).

Faith is a main theme in diaspora literature. In Islam, it is easy to become a Muslim but it is very difficult to be faithful, to be a believer, as Allah only gives faith. Najwa's decision to wear headscarf comes after many attempts, when she first tries it she gives up because it covers her beauty; she thinks she does not look pretty with veil. It took two years since the day Wafaa calls her to come and join them in the mosque and to pray. With her suffering in exile, Nadjwa finally finds her identity and home in Islam and Islamic faith.

The main Muslim figures in Minaret are; Tamer, Najwa and her South Asian Arab friends from the mosque, for them, Islam shapes their identity in the western different culture. If Najwa is Sudanese, Tamer is also Sudanese in origins but lives in Britain and sometimes go to Oman and Egypt her mother's motherland; they are than at first Muslims. No matter from where they come from nor where do they live. The only thing that matters is that they are Muslims and they have the Islamic identity. Therefore, identity and belonging for Najwa and Tamer do not stand on place but on faith and personal existence; one cannot find her/his identity until she/he finds her/his self, finds where do they belong to spiritually. This is well illustrated in a conversation between Najwa and Tamer where she asks him: "Do you feel you're Sudanese" (103), while Tamer thinks, "I guess being a Muslim is my identity. What about you? ...And now like you, I just think of myself as a Muslim" (Minaret103), Thus, Najwa realizes, even if it is too late after many years, her real home and then finds peace and innocence.

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The way Najwa describes her Islamic practices is full of happiness and contentment as she gains her religious awareness. This novel has narrated the story of Najwa from 1984 to 2004 depicting her way of living, her personality and her view to people before and after the exile, and also before and after wearing hijab. In the beginning, Najwa's main ambition is to get a husband, having kids and make a family. "Now I wanted to wash, a purge, a restoration of innocence. I yearned to go back to being safe with God" (222). After her tragedy comes into the surface when she loses everything, her only ambition is to return to Allah.

Her first attempts in the way of restoration fail, Whenever Wafaa calls her, something stops her from answering the call. "If my heart had been soft, I would have burst into tears and asked her how to repent. But my heart was not soft. I saw Wafaa through Anwar's eyes; a backward fundamentalist, someone to look down on "(164). Najwa sees religion through Anwar's eyes, his effect on Najwa's ideology is very strong, because of her weak self-improvement.

Her unsuccessful attempts to fast, pray and wearing the hijab never make her giving up, until she reaches her repent." Now when I heard the Qur'an recited, there was not a bleakness in a numbness or me, instead I listened and I was alert "(223). At one time, when she wants to change, Anwar tells her:" If everything, you hear in the mosque is correct, your beloved Auntie Eva will go to hell because she is not a Muslim. How can you justify this, after all the good she's done for you? "(231). Najwa cannot be religious if she still has a relation with a very non-religious man like Anwar. He washes her brain by his irrational ideology, because he always wins arguments in his conversations with Najwa. For that reason, Najwa does not gain faith only if she leaves Anwar.

Najwa finds a positive social influence in Britain, starting with: Wafaa, Shahinez, Um Waleed and all the friends she meets in the mosque. This plays a strong role in her way to repent.

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However, Omar her twin, unlikely, goes to a negative direction because of the bad social influences he faces in Britain, which leads to his downfall. "Omar was not Omar anymore; Omar wouldn't shake my Mama's shoulders. He would not shout, 'where is my money? It's MY money'." (*Minaret* 119). The character of Omar depicts the negative impact of displacement, he sees Britain as a way to freedom. Omar is always careless about his studies and traditional values; he always supports colonialism and sees that it is the way of under developed countries to be civilized. But when he is displaced to Britain, he becomes more impatient and fanatical because of drugs.

Additionally, Randa, stays far from religion as she does not make relationships with Muslim Sudanese in Wales. Anne-Sophie Roald states: "Religion and ethnic identity cannot be isolated from other social influences. Claims to ethnicity, religiosity and gender might become means of expressing frustrations with prevailing cultural norms." (9), so the social influences are the cause for being either closer or further from religious spirituality.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

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Literature is the mirror of society. It simulates the outer world and discusses its major issues. Diaspora literature is no exception. It depicts the everyday life of people who live in the west. In terms of themes, this thriving literature is prolific as it tackles vivid, captivating, and timely themes like displacement, identity, cultural clash, stereotypes and trauma experience.

The discussion of displacement and trauma in Leila Aboulela's *Minaret* represents a complex issue. These two phenomena have characterised contemporary societies in modern era, especially with the rise of immigration movement. Nowadays, people tend to redefine themselves and search for a stable identity by mean of several cultural elements.

The conclusion of this dissertation will be around the importance of diaspora literature in shedding light on the real experiences of migrants in the West. Moreover, their struggle to assimilate into the new land and new culture.

Minaret reflects the social and political conditions, which were happened in Sudan from 1986 to 2004. It portrays the instability of the Sudanese government, the thing that led people to migrate to other countries. The first chapter pointed out to what extent the events, the settings and the time of the real history of Sudan, between 1986 and 2004, and the events of the novel were similar and identical.

The second chapter has manifested the consequences of colonialism. It investigated its impact on the novel's character physically and psychologically, the way of living, thinking and acting of characters differs completely before and after migration.

