



## **Burial in the Homeland as the Highest Dreams of the Exiles: Postcolonialism in the Modern Arabic Novel**

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### **ENGLISH ABSTRACT**

This research aims to show the strategy adopted by Arab exiles in modern Arabic novels to return to their homeland by making a testament for repatriating their bodies after they die. Considering that the phenomenon of the outcasts is an effect of Western colonialism in the Arab world, this research uses a postcolonial perspective to approach the topic. Using an interpretive method, the exiles' desire to be buried in the homeland will be examined in three novels: *Lailatu al-Milyār* (1986), *Sahrah Tanakkuriyyah lil-Mautā* (2003) by Gādah as-Sammān (Syrian Lebanese), and *Maṣā'ir: Kūnsyirtū al-Hūlūkūst wa an-Nakbah* (2015) by Raba'ī al-Madhūn (Palestinian). The results of the analysis show that: (1) exiles made testament to their offspring to be buried in the homeland to ensure the connection, (2) socio-economic conditions in exile and socio-politics in the homeland make the testament failed to be realized, (3) the effects of inability to fulfill the testament had become a way for the offspring to get to know and love the homeland despite of the distance. Even though returning to the homeland is proved impossible, this strategy of exiles had succeeded in raising nationalism in their offspring. The futility of returning to Palestine seems greater than to Lebanon, considering that Israel has occupied Palestine.

**Keywords:** Burial, Postcolonialism, Testament, Exile, Modern Arabic Novel

### **INDONESIAN ABSTRACT**

*Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menunjukkan strategi orang-orang Arab buangan untuk kembali ke tanah air melalui pemberian wasiat untuk memulangkan jenazah mereka dalam novel-novel Arab modern. Mengingat fenomena orang buangan merupakan efek kolonialisme Barat di dunia Arab sebelumnya, maka penelitian ini memanfaatkan perspektif poskolonial. Dengan metode interpretatif, cita-cita orang-orang buangan untuk dimakamkan di tanah air ini akan dikaji dalam tiga novel, *Lailatu al-Milyār* (1986), *Sahrah Tanakkuriyyah li al-Mautā* (2003) karya Gādah as-Sammān (Suriah Lebanon), dan *Maṣā'ir: Kūnsyirtū al-Hūlūkūst wa an-Nakbah* (2015) karya Raba'ī al-Madhūn (Palestina). Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa: (1) orang buangan memberikan wasiat kepada*

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*keturunan mereka untuk menguburkan mereka di tanah air demi menjamin keterhubungan dengan tanah air, (2) kondisi sosial ekonomi di pengasingan dan sosial politik di tanah air menjadi penyebab wasiat gagal dilaksanakan, (3) efek kegagalan menjadi jalan untuk mengenal dan mencintai tanah air meskipun mereka jauh dari tanah air. Meskipun dalam konteks kembali ke tanah air terbukti tidak memungkinkan, strategi orang buangan ini berhasil memunculkan kesadaran nasionalisme dalam diri generasi berikutnya. Ketidakmungkinan kembali ke Palestina lebih besar dibandingkan ke Lebanon, mengingat Palestina telah diduduki oleh Israel.*

***Kata Kunci:*** Pemakaman, Poskolonial, Wasiat, Orang Buangan, Novel Arab Modern

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## **Introduction**

Hamas, with its Tufan al-Aqsa operation on October 7th, 2023—almost 75 years after Israel declared independence on May 14th, 1948—has shown that Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation is still going on. Hamas leader abroad, Mesyal, said in spiritofaqsa.or.id, Operation Tufan al-Aqsa had returned Israel to zero and threatened its existence. The International Court of Justice (cnbcindonesia.com) in Den Hague on Friday, July 19, 2024, decided that Israel's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territories was "illegal" and must be ended immediately. It is due to the increasing number of deaths, destruction of people's homes and essential facilities (such as hospitals and schools), and the ban on the entry of world aid—thus creating extreme hunger, and mass murder of civilians—have led to accusations on Israel of committing genocide against the Palestinian people.

