

The Notions of Mimicry and Ambivalence in Rubai el-Madhoun's *Fractured Destinies*

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to offer a postcolonial reading of Rubai el-Madhoun's *Fractured Destinies* (2015). The researcher does a careful observation of the novel within the conceptual framework of postcolonial criticism based on the prominent post-colonial critic Homi Bhabha's theories of ambivalence and mimicry. These concepts explore el-Madhoun's protagonist, Ivana Ardakian, a Palestinian girl who deeply subjugates to the western culture during the British Mandate era over Palestine and its aftermath. The study traces actions, behaviours of the cultural interactions between the coloniser and the colonized. Ardakia moves between two opposite cultures and two distant geographical regions. She elopes with her lover from Palestine towards Britain. And she, therefore, locates herself in what Homi Bhabha calls an ambivalent site. Ultimately, the protagonist does not belong to either one of the two cultures, places and affiliations.

Introduction

The postcolonial theory covers a wide range of theories and theorists. If one asks about the definition of the postcolonial or postcolonialism, people may define and use these words in many different ways: even what might seem to be the obvious core meaning for postcolonial, that is coming after the colonial cannot be taken for granted. By indicating to the origin and chronological connotations of the term, Sawant (2012, p.120) shows that the term was originally used by the historians after the second world war, such as the 'post-colonial state', where 'post-colonial' had a clearly chronological meaning that refers to the post-independence period.

The term has also been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization in Western institutions in the late 1970s. Young (2009) associate the meaning of postcolonialism with the idea of modernity and European knowledge. In the late 1970s onwards, as spearheaded by the arrival of academics in Western universities which were brought up in the so-called third world, the politics of postcolonialism began with the deconstruction of ethnocentric assumptions in Western knowledge.

Gilbert and Tompkins (2002) have also suggested that *post-colonialism* is often too narrowly defined. The term, according to a too-rigid etymology, is frequently misunderstood as a temporal concept, which typically indicates the time that come after colonization has ceased, or the time following the politically determined Independence Day on which a country breaks away from its governance by another state. They add that post-colonialism is, rather, an engagement with and contestation of colonialism's discourses, power structures, and social hierarchies.

According to Roy (2008) by the term *postcolonialism* one attempts to examine and analyze a nebulous range of discursive practices, such as slavery, dispossession, settlement, migration, multiculturalism, suppression,

resistance, representation, difference, race, gender and sexuality, class, otherness, place, diaspora, nomadism, hybridity, indigeneity, ethnicity and identity.

The term is also accompanied with various connotations or significations. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2004) the term 'post-colonial' covers all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression.

In his book titled *Orientalism*, Edward Said, by most accounts, revolutionized the literary field and laid the ground for postcolonial theory, creating an unprecedented dispute in the Academic circles in the West and East alike (Hamadi, 2014). Said aims to do away the binary opposition between the West and the East so that one cannot claim the superiority over the other (Sawant, 2012).

Unlike Said, the postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha is one of the major proponents of postcolonialism. Bhabha is the most earnest one to propagate the concept of hybridity. His colonial discourse theory describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and colonized. According to Bhabha (1994) the new polarity of the colonialist and colonial country results in disintegrating rather than integrating different entities. Therefore, Bhabha suggests "hybridity" as a means of bridging the gap between disparate entities. He utilizes the concept of hybridity to stress the interdependence relationship between the colonizer and the colonized.

According to Licata (2012, p. 4), Bhabha envisages the cultural hybridity as a way of countering the colonial power: by blurring the intercultural boundaries, and therefore, by de-essentializing the colonized, the blending of native and European cultures produced an ambivalence that gradually altered the authority of colonial power. Bhabha also utilizes the concept "mimicry" to describe the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Sawant (2012, p.123) says that when colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizers' cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of these traits. Rather, it results in a 'blurred copy (p.123) of the colonizer that can be quite threatening.

The present study centres on Bhabha's concepts of Mimicry and Ambivalence as a central preoccupation dealt with by Rabai al-Madhoun, the Palestinian-British novelist. Al-Madhoun, who is located as a postcolonial writer, lives in an in-between state and he therefore explores manifestations of cultural hybridity in his *Fractured Destinies* through which the novelist discusses the attitude of the main character, Ivana and how she is influenced and responded to the western cultural stream in which she is immersed in her day-to-day life in the postcolonial environment. Al-Madhoun explores cultural issues that are of concern to Palestinian immigrants who are afflicted by the experience of colonization before and in the aftermath the Palestinian Nakba. He also provides an appropriate combination of the themes to grant life to his narrative terrain. Therefore, the issues pertaining to cultural hybridity such as ambivalence, mimicry are also explored.

