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**الهوية والحدود الثقافية في رواية موسم الهجرة الى الشمال**

**Identity and Cultural boarding in Season of Migration to the North**

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**الهوية**

**الاستعمار**

رواية موسم الهجرة إلى الشمال نشرت لأول مرة في بيروت في عام 1966 وتعتبر واحدة من أهم الروايات العربية في القرن العشرين، تمثل رواية الطيب صالح قصة شخصين عربيين كانا يعيشان كمهاجرين عرب لفترة طويلة من الزمن في إنجلترا ثم عادا إلى أرضهم بعد انتهاء الاستعمار في السودان. تقدم رواية موسم الهجرة جانباً نقدياً للهجرة والتداخل الثقافي بين أفريقيا وإنجلترا من خلال الإشارة إلى لندن العلمانية في عشرينيات القرن العشرين والفلاحين في شمال السودان، حيث تنتقد الرواية بشكل مباشر أو غير مباشر الاستعمار من خلال التركيز على مشكلة الهجرة ونتائجها التي لا مفر منها على المهاجرين من خلال ظهور بطل الرواية مصطفى سعيد كمستعمر على الثقافة الغربية من خلال إنجازاته الجنسية كنوع من انواع الانتقام. إن فكرة سعيد بنقل الاستعمار ومشاعره القوية التي يحملها في مخيلته تجاه وطنه الام وكذلك دوره السليبي في مواجهة العالم العربي البطريركي المخيب للأمل ، كلها تتضمن أهمية كبيرة في التعرف على الثقافة الغربية لانكلترا والثقافة الشرقية للسودان.

**الكلمات المفتاحية: الحدود الثقافية ، الهوية ، الاستعمار**

**Abstract**

*Season of Migration to the North* first published in Beirut in 1966 and regarded as one of the most significant Arabic novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Tayeb Salih's fabulous novel is the story of two postcolonial persons who lived as Arab and Muslim emigrants for a long of time in England and then returned to their postcolonial land Sudan. *Season of Migration* supplies a critical aspect on immigration and transcultural between Africa and England by mentioning to the secular London of the 1920s and the peasantry of northern Sudan through the protagonist Sa'eed's personal practices. The novel directly or indirectly makes a criticism of colonialism by centering on the problem of immigration and its inescapable results on the migrants. *Season of Migration* shows Mustafa Sa'eed as a conqueror on the western culture by his sexual achievements as a sort of revenge . Through the end of the novel we obviously notice that each character fights to make their own world by death or rebirth in a patriarchal society on the edge of modernism. Sa'eed's idea of transferring colonialism and his strong feelings about his native land in his imagination as well as his negative role in the face of disappointing patriarchal Arab world all include great importance to identify the occidental culture of England and the oriental culture of Sudan.

**Key words:** Cultural boarding, Identity, Colonialism

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<sup>1</sup> - جامعة ديالى / كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية

## INTRODUCTION

The West's capitalist development during the nineteenth century was instantly related to colonialism. While compelled migration became part of the colonial system, it also represented to dramatically transform Western internal culture. As a result, a wave of anxiety concerning racial difference and miscegenation dominated Western thought (Young 1995, p.4)<sup>1</sup>. For the West, interracial relationships threatened social stability as noted that 'no one bothered too much about the differences between the races until it was to the West's economic advantage to profit from [colonialism]' (Young 1995, p.92)<sup>2</sup>. The matter of racial difference became the center of many discussions in both the political and social nations.

In an attempt to prevent racial combination from revolving, an oppressive racial hierarchy was constructed in which whites were classified as superior and blacks as inferior. The figuration of a racial hierarchy moreover supported the current belief that interracial relationships would produce a corruption of the white bloodline and lead to sterile offspring. This sort of thinking meant that blended raced offspring were often isolated in society. To overrun the racial boundaries specified by western society and contribute in an interracial relationship was thus seen as an act of social deviation.