The killing of Palestinians can be traced back to the Dair Yassin massacre on April 9, 1948 – a few days before Israel was proclaimed – which killed nearly 200 people and forced at least 700,000 Palestinians to leave their homeland. Some of them had no other option but to live outside the country as refugees, and exiles, and became diasporas in many parts of the world, not only in the Middle Eastern countries but also in some countries in America and Europe.

A similar condition also occurs among the Lebanese people. The Civil War is thought to have caused many Lebanese to flee from their homeland. In Lebanon's modern history, there have been at least two Civil Wars, the first in 1958 and the second in 1975-1990. The Civil War in May - October 1958 was triggered by President Shamun's policy of refusing to sever diplomatic relations with France and England (Foster, 1992). The massacre at Ain el-Roumaneh on 13 April 1975 is often considered or believed to be

the reason for the war, even though this event was only one of the triggers (Gilmour, 1983). The war itself caused nearly 44,000 deaths, 180,000 injured, and 4 million displacement/migration of the victims (Collelo, 1989).

In the context of fiction, Arabic literary works - in various genres - took that phenomenon as the setting or even the central theme so it became the source of the writer's inspiration. The deep connection to the homeland that runs through each of the victims of the Israeli occupation and Lebanon's civil war, makes returning such a big dream that they carry all their lives. However, that is only a dream that is very difficult to realize, considering the situation in their homeland is not going anywhere but getting worse. It seems impossible to come back to their beloved homeland.

Palestine and Lebanon as the countries that were previously colonized, during the post-independence era, many people were exiled and forced to leave their country or homeland in a situation that "forbade" them from returning due to political and historical reasons. Burns & Kaiser (2010) argue that alienation, tradition, hybridization, and violence flow back and forth in the wider world of postcolonial experience. In the context of modern Arabic literature, exile, including both internal and external forms, is one of the models used by Arab novelists (Badawi, 1992). Imprisonment, loneliness, and alienation, both physical and external, as well as psychological and internal have become prominent features of many modern Arabic novels (Allen, 2003). According to Abul-'Azam (2015), literature with this character can be considered as the literature of a nation that has experienced colonialism; literature whose political conditions are influenced by the colonial experience and are related to colonial forces.

As a defining category, the novels offer great potential for postcolonial discourse (al-Musawi, 2003) and simultaneously reveal the ownership of the nation as a source of 'stability and centrality' and the alienation from it as a condition of 'anxiety and marginality' of exile (Hout, 2005). Quoting Said and Loomba, Ratna (2010) stated that the experience of colonization has been considered global and universal, and has a direct impact, both on the colonized and the colonizers. The global and universal nature can be seen from the phenomenon of many people who have experienced colonialism spread to various parts of the world, including former colonial countries. As the dominant writing in postcolonial discourse, exile (al-Musawi, 2003) not only assumes a strong presence

against the colonizers but also subsequently against post-independence state arbitration.

The alienation of Arabs is generally caused by a political situation that pushes them to leave their homeland. Al-Maleh (2009) stated that the reason for many Arabs leaving their homeland could be dictatorship as in Iraq, bloodshed as in Lebanon, Iraq, and the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel, or the lack of freedom of expression as in the entire Arab world. In general, they choose to go to Europe rather than Middle Eastern cities because Europe in their opinion is more peaceful and prosperous than their home countries, which are full of violence and despair.

This paper will discuss the exile of Arabs outside the homeland in three modern Arabic novels, namely *Lailatu al-Milyār* (1986), *Sahrah Tanakkuriyyah li al-Mautā* (2003), both by Gādah as-Sammān, a Syrian Lebanese writer, and *Maṣā'ir: Kūnsyirtū al-Hūlūkūst wa an-Nakbah* (2015) by Raba'ī al-Madhūn, a Palestinian writer. Some of the characters in these novels live in exile—respectively—in Switzerland, France, and England largely due to the unstable political situation in their home countries. To live outside their homeland is a form of coercion, so returning there is their highest dream. They realize that coming back is not easy, and it is manifested in their hopes to return even after death.