In Rubai el-Madhoun's postcolonial novel, Ivana Ardakian, a colonized Palestinian girl has eloped with her British lover and lived most of her life in London until her death there. She loses her cultural identity and the struggle of vacillation between two opposite cultural identities leads her to an ambivalent site. Therefore, in this study, it has been attempted to explore Rabai el-Madhoun's *Fractured Destinies* under Homi Bhabha's theories of Mimicry and Ambivalence as the causes of emerging this contradictory site.

Methodology

The present study traces a postcolonial novel *Fractured Destinies* by contemporary Palestinian novelist Rubai el-Madhoun. Qualitative study is conducted through textual analysis. For achieving the objectives that revolve in and around themes of Mimicry and Ambivalence, the postcolonial theory is regarded as suitable and crucial to analyze such themes. In order to do so, the notable scholar Homi Bhabha will be selected to discuss and analyze the mentioned themes.

Results and Discussion

In the general sense, mimicry is a direct consequence of a process of convergence and intermixture between two cultures, especially, in terms of the culture of the colonizer and the colonized, which usually creates an absorbed hybrid subject on the part of the colonized. This phenomenon often generates or produces an ambivalent state of imitation which is considered as an apparent sign in the strategy of mimicry. This process of mimicry undermines the binary opposition of self and other which is the most striking feature within the colonial discourse. In this regard, Homi Bhabha (1994) justifies mimicking of the colonial subject due to "the desire for a reformed, a recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (p.86). Here, Bhabha clearly indicates to the colonized's wish to be absorbed and imitated to create the similarities and differences to show the oscillated strategy of the process of mimicry between "being English and being Anglicized" (1994, p.90). In his reference to this statement "almost the same but not quite", Bhabha also asserts the implied existence of the colonized other in the context of the colonial discourse as a clear sign of the ambivalence of the colonial mimicry as Bhabha says "mimicry 'does not merely 'rupture' the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a 'partial' presence"(Huddart, 2006, p.41). Therefore, mimicry is embraced by the ambivalent condition of the relationship between the coloniser and colonized. When the colonizer wants the colonized subject to imitate him by embracing the colonizer's assumptions, values, actions and cultural habits and so on, the consequence is not an identical reproduction of those traits.

From the very outset, we are introduced to an Armenian Palestinian girl named Ivana Ardakian who deeply assimilates the Western culture. At an early age of her teenage years, Ivana has an affair with John Little House, a young British medical officer who serves as the political strategist of the British Mandate over Palestine. Upon the last days of Mandate, we learn that Ivana is more attracted to John. Ivana's character could be considered as the best example of those Palestinians whose state of mind is engaging in cultural absorption and thus deeply attracted to mimic the Western culture.

Ivana has identified her own quick attachment as an imitated personality to the colonial ideology. Ivana describes her love story and her affair with the young Westerner. She quickly allows herself to indulge and incorporate her personality into the Western culture, something that is not possible for fulfilling her wish and ambition in the conservative environment of Palestine, her country of origin. She speaks about her readiness "to do anything to bind herself to John forever, even if a great war should break out between Britain and Abud Square, engulfing all the Armenians of Acre"(*Fractured Destinies*, p.23).The above quotation tells us that Ivana doesn't take care for the negative influences even if they lead to a destructive war or a violent confrontation between the colonizer and colonized Palestinians. The most important purpose for her is to maintain a strong relationship with John who is a representative of the colonizer's culture. Therefore, she finds it normal to betray her values and to seek her satisfaction alongside the Western man whom she loves. In other words, this act on Ivana's part can be regarded "as a sign of the productivity of the colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities" over the colonized to use Bhabha's words (1994, p.112).