*Season of Migration to the North* is a novel by Tayeb Salih. He is a Sudanese novelist and newspaperman. He studied in Sudan at Khartoum University and left for the London University for further studies. Most of Salih's writings are produced from his personal experience of provincials and the complex social relationships. He addressed the themes of real world and imagination and the cultural disharmony between the West and the east.

*Season of Migration to the North* is a tale of a young Sudanese boy grown up in Khartoum, the Capital of Sudan. His name is Mustafa Saeed. He was get up by his neglected mother because his father died a number of months before his childbirth. He was sent to school where he had shown that he is a brilliant and advanced fleetly his elementary education, so he was sent to Cairo for secondary education where he was studied by Mrs. Robinson the schoolmaster of the school. He was gifted

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<sup>1</sup>Young, Robert. 1995. *Colonial Desire*. London: Routledge.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

scholarship to study in London, he used to mirror African culture and conventionalism , but sometimes he overdoes stories about his African descents such as his life in brushwood next-door fascinating snakes. These false tales were used to fascinate English women by giving them false commitments to marry them. For this reason many women destroy oneself such as Sheila Greenwood, Ann Hammond and Isabella Seymour and he killed Jean Morris after marrying her.

Mustafa Saeed *in the Season of Migration to the North* is created as an image of African reflection opposed to the attackers, the imperialistic force from Western civilization. Mustafa's sexual defect and wish for enjoyment is used as a recrimination of colony power to the suppressors to reflect their torture. He utilized Western women sexually as imperialistic exploited African people and their resources. Indicating to Mustafa's early years and using psychological criticism to examine his behavior, particularly his thirstiness for women. Despite his objecting behavior as a simple peasant as the rest of the men of his village in Sudan, he behaves differently in Europe.

On this regard the character of Mustafa Saeed will be analyzed using psychoanalytic criticism. From his early occurrence in the novel, Mustafa was free of love and care. His father is dead before his birth and left nothing for them to live at and meet their needs. He lived with his mother as strangers as they were met by chance, his mother was cold and departed no kisses no any kind of one's mother's side love. Mustafa is reflecting his life as child:

*I was born in Khartoum and grew up without a father, he having died several months before I was born. He did none the less leave us something with which to meet our needs- I had no brothers or sisters...we had no relatives. She and I acted as relatives to each other. As if she were some stranger on the road with whom circumstances had chanced to bring me. Perhaps it was I who an odd creature or may be my mother who was odd- I don't know.(Salih:p:19)<sup>1</sup>*

Mustafa Saeed was an empty character, because he was brought up in desolated condition of parental interest and love. He had never seen his father because his father died several months

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<sup>1</sup>Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*. Trans. Denys Johnson-Davies. Oxford: Heinemann Press.

before his birth. He had no brothers or sisters all he had was his mother who seemed to be a detached mother. Their relation be without sympathy; they looked as strangers lived together in one house.

For Sigmund Freud this sort of the early life impressions can result in focused on moral behavior in the later life in his adulthood. From his early life Mustafa was not like other children he has no emotions according to anything. Mustafa explain his early life misery:

*I had felt From childhood that I was different- I mean I was not like other children of my age :I wasn't affected by anything, I didn't cry when hit, wasn't glad if the teacher praised me in class, didn't suffer from the things the rest did. I was like something rounded, made of rubber: you throw it in the water and doesn't get wet, you throw it on the ground and it comes back.(Salih. P: 20<sup>1</sup>)*

Freud started his psychoanalytic theory through his handling of his patients who tolerated behavioral defects. The importance of this path relies on its effectiveness of the importance of literature. Freud (1993)<sup>2</sup> pointed out:

"The dream-thoughts which we first come across as we proceed with our analysis often strike us by the unusual form in which they are expressed; they are not clothed in the prosaic language usually employed by our thoughts, but are on the contrary represented symbolically by means of similes and metaphors, in images resembling those of poetic speech" (26).