The questions in this study are as follows. Why do people in exile make a will to be buried in their homeland? How is the will executed in the homeland? How does the execution of the will affect its executor? The above questions will be answered using the lenses of postcolonial theory, especially the concepts of exile about the homeland. Thus, the objective of this study is to show that people in exile still have a physical attachment to their homeland which Anderson (1992) calls long-distance nationalism— which they want to pass on from generation to generation. The study is important to demonstrate the strategy of the exile to return to their homeland. Although the most important thing is to return to the motherland, the passing down of the sense of attachment of the next generation to the homeland is no less important.

The postcolonial approach to literature is a reading strategy that considers and identifies the signs and effects of colonialism, and also its impact on literary texts, as well as the position of the postcolonial writers in their personal and narrative voice. This approach is suitable for reading works of writers from former colonized countries

considering that the author presents personal experiences of colonized people which show the strong influence of the colonial era (Foulcher & Day, 2002). Postcolonialism in Arabic literature can be traced to the adverse effects of World War I which for Arabs is what Badawi (1992) described as *sowing the seeds of many future problems*. Musawi (2003) says that colonial referentiality exists in the minds of Arab fiction writers in almost all of the Arab world.

Postcolonial theory (Ashcroft et al., 1946) is based on the concept of otherness. The "Other" means anyone who is separated from oneself. Others in the context of exile are those referred to in seclusion caused—in Humphrey's term—by politics or history. The theory (Ashcroft et al., 1995) involves a discussion about various kinds of experiences of migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place, and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe. The theory (Haidar, 2018) is a reading of Western thought concerning the East, through a critical approach, with its cultural, political, and historical dimensions. In the literary context, this theory is related to the field of culture and the field of literary criticism in particular. According to Sabit (2014), it traces and recognizes Europe as a region whose origin, ideas, and expansion were obtained through conquest and subjugation, thus it is exactly correct if Musawi (2003) stated that postcoloniality seems more assertive in narratives involving post-independence states.

Among colonial traumas are dispossession, forced migration, diaspora, slavery, separation, racism, political violence, and genocide (Craps, 2008). Most of those who experience dispossession and forced migration have to live outside their homeland and face complex problems, such as living as exiles. Despite this, they still maintain ties with their homeland and keep the desire to return, even after they die. This shows that there is a spirit of nationalism within the exiles. Said (2000) said nationalism has an essential association with exile. Nationalism is an assertion of belonging to a place, people, and heritage. It affirms the home created by a community of language, culture, and customs; and, by doing so, it fends off exile, and fights to prevent its ravages.

An exile involves the idea of separation and distance, either literally from the homeland or cultural and ethnic origin (Ashcroft et al., 1946). Exile is a state of disconnection where the person in exile is cut off from their roots, land, and past. Exile is strangely compelling to think about, but terrible to experience. It is an unhealable rift

that occurs between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home (Said, 2000). Humprey (2004) mentions that the feeling of being alienated is the feeling of wanting to return home, however, it is impossible to do so, due to political or historical ostracization.

The discussions of exile in modern Arabic novels have been done in some research that was conducted by Saffar (2016), Sellman (2018), Alsaleh (2019), Batt and Sharma (2020), and Masood (2022). Al-Saffar (2016) examines the role of exile, specifically how exile can be viewed positively in the character's life. The new form of exile presents figures who understand the conditions of exile in their way. The exile embarks on unique journeys and faces the opportunities of new life possibilities. Sellman (2018) puts contemporary Arabic literature on forced or precarious migration from postcolonial perspectives, Arabic literary studies, and border studies. In contemporary Arabic literature on forced migration, discourses on exile and migration had been found in literary narratives centered on topics such as political exile, students traveling abroad for study, and labor immigration. They paved the way for literature that explores the perspectives of refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants.

Alsaleh (2019) explores how Mourid Barghouti's autobiography *Ra'aytu Ramallah* reveals Palestinian exile as a permanent state and as a process that challenges, resists, or accepts the displacement of people and places over time. It attempted to come out of the state of exile and reveal its effects, especially when they returned to their homeland. Returning has brought up memories of the distant past, inviting buried or forgotten identities. By remembering the past, and what happened before displacement, a person of exiles – for example, Palestinian exile – tries to "repair" Palestine as a land for people who have memories and history in it.