At the end of her life in London, Ivana becomes an ambivalent character that oscillates between two cultural worlds which are different from each other. Ivana has two different attitudes towards two singers who have

contradictory cultural backgrounds: John Lennon, the British singer and an Arab traditional singer named Fairuz. This ambivalent attitude takes place during a meeting in her house with her friends and relatives. Ivana discusses her funeral eulogy. Among her requests to her daughter, Julie and her husband, Walid, is to fulfil her wish that after death, her body should be cremated, and her funeral ceremony be to the John Lennon song 'Imagine': "I would like this song, which does not die as mortals die, to be the last thing my ears hear before the fire consumes them and they are turned to be ash" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.27). In line with this request, on another occasion, Ivana, in the same meeting asks Walid and her daughter, Julie as well as other mourners to hold a party in her old house in Palestine and listen to the famous Arabic singer "Fairuz raising the flower of cities to the highest heavens, and let her voice fill the city" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.29). The above quotations and statements indicate the role of Western culture and society in shaping the personality of Ivana. Her decision to choose both Arab and the Western singers could be seen as a considerable ambivalence in space personality of the postcolonial narrative. Ivana is too eager to transfer her pure identity to what she thinks as the more accepted identity, or more specifically, a mimic identity of the Western culture. The need to assimilate is very evident in her request for the fusion of both East and West upon her death.

Ivana uses various tones of discourse and different body languages in her dialogue to British friends and Arab relatives in London. She changes her traditional dialect of speech to a formal discourse when she talks to important persons. For example, on one occasion, even though a meeting in her house and not in an official institution, Ivana chooses to talk in an official dialogue with an official accent with Mr. Byer, an old British friend to her dead husband. The statements below indicate that she has simultaneously two varied ways of dialogue toward different persons. Ivana "sat up straight and went on: 'My friends, I invited you here today to say something else'" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.27). Then she turns and addresses Mr. Byer in "a business-like tone: 'Mr. Byer, we will add some further details to my will together. I will come to your office for this purpose at a time that we will agree on later". The foregoing passage indicates that Ivana's ambivalence in how she deals with the dual worlds of her life (*Fractured Destinies*, p.32).

In May 1948, Ivana's British husband, John Little house leaves Palestine and returns to London, his country of origin. Ivana happily receives him and celebrates the second occasion of her marriage to him. She decorates her body and wears a wedding dress which she keeps since her marriage to him in a British military air-base in Palestine. Needless to say, the above date in which Ivana celebrated, is the same date the Israeli occupation invaded Palestine in May 1948. This event caused a great physical and psychological catastrophe to the Palestinian people in particular and the Arab nation in general. Indeed, this event is called Nakba, an Arabic word that refers to the events that took place in Palestine, culminating in the establishment of the state of Israel and the loss of a nation for Palestinians. The above statement has apparent indications that Ivana celebrates her wedding on the same date of struggle of the Palestinian people against the Israeli invaders which results in their expulsion. It is the catastrophe in which indigenous natives are expelled and migrated elsewhere, and their land expropriated by the invaders. It also indicates that Ivana's British husband greatly contributed to preparing the way to the Israeli occupation over Palestine. To use Bhabha's notion of mimicry, Ivana accedes to the Western side of her cultural ambivalence.

In this sense, Ivana who is a Palestinian woman allies herself with John, who is her real enemy and a representative of the colonial domination on her country. To suit the background of the Western culture, the way of thinking and the acts of behavior as cultural signs of the West, Ivana attempts to fulfill and mimic such colonial requirements. Therefore, this scenario by Ivana, the colonized woman is not more than just another early sign of her ambivalent mimicry. It is a denial of the self and a desire for the other.

Mimicry can be manifested in different forms throughout Ivana's story. In her British home in London, Ivana invites some Westerners to attend a private meeting followed by a meal. During the meal, she is asked by her daughter about wine glasses as they seldom have wine in the house. This situation brings acute embarrassment

on the part of Ivana and she begins to apologize to the guests. Although she explicitly and obviously apologized, Ivana still feels embarrassed that the guests might think that she still clings to her older culture of prohibiting alcoholic drinks. Therefore, she again says to them that this attitude is "unintentional lapse and asked Julie to fetch seven glasses" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.21) of wine. This is because she thinks that in order to fit into the world of her Western guests, she must mimic their culture. When Ivana tries harder to mimic their culture with the episode of the wine it becomes more ludicrous. To put it in Bhabha's words "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (1994, p.86). The psychological effort Ivana puts on herself to become just like the Westerners makes her feel the needs to assert to them that she is like them. However, from her point of view to be like them is to exaggerate their Western ways. Her struggle to become like them locates her in the precarious position of being neither here nor there. She will never become them but be just like them- a mimic of the West.

On one occasion, Ivana speaks to her British friends about her past stories when she was a teenager. She tells them about the beginning of her love for John. But Ivana deliberately conceals the historical realities that happened due to her prohibited relationship with John. Al-Madhoun tells us that Ivana keeps quiet about the details of the war that breaks out between her family members and the residents of the quarter. Furthermore, she even conceals some events related to her last moments in Acra. Those events with all their details are still remembered and gossiped by the local residents since for many years.