Through this theory Freud resorts to discover guides of the character's psychological struggles such as pressed feelings and sinful behavior. These struggles may be assigned to the authors own early life sufferings as a result of loss of one of the parents, so the sexual struggles can be discovered through the study of the character.

Sigmund Freud confirmed that the early life experiences are accountable for forming the later adult personality. Freud asserts that "our early life experiences are very critical and crucial in forming and determining our adulthood relationships" (p35)<sup>3</sup>. Mustafa Saeed was completely

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<sup>1</sup> ibid

<sup>2</sup>Freud, Sigmund (1993). The Interpretation of Dreams in The Freud Reader

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

different from his groups; he was without feeling, uninterested person. Even when the teachers praised him for his clever ability in the class he didn't feel glad. The most effective factor that decayed Mustafa's early life according to psychoanalytic aspect is his bad relation with his mother. There wasn't any hint of soulful love between them. When he left Sudan for Cairo for further education, his mother didn't be minded for his leaving telling him that is his life and he has the total liberty to do what he likes. Mustafa's mother said:

*Do as you wish, depart or stay, it's up to you. It's your life and you are free to do with it as you will. In this purse is some money which will come in useful. That was our farewell: no tears, no kisses, no fuss. Two human beings had walked along a part of the road together, and then each has gone his way. This was in fact the last thing she said to me, for I did not see her again. (Salih, p:23<sup>1</sup>)*

Mustafa Saeed's coming to Cairo and departing his home Sudan is related with building the oedipal complex in relation to Mrs. Robinson. Assuming for the first time hugged by a woman in his life because of his disharmony with his mother: Mustafa Saeed describing the moment that he met Mrs. Robinson by saying:

*I felt the woman's arms embracing me and her lips on my cheek. At that moment, as I stood on the station platform amidst a welter of sounds and sensations, with woman's arms around my neck, her mouth on my cheek, the smell of her body- a strange European smell –tickling my nose, her breast touching my chest, I felt- I , a boy of twelve- a vague sexual yearning I had never experienced. (Salih, p: 25)<sup>2</sup>*

In contrast to his leaving from Sudan, Mustafa found a family who interest for him and be unhappy for his leaving from Cairo for London. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson were on the quayside when the ship sailed from Alexandria. Mustafa explain his feeling about his departure from Khartoum for Cairo.

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<sup>1</sup> Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*. Trans. Denys Johnson-Davies.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

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*"I saw her far-away waving to me with her handkerchief, then drying her tears with it, her husband at her side, his hands on his hips; even at that distance I could almost see the limpid blueness of his eyes.(Salih,p:26)*

Our protagonist used interracial sexuality as a weapon for retribution and also his early life issues have the great role to his erotic desire . He was a cunning in the feeling that he attracted many British women who represented him as a perfect easterly man. He played with their ideas giving them false promises as a result of spurious promises many British women committed suicide. Such as Ann Hammond, Sheila Greenwood, Isabella Seymour and killed Jane Morris.

On this aspect , Patricia Geesey(1997) said that it is “difficult not to see in his character a man who exacts vengeance upon British colonizers of the Sudan through his sexual exploits with women in London” (129)<sup>1</sup>. Sa'eed used solid aggressive state against the western women whom he practiced sex without any kind of intimacy. This situation describe his hate according to colonizers; he used western women as a detrimental punishment on colonialism.

As refered by Hassan, (2003): “a grim revenge on colonialism marked by sexism and misogyny.... For him, seducing women is reclamation of masculinity, a metonymic equivalent of conquering territory, and a symbolic revenge on Europe for the crime” (Hassan 311)<sup>2</sup>. No doubt there is a sort of avenge for the west by seducing their women in the mind of Mustafa's attitudes. Mustafa Saeed used to seduce five women and live with each other and giving them a promise that he would marry them and take a fake name with each other; that he was Hassan, Charles , Amin, Mustafa and Richard. In the court he was said " *In the period between October 1922 and February 1923, that in this period alone you were living with five women simultaneously*"(Salih, p: 35).<sup>3</sup>

For this reason one can say that the African man was not only the interest of political colonization but also became the erotic sufferer of western women as the relation between racism

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<sup>1</sup> Geesey, Patricia. (1997) “Cultural Hybridity and Contamination in Tayeb Salih’s Season of Migration to the North.”