Batt & Sharma (2020) examined the differences in the ways of self-identification of female protagonists by Arab-British and Arab-American female novelists. As transnationals negotiate the "pull and push" between homeland and hostland home becomes a "mythic place of desire" where they – in spirit – cannot return even though it is possible to visit their homeland physically and experience the sense of belonging of home and community.

Mohammad & Abdulaali (2020) examine Darwish and Ojaide, who were both experiencing the crisis in their homeland. They have a strong sense of belonging to their

homeland and consider exiles as monsters full of threats and seductions. They praised their homeland to claim dignity and identity that is denied in their adopted country. Masood (2022) uncovers the chronological development of Palestinian literature in the context of Palestine's geopolitics, international politics, and aesthetic settings to document the past of the people who have suffered unimaginable hardships and were exiled from their whole nation. Palestinian intellectuals employ the magical power of language to reclaim their dislocation and anguish outside the bounds of history. Palestinian literature rejects the "horror of history" and perfectly expresses the Palestinian people's setbacks and the ongoing struggle for existence.

The discussion above shows that exile was accepted as something positive, as a journey, and an opportunity for new life possibilities. The idea of returning to the homeland through a physical visit brings up memories of the past life before exile. Political exile is generally found in fiction about forced migration, one of the characteristics of contemporary Arabic literature in a global context. Meanwhile, in the context of diaspora, returning to the homeland in spirit is impossible even though it is possible to physically visit the homeland, and feel a sense of belonging, home, and community. Thus, such literary works can serve to document or save the memories of people who have suffered unimaginable hardships and were exiled from their entire country.

This article strengthens the discussion above, that visiting the homeland is physically possible. However, this research also found that it is almost impossible to return to the homeland physically. Thus, this research aims to show the strategy of Arab exiles how to return to their homeland, even though they are already dead. It shows the strength of their ties to a place far from them. Apart from keeping exiles connected to their homeland, giving a testament to the next generation opens the way for them to get to know and love their homeland.

## **Methods**

The discussion regarding this method will include material objects, formal objects, data sources, data collection, and data analysis. The material objects in this research are three novels, namely *Lailatu al-Milyār* (1986), *Sahrah Tanakkuriyyah li al-Mautā* (2003), and *Maṣā'ir: Kūnsyirtū al-Hūlūkūst wa an-Nakbah* (2015), while the formal object is the burial desire of exile in the homeland in the three novels. Data

sources used in this research are accessed online, in the form of e-books and scientific journals. The main data sources are three novels and any information related to the exile of Arabs in a postcolonial context, especially the concepts of exile concerning the return to the exiles' homeland.

The research method is based on the literature study method. The data is obtained by reading and observing the novels as material objects. This is attained by carefully analyzing the characters' speech, thoughts, attitudes, and behavior, which culminate in a formal object that has been determined, particularly the burial desire of exiles in their homeland from a postcolonial literary perspective. The characters' speech, thoughts, attitudes, and behavior are studied at the level of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs in the three novels. Data collection from other sources was carried out by reading and observing important points related to formal objects in the postcolonial context.

Then, the data that have been obtained is classified to form a data class. This research employs an interpretive method, a technique of giving meaning to data that have been classified interpretively in a postcolonial perspective or as Endraswara (2013) suggests, an analysis should be based on what he termed as the construction or frame of mind that has been built previously. According to Ratna (2004), this is called the hermeneutic method. The data that have been collected and classified will be described and then interpreted to show the attachment of exiles to their homeland based on postcolonial concepts, especially how the exiles keep the desire to return to their origin.

### **The Testament for Burial in the Homeland**

Living in exile is deeply painful; thus, returning to the homeland is the only way to relieve the pain. Among those who have experienced expulsion are Lebanese and Palestinians. They live in exile due to the unstable political situation. Lebanon witnessed a civil war that was exacerbated by the conflict with Israel, while instability in Palestine continued after the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel. According to Said (2000), people call the exile experience 'a contemporary political punishment.'

The homeland is depicted as a mother and a grave, where the dead are buried in her womb. Thus those who are exiled from their homeland do not have a uterus



("mother"), where they can lie down to rest (Gunther & Milich, 2016). The only chance for exiles returning to their homeland is to be buried there, yet the chance only comes when they are dead so that they can 'lie on their mother's lap'.