After two days of Ivana's cremation, Julie carries on with the arrangement of her mother's will. She receives her mother's ashes in two porcelain jars. She takes these two jars of her mother's ashes to "Glass Company" in London. Ivana has specified details in her will for Julie strives to follow. She requests another container of porcelain in the form of a statue that resembles her mother. A few days later, Julie went back to the company to get the porcelain container on the belly of which is inscribed the phrase, "She died here....she died there". Underneath, in smaller letters, was written, "London-Acre, 2012" (*Fractured Destinies*, p. 32). Ivan died they she has lived- in two worlds of which she belongs to neither.

Even after his death, Ivana continues insisting not to forget the last years of her youth she has spent with John. She recalls a strong romantic attraction towards the colonial lover as she says "As if looking at the dead man in his seat opposite her...that he had been a handsome man, whom it was difficult for a girl of her age to resist at that time" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.22). She goes on further to lament his loss as she "sighed, so deeply did she miss him, and started talking about her happy memories in details" (p.22). The above statement denotes that this Westernized woman is still yearning for the Western man. This statement is symbolic of her ongoing efforts to mimic Western culture and identity.

Ivana's romantic nature since adolescence and her attempt to change following her adulthood into the Western culture develops a cultural hybrid which reflects her cultural rejection to the old Palestinian cultural values particularly as she sees patriarchy that subordinates a woman like her. In her early youth, when she was a student in Terra Sancta School in Palestine, Ivana reflects a further sign of attraction of the Western culture. At the early stage of her emotional development, she has ambivalent attitude towards the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized. In spite of some young Palestinian men's attraction to her and their desire towards her, Ivana totally neglects them. She rejects those Palestinian young men of the Sheikh Abdallah and Fakhura quarters, Abbud Square and other colleagues in her school as she feels that they are beneath her. This situation can be considered as another form of latent mimicry where she associates the colonizer and colonized from the binary opposition of superiority/ inferiority, centre/periphery, modern/traditional, and so on. Therefore, Ivana's attitude is ultimately reflected as a mimicking Westernized culture. Her decision to be on the side of the colonizer is evident as illustrated below:

The young men of Abbud Square and the Sheikh Abdallah and Fakhura quarters, as well as her colleagues in the Terra Sancta School, would scatter their morning smiles at her feet as she walked

along with the coquettishness of a teenager, showing off the power of her beauty over others, never turning to pick any of them up. She was ready to do anything to bind herself to John forever. (*Fractured Destinies*, p.23)

In contrast to her behaviour with the Palestinian youths as evidenced in the above lines, Ivana demonstrates in the last line of the above quotation to her own excessive desire towards the Palestinian's enemy, John who is the representative of the colonizer. Thus, Ivana is influenced by what she feels is the more attractive way of life of the colonizer as opposed to the degenerate existence of her own people. In looking at this from a postcolonial lens, it follows Bhabha's notion of hybridity as he considers it as a sign of her ambivalent mimicry of the colonizer.

In London, after her husband's death, Ivana inherits all his possessions, including his car, the house that she lives in and a sum of money. Ivana explains that she does not merely inherit his physical wealth but his spiritual culture as well. One example is her friendship with Mr. Byer, "whom Ivana had gotten to know during one of her secret romantic meetings with John before she had left Palestine" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.16). Her friendship with Mr. Byer links her to the culture of her late husband, and provides her with a sense of belonging to the husband's culture. Ivana insists to maintain the relationship with him as a constant reminder of her old relation with her husband. Thus, her friendship with Mr. Byre is "to remind her of the most beautiful days of her life...so she kept him beside her later, and entrusted him with her financial and the legal affairs" (p.16).

Another scenario where Ivana is helplessly mimicking the Western culture is her devotion to her daughter, Julie. After her marriage to John Little house, Ivana gives birth to Julie who is beautiful with green eyes, and looks like her father. In addition to the inheritance of his father green eyes, Julie is also given his surname. "Ivana turned to Julie as if to reassure herself that John's features were still there on her daughter's face" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.22). Like her friend Mr. Byer, Julie is Ivana's connection to the master's culture that she adores so much. The above statement indicates the manifestation of Ivana's blind absorption of Western culture which she feels is superior to her own Palestinian values.