<sup>2</sup> Hassan, Wail S. (2003) “Gender (and) Imperialism: Structures of Masculinity in Tayeb Salih’s Season of Migration to the North

<sup>3</sup>Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*.

and erotica came to the forefront of colonized society. Mustafa is thus has the capability to use his sexual tendencies as a kind of racial revenge for colonization, then he figurative the colonized who resist against the colonizer.

The discrimination of a western woman's body as being a site of western power, confirming the affections of royalty experienced by the colonized with each sexual occupation. Salih's understanding of interracial relationships during the colonial period is thus seen as an act which cannot be separated from past memories of colonialism, at least on the part of the African male, as race becomes connected to a larger battle for self respect (Hodge & Mishra 1993, p.285)<sup>1</sup>. As a result, sex and domination become intertwined for Mustafa and used as a tool of oppression.

Throughout the novel it is noticed that the experience of colonizer domination is inverted especially by Mustafa Sa'eed expressing: "I'll liberate Africa with my penis"(Salih 1969: 120)<sup>2</sup>. As well as Mustafa's social position as a lecturer in London, we understand that Mustafa gains capacity over Europeans also by his erotic subjections as a fruit of his violent , untruthful has a great role on western women such as Sheila Greenwood, Isabella Seymour and Ann Hammond. Their subjection to his desire appears, in a way, that Mustafa carried out to colonize them both physically and psychologically. In *On Borderline Between Shores Space and Place in Season of Migration to the North*, Mike Velez points out: "when Sa'eed arrives in England, his mental topography of the North becomes conjoined with a feminized Other. This Other he intends to conquer and conquer literally, woman by woman"(Velez 2010: p.194)<sup>3</sup>. Velez's analysis proves how Mustafa attacked colonialism by handling western women like the "Other" and just erotic subjects. He announces himself as the "colonizer"(Salih 1969: 94)<sup>4</sup>. Inquiring that Mustafa has been deceiving them, tricked women are driven to suicide, except for Jean Morris.

Mustafa is the heritage of colonizer power and a result of western culture in terms of education, perspective and destination. He feels in a state of dominance and power to enslave that West at his control and he affirms it by using his power over western women. In his article entitled

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<sup>1</sup> Hodge, Bob & Vijay Mishra. 1993. What is post-colonialism?

<sup>2</sup>Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*.

<sup>3</sup>Valez, Mike (2010). On borderline between shores: Space and place in *Season of Migration to the North*:

<sup>4</sup>Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*.

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*The Empire Renarrated: "Season of Migration to the North" and the Reinvention of the Present*, Saree S. Makdisi indicates :

Mustafa was born in Khartoum in 1898, the year of the bloody defeat of the Mahdist forces by Kitchener's army in the battle of Omdurman, which signalled the final collapse of Sudanese resistance to British encroachment. Rather than passively accepting this defeat, however, Mustafa's life is spent trying to symbolically "reverse" the history of modern European colonialism. After his appointment at the University of London, he begins his campaign to throw colonialism back on the colonizers (Makdisi 1992: 811)<sup>1</sup>.

However, Mustafa's sharp conflict with the west happens through Jean Morris who get involved his colonizing experience. She likes to have come to decolonize Sa'eed, the symbol of east. She comes into contact with his point of weakness by disgraceful him with stereotyped ethnic depictions differently from other female sufferers. For instance, Isabella Seymour says: "Ravish me, you African demon. Burn me in the fire of your temple, you black god"(Salih 1969: 106)<sup>2</sup> and Sheila Greenwood exclaims: " how marvelous your black color is! (...) the color of magic and mystery and obscenities"(Ibid :139), while Ann Hammond worships him with these words: "you are Mustafa, my master and my lord....and I am Sausan( name of one of Abu Nuwas' lover), your slave girl"(Ibid: 146).