They are optimistic that returning home after their death is still possible. That is why they still have the desire to return home even after death. They want to be buried in their origin and want to realize this desire by making a testament to their offspring. It can be found in *Lailatu al-Milyār*, where Umm Laila made a testament to her daughter, Laila; and in *Sahrah*, where Faiz to his son, Fawwaz, and in *Masā'ir*, where Ivana to her daughter, Julie.

Umm Laila is a Lebanese who was forced to migrate to Switzerland to follow her daughter. Faiz, who lived in France, was a revolutionary fighter who opposed sectarian groups in Lebanon and called for resistance against Israel. He ended up excluded and faced death threats from his friends who previously fought with him. Ivana is an Armenian-Palestinian woman who lived in England after marrying a British soldier, who then brought her to England at the end of the British Mandate in Palestine.

In *Lailatu al-Milyār*, Umm Laila tried to deny her existence in exile. During her exile in Switzerland, she refused to interact with others. She did not visit and socialize with other Arabs because she did not want them to know that she was in exile while keeping '*amal yaumi al-ūdah ilā al-waṭan*, 'the hope to one day return to home', as Amir, one of the protagonists said (as-Samman, 1986).

... أن أم ليلي لم تزر أحدا هنا يوما ولم تزر وظلت تستميت لإنكار الغربية وتجاهلها ولم تتحدث إلى جارة، وظلت معتصمة ببيتها لا تخاطب بائعا ولا تمشي في شارع ولا تصادق أجنبية لأنها لا تعرف الفرنسية، ولا تصادق عربية لأنها لا تريد أن تعترف بأنها غريبة.

... Umm Laila never visited nor was visited by anyone here, and has been struggling to deny and ignore alienation, did not talk to a neighbor, kept sitting in her house, did not address a vendor, or walked in the street. She didn't befriend a foreigner because she didn't know French, and she didn't befriend an Arab because she didn't want to admit that she was a stranger.

The denial of the exile is manifested by her refusal to interact with indigenous people as well as with her foreign Arab comrades. She made a testament, asking Laila to take her home. The testament was accompanied by anger, for Laila let her granddaughter, Maryam, follow her father's nationality, which was France. Not only

angry with Laila, Umm Laila was also angry with Maryam, because she abandoned Arabic language and lived with her French boyfriend without marriage. The anger of Umm Laila was shown by one of the characters in the novel, named 'Amir, who retold Maryam's experience while speaking in French (as-Samman, 1986).

"... وحاولت التملص منها ولم أستطع وصرت أبكي وأصرخ وهي تصرخ في وجهي كأنها غاضبة مني أو تريد أن أنقل لأمي وصية أو لعنة وتلفظ اسمها واسمي وأسماء أخرى كثيرة لا أعرفها، لعلها أسرتها في وطنها"

"... I tried to escape but failed, and I started crying and screaming as she screamed at me as if she was angry with me or wanted me to convey to my mother a will or a curse. She uttered her name and mine and many other names unknown to me, probably her family in her homeland."

In the second novel, *Sahrah*, returning to his homeland is impossible for Faiz because a return means death. His refusal to become part of power became an excuse for his comrades – who previously advocated justice, freedom, and non-violence, but then turned to renounce democracy once they got the power – to haunt him. Thus, returning home for Faiz is considered to be impossible, if he wants to live (as-Samman, 2003).

وثمة من ميليشاوي مال وسلاح غير منك يريد أن "يحسب أن الله ما خلقك" وبالتالي يقتلك... كان بوسعك يا فايز ... أن تكون أحد الحكام الثلاثة (الترويكا) في بلدنا.

'There are militias with money and weapons who are jealous of you and want to think that 'God did not create you' and therefore kill you. ...You, Faiz, ... could have been one of the three rulers (the Troika) in our country.'