It seems for Ivana, to a large extent, the colonial values have been inculcated in her psyche very deeply. She has failed to distinguish between her true enemy and her people. Not only has she been fascinated by the attractive appearance of the Western culture, but she also has gone further in rejecting the values of her own people. Such action will result in the confusion of her true identity as she attempts to emulate the culture that is alien to her. It is a matter of assimilation and mimicry as the ultimate end. This is exactly what Ivana says in her own description and her comparative attitudes towards the colonized and the colonizer "She said that a look from John's eyes was worth the whole blue sky of Acre [her native city in Palestine where she was born and grew up]" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.22). She has fallen into a cultural trap with no way of getting out.

Furthermore, Ivana doesn't think to reconsider her relationship with her colonial lover, John Little house. She never regrets her decision. In fact, she strives to resuscitate the love forever even after his death. "And that she had never for a moment thought about the madness of her relationship with him, in case her reason might make her lose the best love story she had ever lived" (p.22). The quote clearly illustrates that this madness of her relationship with the colonizer is a clear indication of her mimicry of the Western man.

Throughout the novel, mimicry manifests itself on many occasions. However, this manifestation has one major effect on Ivana Ardakian. She strictly refuses to admit and distinguish a real enemy who contributes, prepares and supports the Israeli occupation over her country. Her exaggerated and extreme mimicry is evidenced in the following scene when she states "that from the moment she had fallen in love with John, he had no longer been for her a hated British colonizer or a medical officer, but rather the only young man who had knocked her down with his first smile" (p.22-23).

Those exaggerated efforts to become someone else could be also seen in a scene at the beginning of the novel, where she prepares to escape with John. She is too eager to leave the old traditions and join the new one. Al-Madhoun tells his readers that Ivana has violated the values, traditions and norms of her ancestors. To put it another way, he wants the reader to take a closer look, reflecting the in-depth analysis in the novel of Ivana's character lest the reader falls into the same cultural trap.

In spite of her early knowledge of extreme disapproval of her mimicking behaviour, she chooses to ignore it at all. The following situation explains to which extent she is fascinated by the Western culture. It describes the way through which she escapes when "she closed the front door and ran down the twenty steps of the staircase. She peeped around the corner of the house and surveyed the neighbourhood" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.24). Her escape symbolizes her attempt to break away from her Palestinian roots and, instead, chooses the coloniser's culture. While adaptation to one's culture is part of how the Eastern people can imitate with the Western, Ivana takes it to another stage. She seems to repress her Palestinian identity to follow the Western culture which she feels is superior.

Furthermore, the narrative indicates that this Westernized figure, as Ivana has become, doesn't know the meaning of dedication and loyalty, whether to her parents, to her culture, or to her country. This is in regards to what has happened in the aftermath of these actions, starting from the love story, her marriage to the young British medical officer and subsequently her elopement with him to his city, London. Her behavior looks ridiculous in the views of the people close to her. Ivana faces great anger from her family members, especially her parents. The parents, Manuel, her father, and Alice, have no connection with Western culture. As a reaction to Ivana's action, they announce that they had disowned their only daughter the day she left the house. Eventually, Manuel who lives a miserable life died in a state of sorrow for himself and "for his daughter, all of whose attempts at reconciliation he had refused. He didn't reply to her letters, which continued to reach him for the first five years after their elopement" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.26). When her attempts at reconciliation failed, she beseeched him at least to accept and recognize his granddaughter, Julie, but she received no reply from him. Manuel is well aware that his granddaughter, Julie is a representative of colonial culture. As a consequence, he refuses this hybrid creature.

The above statements clearly indicate that her family dislikes her behaviour; they feel she mimics their enemies' behaviour. Although they love their daughter, they find it hard to accept her personality. The fact that their daughter has left their culture to embrace the new culture is something they cannot accept in a conservative society like Palestine. In the above statement, Al-Madhoun also describes Ivana's state of mind as never having fully gotten over her feelings of guilt. Bhabha (1994) describes this aspect of mimicry as the statement of a discrimination that is itself a process of disavowal.

In line with the commitment of her parents towards the Palestinian tradition and culture, there are other manifestations as clear indications of refusal, that is shown by other Palestinians who strongly rejects her mimicry of the colonizer. In a scene while Ivana prepares to escape the house of her parents with John Littlehouse who arrives near her house, she hears the sound of Mitri, the shoe shop owner who shouts: "I 'd like to know who brought this Englishman here to us! What's he doing in our quarter?" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.24). As a result, after hearing Mitri's shouts, sensing the man's anger, John leaves the place quickly. In another scene which also relates to Mitri's own attitude towards Ivana's relationship with the colonizer, Mitri quickly displays his feelings in front of Ivana when she leaves the house and walks past him toward John. He warns her:

Tell the man who brought you up at home, the residents of the Abbud quarter will not marry off their daughters to the British-they've been riding the country for thirty years, holding on to our shoulders and kicking their feet. And now they have to ride our women as well? (p.24).