Displacement, trauma, religion and identity are the main themes in which this research focused on. Displacement and trauma are strongly related to each other in *Minaret*, as displacement can be a cause of psychological traumas. Living in new settings where everything is displaced: social position, people, dreams, desires, feelings, traditions and language and religion as well. The struggle of finding identity and faith in order to escape the harshness of

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exile is highly portrayed by Aboulela, overcoming trauma and improve self-awareness from the positive side of displacement as Leila Aboulela herself did.

Additionally, it tackled the solution to escaping traumatic stress disorder and, to some extent, gave the positive and the negative effect of displacement by analyzing the dramatic changes of the characters' lives, using diaspora and psychoanalysis as a critical theory. Thus, "Minaret" is considered as a diaspora literature work.

This dissertation tried to explore these themes in a more detailed analysis. In the last part of the second chapter, the research put the light on the Islamic spirituality of Muslim migrants and the Islamic stereotypes on the eyes of a western the journey of discovering faith.

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Résumé

Cette thèse explore la façon dont le traumatisme est construit en relation avec le déplacement à travers l'œuvre choisie par Leila Aboulela, *Minaret* (2005). Aboulela dans son roman fournit un contenu authentique et riche pour explorer la vie au Soudan après les gauches de la colonisation britannique. Cette vie était caractérisée par de multiples pratiques perverses enracinées dans la communauté soudanaise telles que les déplacements et les expériences traumatisantes parmi les gens. Cette étude est en fait discutée à travers une approche analytique descriptive pour dépeindre la question du déplacement et ses effets sur le sujet. La présente recherche vise à mettre en évidence comment la représentation du traumatisme dans la littérature est entreprise et à discuter du sujet du traumatisme et de la façon dont il se forme. Ainsi, la recherche est composée de deux chapitres principaux. Le premier chapitre est théorique et traite d'un cadre socio-historique et conceptuel. Le deuxième chapitre aborde avec force les deux thèmes dans lesquels le roman est analysé. Aboulela présente l'expérience d'une femme soudanaise dans une société occidentale, le protagoniste Najwa examine une expérience de migration et d'événements traumatisants causés par une série d'événements commencés avec la colonisation. Par conséquent, la psychanalyse peut servir de guide d'aide pour analyser les thèmes cibles du déplacement et du traumatisme. À la fin, l'étude conclut que le traumatisme et le déplacement sont fortement liés à *Minaret* et que les traumatismes psychologiques peuvent être le résultat du déplacement. De plus, Aboulela examinant les changements drastiques dans la vie des personnages, et montrant comment échapper aux traumatismes et fournissant les effets positifs et négatifs du déplacement, *Make Minaret*, dans une certaine mesure, une pièce intéressante pour étudier la littérature de la diaspora et les effets du déplacement sur "L'autre".

Mots clés : déplacement, traumatisme, littérature de la diaspora, « l'autre ».

ملخص

يدرس هذا البحث علاقة حدوث الصدمة النفسية بالنزوح في رواية ليلي أبو العلا "المئذنة" 2005. حيث تقدم أبو العلا في روايتها محتوى غنيا وحافلا يساعد على استكشاف الحياة في السودان بعد الاستعمار البريطاني ومخلفاته. لقد تسبب الاستعمار في اضطهادات وممارسات قاسية تجذرت في المجتمع السوداني، أدت إلى النزوح والصدمة النفسية. تمت دراسة هذا العمل الأدبي من خلال منهج وصفي تحليلي لتصوير قضية النزوح وتأثيراتها المختلفة. كما يهدف البحث الحالي إلى تسليط الضوء على كيفية تمثيل الصدمة في الأدب وكيف يتم حدوثها وتخطيها. لهذا؛ يتكون البحث من فصلين رئيسيين. الفصل الأول نظري ويتناول إطارا اجتماعيا تاريخيا ومفاهيميا. أما الفصل الثاني فيتطرق إلى النظريتين المعتمدتين لتطبيقهما لتحليل الرواية. تقدم ليلي أبو العلا تجربة امرأة سودانية في مجتمع غربي، وتتناول تجارب البطلة نجوى في الهجرة والاحداث الصادمة التي سببتها سلسلة من الأحداث بداية من الاستعمار. وهكذا؛ بإمكان نظرية التحليل النفسية ان تكون بمثابة دليل مساعد لتحليل المواضيع المستهدفة المتمثلة في النزوح والصدمة. في النهاية، توصلت هذه الدراسة إلى أن الصدمة والنزوح يرتبطان ارتباطا وثيقا في رواية "المئذنة"، وأن الصدمات النفسية يمكن أن تكون نتيجة للنزوح. علاوة على ذلك، فإن تطرق أبو العلا للتغيرات الجذرية في حياة الشخصيات وإظهار كيفية تخطي الصدمة وتبيين الآثار الإيجابية والسلبية للنزوح، جعلت من المئذنة قطعة أدبية مثيرة للاهتمام لدراسة أدب "الشتات" وتأثيرات النزوح على "الأخر".

الكلمات المفتاحية: النزوح، الصدمة، أدب الشتات، "الأخر".