The "troika" refers to a Russian light carriage with three horses. In the Lebanese context, it was introduced in the 1943 National Pact which stated that the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni, and the speaker of the House of Representatives a Shiite. Faiz – even though had been nominated by his friends for one of these positions – chose to refuse the opportunity. It is because the previous orientation had changed, from '*saurah*' 'revolution' to '*sarwah*' 'treasure'. Thus, Faiz preferred to call the civil war which is essential '*širā`uṭ-ṭabaqāt*' 'conflict between groups' as '*širā`ul-karāsī*' a 'conflict over the seat of power'. Faiz's criticism of his powerful comrades led to death threats against him, which made him end up in exile. He

asked his son to send his corpse to the homeland so his family and friends could receive it, and then buried it, as Fawwaz said (as-Samman, 2003).

...إعادة جثمانه إلى بيروت ودفنه في القبر الذي اشتراه في مقبرة الشهداء. ... المهم أن توصلني إلى مطار بيروت.

'... returning his corpse to Beirut and burying him in the grave he bought in the Martyrs Cemetery. ... what matters is that you take me to Beirut airport.'

There is an analogy of a homeland with a home for exiles. The separation between the past and present, 'here' and 'there', makes home seem far away in the context of time and place, which can only be visited through imagination (McLeod, 2000). Rushdie (1991) connects the condition of exile with the memory of a homeland that cannot be owned, so the homeland seems to be just an imagination. Faiz imagined his return to his homeland and the airport reception by those close to him. His wife, Farah, meanwhile, insisted that she would not return to Beirut because the city —for her— is full of chaos, both during and after the war. Therefore, the responsibility for returning his corpse was in Fawwaz's hands alone.

The third novel, *Maṣā'ir*, tells the story of Ivana, who lives in London with her husband and daughter, who is married to a Palestinian, Walid. Ivana is an Acre girl who fell in love with a British officer doctor who served in Palestine. Her parents and the people of Acre disagreed with their love; however, she escaped and married him. When the British Mandate ended, Ivana —who had already given birth to Julie— and her husband moved to London. She then gave a testament to Julie and Walid to cremate her body and then scatter the ashes in the river Thames and Acre (al-Madhun, 2015).

"وطلبت نقل القارورة إلى بيت والديها في ساحة عبود في عكا القديمة."  
... أريد أن أدفن هنا وأدفن هناك. إن تعذر الأمر لسبب ما، أكون سعيدة لو أخذتما هذا النصف إلى القدس القديمة.

"She asked to take the bottle to her parents' house in Aboud Square in Old Acre."  
... I want to be buried here and buried there. If for some reason that is not possible, I would be glad if you would take this half to the Old City of Jerusalem.

They scattered her ashes in the river Thames even though they "*don't believe that they buried some Ivana in the wind and made the space of London half of its final resting place*". The other half of her ashes were stored in a bottle shaped like her body. The

bottle had an inscription that said *"She died here, she died there" London-Acre, 2012* (al-Madhūn, 2015). It was the bottle that they would bring to Acre, the home of Julie's ancestors.

The testament to return shows these characters' strong attachment to their homeland and the people there. The will to repatriate is also expected to bring the next generation closer to their homeland. The three figures, Umm Laila, Faiz, and Ivana, confirm Hout's (2006) statement that life in exile can strengthen a person's feelings of nationalism.

### **A Testament that Failed to be Carried Out**

The feeling of alienation is the feeling of wanting to return home, but there is no ability to do so, due to the rejection of politics or historical reasons. An exile is ostracized because of either a need or fear of the moment or because the distance between generations makes their way to the homeland impossible (Humphrey, 2004). 'There is no homeland to return. However, a homeland may exist, it is not a welcoming place with which they can identify politically, ideologically, or socially because it would be too inconvenient and disruptive, if not traumatic (Safran, 1991). Passing the testament to the next generation is the most viable alternative. However, the path back home is not easy because subsequent generations still face difficulties. like what had been shown in all three novels. The corpses of Faiz's father and Laila's mother were not able to return to Lebanon, while Ivana's ashes were brought to Palestine but rejected by the Jews of Acre.

Laila did not want to take her mother's body home, because she never committed to do so. In addition, for her, returning to the homeland means she will be subjected to gender discrimination again. Therefore, she felt comfortable being a foreigner in exile in Switzerland and even chose to marry a French man to guarantee that she got her rights as a woman and a wife (as-Sammān, 2003).