In fact, in the aftermath of these events, Ivana vanishes from Abbud Square, where she has lived since her childhood. On occasions, her scandal is only reminded by people of the Square. Some people say "Ivana's in the custody of the English!", other asked " Wasn't Palestine enough for them? Did they have to take its daughters as well?"(*Fractured Destinies*, p.25) And since family is the core identity sign for Palestinians; the woman is considered by the conservative Palestinian society as a source of scandal.

The novel provides some textual excerpts of people who resist the imitation of the Western culture. The main theme behind this resistance is to refuse the ideology of Western culture. This rejection springs from the great gaps in values, traditions and religion between the conservative Palestinian society and the Western culture, added by the fact that Palestine was under colonization by the same power.

Conclusion

The study explored cultural issues in Rubai el-Madhoun's *Fractured Destinies* by applying the notions of Homi Bhabha in order to examine, and then to situate this Palestinian work in the realm of postcolonial literary discourses. In the analytical part, the researcher has explored the attitudes and responds Ivana towards western culture. The novelist explored the in-between site or the ambivalent status and the transformations in his protagonist's original cultural identity. The attitude of the Palestinian native character towards the colonial culture in which she immersed is a pivotal issue in this narrative terrain.

The life of the native characters under the influences of colonial cultural domination. In light of the issues have been explored in the fourth chapter, it is apparent that in postcolonial Western environments, one could recognize the cultural oscillation. The contradiction between the two cultures caused disorder and divisions in these characters, resulting in sufferings due to in-between status. In this regard, the novels have been analysed under the first research question can be regarded as good examples depicting the cultural trauma experienced by the native characters in the postcolonial Western societies. Three main characters shared common characteristics in terms of their cultural affiliations and their predicament of wavering space in which they have located themselves.

In the light of the issues explored in the analytical section, the concept of Homi Bhabha's cultural hybridity and its various faces such mimicry and ambivalence have been adopted as postcolonial criticism that closely relevant to el-Madhoun as postcolonial writer. Both Bhabha's notion of these theories and the novelists' view explore the condition of people who left their original homelands towards the foreign countries and therefore immersed themselves in the alien lifestyles and languages. Due to the trapping between two cultures, values, traditions and languages, such people stay oscillating and face the crisis of affiliation as where they belong to. They face mixed cultural identity as the consequence of this ambivalent status and they remain to live a dual life.

The colonisers' ideology has been devoted to reshaping the culture, values and origins of the native people. It's the main aim is to create a fragile and threatened culture of the native people. The authority of the British Mandate upon Palestine well realized that its duty would not continue in Palestine and instead the role would be given to the Zionist project. Thus, the British project changes its ideology from military occupation to cultural domination as an alternative means which would remain its cultural seeds for the future. The colonizers' goal is to make the culture and values of native people vanish and fuse into their colonial culture which is considered in a superior position. Upon the era of the British Mandate, some native people in Palestine have been displayed to such cultural changes in their lives.

Consequently, Rubai el-Madhoun in *Fractured Destinies* calls our attention towards attractive features that the British culture immersed in the Palestinians' mind and therefore, the abandonment of original values and

traditions. Ivana Ardakian has eagerly embraced the cultural changes in her early life during the British Mandate when she falls in love and then elopes with the British John Little House, a young British medical officer who has succeeded in reshaping her indigenous cultural identity. Throughout her life in London, Ivana has immersed herself in western culture. Ivana cannot forget her British husband even after his death. She recounts his strong attachment with him by saying that she is ready "to do anything to bind herself to John forever, even if a great war should break out between Britain and Abbud Square, engulfing all the Armenians of Acre" (*Fractured Destinies*, p.23). However, on many occasions, Ivana tries to restore her indigenous cultural identity through her recurrent letters of her parents but she fails due to the ongoing rejection on the part of the parents. Furthermore, the population of Abbud Square also acclaim a sharp, immediate repudiation of such hybrid creature. Ultimately, she situated in a liminal space when she realized her imminent death. As a consequence, this mimic character could not be accepted by the indigenous population and nor adjusts herself in a western environment. This character becomes absorbed by a double cultural identity. Therefore, she can be regarded as the employment of Bhabha's notion of mimicking of the colonial subject due to "desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is the same but not quite" (1994, p.86).

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