On the other hand, Morris is realize of Mustafa's tricks and she always challenges him when he tells her he will kill her: "My sweet, you're not the kind of man that kills."(ibid: 159) Upon this, Mustafa experiences "a feeling of ignominy, loneliness, and loss"(ibid: 159). Especially when Morris declares she will hate him until death, Mustafa feels the slave and victim of the West again in spite of his cultural occurrence which makes him agreement in weteran society. As John E. Davidson indicates in his 1989 article *In Search of a Middle Point: The Origins of Oppression in Tayeb Salih's "Season of Migration to the North* ,

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<sup>1</sup> Makdisi ,Saree S. (1992). 'The Empire Re-narrated: "Season of of Migration to the North

<sup>2</sup>Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*



the Europeans, Mustafa realizes, want him to forget his intellect and thus remain a savage in their eyes; hence, his decision to stay abroad to wage war on the English by refusing to do so (...) by maintaining his grasp on his intellect, Mustafa defeats their objectification”(Davidson 1989: 390)<sup>1</sup>.

Mustafa’s conquering is finished by Morris, who destroys all his triumph. Obviously Mustafa admits: “having been a hunter, I had become the quarry”(Salih 1969:159)<sup>2</sup>. This reflection causes to his falling as a catastrophic hero and crumbling his dignity in European society. For the beaten hero there remains nothing to do other than to homecoming to which he will canalize his talents and knowing as a fecund man of country.

Then we can say *Season of Migration* as a novel that sometimes implicitly, sometimes explicitly assault colonial power and its two face reflected on its sufferers. Maybe the colonizer presented himself to create advancement to uncivil, unaware East through power, brutality and valor, but how could it think the sufferers will put up with the same techniques to take retaliation on colonizers? Mustafa describes colonial actions as such:

the ships at first sailed down the Nile carrying guns not bread, and the railways were originally set up to transport troops; the schools were started so as to teach us how to say “Yes” in their language. They imported to us the germ of the greatest European violence”(ibid: 95).

This duplicity of colonialism encouraged colonized to defend against colonizer with the same brutal stratagems as a reversal of harsh, colonial power movements. Brutality is like a virus of a fatal illness for Mustafa and other colonized societies. Therefore during the trial he keeps these words as his inner thoughts: “ yes, my dear sirs, I came as an invader into your very homes: a drop of the poison which you have injected into the veins of history. ‘I am no Othello. Othello was a lie”(Salih 1969: 95)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Davidson, John E. 1989. In Search of a Middle Point: The origins of oppression in Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*

<sup>2</sup>Salih, Tayeb, 1969. *Season of Migration to the North*

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

Through the analysis it can be concluded that the brutal interracial sexuality by Mustafa is represented as a recrimination and punishing for the west for their offense of African utilization. Despite that, Mustafa's changeful childhood was behind his sexual troubles as a demonstration to what has been pointed by Sigmund Freud that the early childhood experiences have an effect on our later adulthood practices. For this reason, he pursued differently between Sudan and Europe because he was restricted by social and religious merits in Sudan and as contrasting the liberty and enjoyable his innate sexual requirements in the west.

Consequently, Mustafa comes to show all his European companies as dealing with the British culture of imperialism as he is incapable to detachment himself from colonial remembrance. In an attempt to get racial revenge, Mustafa changes his suffering into displeasure by sexually suppressing his beloveds in an attempt to metaphorically refuse the West and purify Africa's history of colonial power. Mustafa's faith in an irresolvable racial struggle is orally uttered through Mustafa's employment of colonial discourse, which also represents to bear the objection between black and white. The prayer of colonial discourse by both Mustafa and his partners' similar use of language thus represents to underline that there is no way of escaping of colonial classifications within interracial relationships during the colonial era.

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