وهي كفتاة متعلمة متخرجة من أرقى الجامعات الأوروبية لن تعود للعمل في الوطن ... معظم القوانين هناك تعاملها كمواطنة من الدرجة الثانية ... فقررت أن تتزوج أوروبيا وتبقى في الغرب.

'As an educated girl graduating from the most prestigious European universities, she will not return to work back home... Most of the laws there treat her as a second-class citizen, ... So, she decided to marry a European and stay in the West.'

In the second novel, Fawwaz's failure to carry out Faiz's testament was due to his reluctance to return the body of his deceased father while he was busy with work. Besides, he still suffered from the trauma of the civil war he experienced when he was young, which forced him and his family to leave the homeland. Even when Lebanon emerged from the conflict of civil war, its condition remained frightening due to the lack of security and stability. Meanwhile, burying his father in France is also impossible because the price of land is prohibitive. The only option is to cremate his father's corpse in Paris. Faiz's corpse lined up for five nights waiting for the cremation schedule (as-Samman 2003).

لن أنسى ما حييت الرائحة البائسة التي عمت أرجاء المقبرة خلال إحراقه، كأنه كان يناكد النار ويريد أن  
يدفن في بلده.

'I will never forget the terrible smell that pervaded the cemetery during his cremation, as if he was fighting the fire and wanting to be buried in his own country.'

As for Julie, she succeeded in carrying out her mother's testament and bringing the second half of her ashes back in a bottle in the shape of Ivana's body to Acre. She went with the ashes to Ivana's parents' house to be stored or scattered in a part of the house. However, a Jewish couple who lived there strongly rejected her (al-Madhun, 2015).

"نونونونو" رجوته "يا سيدي لن تزعجكم روح أمي أبدا ... "لولولولولو" ثم نظر الرجل إلى الهيكل  
الزجاجي كمن ينظر إلى روح شريرة خرجت من ظلمة ويريد طردها، وصرخ "لا نقبل غرباء في بيتنا هيا  
هيا انصربي"

"No no no no," I begged him, "Sir, my mother's soul will never bother you. ... "Lo lo lo lo lo". Then the man looked at the glass structure as if looking at an evil spirit that had come out of darkness and wanted to expel it, and shouted, "We don't accept strangers in our house. Go, go, go!"

Ivana's ashes were subjected to a very tragic event. The ashes were scattered after the Jew poured the contents of the bottle on Julie's head and threw it into the air until the bottle fell on the stairs of the house. The ashes rose and disappeared into the sky of Acre. Thus, Ivana's ashes failed to remain in her home in the way she wanted it to be. However, she had succeeded in returning to her hometown, Acre.

## Failure and Its Effects

Failure to fulfill the wish to return the exiles had different impacts. Laila and Fawwaz failed to return their parents, and Julie failed to return her mother's ashes to her ancestral home. The impact is short but comes in the form of feelings of regret, guilt, and haunting fear, as happened to Laila and Faiz, as well as feelings of disorientation experienced by Julie.

Laila feels regret guilt, and is haunted by fear. She felt responsible for her mother's death because she failed to fulfill her mother's desire to return to Lebanon, even for a visit. Those feelings made her repeatedly say "*Ana qataltuha*" [I killed her]. However she tried to ignore these emotions by never visiting her mother's grave, she was still haunted by fear in her everyday life (as-Samman, 1986).

وهل ستهداً عظامها هناك؟ لماذا لا يرقد الأموات ويدعون الأحياء بسلام؟ ربما لأن الأحياء لم يدعوهم بموتون في سلام؟ ... ألن يخرج شبحتها كل ليلة من مقبرة (الجراند ساكونكس) صارخا في وجه ليلي، طالبة العودة إلى البادية؟

'Will her bones rest there? ... Why do not the dead rest in peace and call the living to peace? Maybe because the living did not let them die in peace? ... Won't her ghost come out every night from the Grand Saconx Cemetery screaming in Laila's face, asking to return to the desert?'

As for Fawwaz, feelings of regret and guilt arose when he was on a trip to Lebanon to take care of the house that was left by his father. He was the heir of the house and he would look for a lawyer to act on his behalf to sell the house. The earnings would be used to increase his business capital in Paris. He was afraid to visit Lebanon, but after almost 15 years, he finally stepped back into his homeland. His regret and guilt were getting worse because he felt selfish enough to think of his father's inheritance; meanwhile, he could not defeat his fear of coming back when he had to go to return his father's corpse. Among his expressions of guilt was his inner voice (as-Samman, 2003).

"كم أشعر الآن بالذنب لأنني لم أنفذ وصيته بأي ثمن وعلى الرغم من كل شيء! كم أشعر بالندم الذي يكويني في هذه اللحظة كجمرة اشتعلت في القلب!"

'How guilty I feel now because I did not carry out his will at any cost and despite everything! How much remorse I feel at this moment like an ember that burned in the heart!'

This feeling made him remain haunted by fear as if he smelled his father's corpse being burned on various occasions: in Paris, every time he entered his father's room; in Beirut, when he was in his front garden home as if the smell was spewing from the odor of a pine tree. When he entered the house, he felt like he was in the Grand Saxon Cemetery. Fawwaz believed that his father was trying to '*deliver a message from the other world*' (as-Sammān, 2003). Therefore, as compensation for his guilt, he decided to return to Lebanon to take his father's ashes home and bury them in the front garden house under a pine tree that his grandfather had planted at the time of his son's birth.

The feeling of disorientation occurs in Julie. Disorientation is associated with losing the ability to recognize people, places, and time. Julie lost the capacity to recognize persons and locations. Regarding persons, although Julie was treated badly by the Jewish couple living in her grandfather's house, she said they showed a good attitude. As for the place, living in Israel – according to Julie – is a comfort. Living there as a non-Israeli citizen is full of enormous life difficulties. The very dramatic rejection made her think that she was telling the truth to Walid that the Jewish couple were happy to welcome her and her mother's ashes (al-Madhun, 2015).

"سمية ستسمي المنزل باسم أمي يا وليد هل تصدق؟"

"هاه أنت تمزحين!"

"أبدا، هي أخبرتني بذلك ستسميه (نزل إيفانا)"

"Sumayah will name the house after my mother. Do you believe it, Walid?"

"Heh, you're kidding!"

"No, I'm not. She told me that she would call it 'Ivana Hostel'."

Julie's disorientation can also be seen when she asks Walid to sell all of their properties in London and move then live in Palestine despite the bad Jewish treatment towards Palestinians living in cities that Israel claims as its territory. As residents, they suffer from continuous discrimination. However, the disorientation made her propose that she settle in Acre with her husband.

## Conclusion

The physical return of exiles to the homeland was complicated and nearly considered to be impossible. Due to the conditions in exile and their homeland, they were not allowed to return. However, returning to their homeland after death is an alternative that allows them to be buried and finally get back to their homeland. One of the strategies for returning to the homeland is making a testament. This testament signifies the attachment of the exiles to their homeland and their desire to create a similar connection for their offspring. However, their offspring failed to return them to their homeland. The failures to carry out the testament were due to a lack of interest in returning home because of the trauma of the civil war, the patriarchal culture in their homeland, as well as rejection by some Jews as the new citizens in the homeland. The failure to repatriate the parents' bodies gives rise to feelings of being hunted, regret, guilt, and disorientation. The feelings show an attachment between the exiled generation's offspring and their country. The failures also show the futility of the exiles returning to their homeland, even after they are dead, for both Lebanese and Palestinian exiles. However, the futility of returning to Palestine for Palestinians seems greater than to Lebanon for Lebanese, considering that Palestine has been claimed as a Jewish homeland and has been occupied by Israel.

Narratives about exile and its relationship with the homeland are abundant in Arabic literature, especially from countries experiencing political upheavals, such as Iraq, Syria, and Sudan – and, of course, Lebanon and Palestine, as already investigated in this article-. Their works of fiction provide abundant data regarding the complicated situations faced by people who leave their homeland and live outside their homeland. An analysis of those works will enrich the relationship between the Arabs who live outside the Arab world and their homeland.

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