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# **The Controversy of Identity Between the Author and the Characters of "The Disoriented"**

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## **Abstract:**

This paper looks into the forms of identity and belonging of the author and characters of "The Disoriented" novel by Amin Maalouf. It is a big, exquisite novel about friendship, betrayal, nostalgia, ideas, politics, and the world as it is. The paper is divided into two parts: Part one tackles the concept of identity, the characteristics of the protagonist Adam, his relationship with the author's personality, the problematic belonging and identity and the conflict and transformations in the Novel's characters it creates due to the warfare in their homeland. Part two tackles the exposition of conflict on which the novel's incidents are based on globalization. This part also encompasses symbolism and inference for some characters in the novel and the implications of the ending in "The Disoriented".

**Keywords:** Amin Maalouf – "The Disoriented", Identity, Belonging, Globalization.

## Introduction

"In the journal entry that opens "The Disoriented", Adam addresses the Biblical origins of his name: "I carry in my name the birth of humanity, but I belong to a humanity that is extinguishing itself. In the long term, all the sons of Adam and Eve are lost children." ((Maalouf 2013, 553)

The Lebanese writer "Amin Maalouf" narrated in his well-known novel "The Disoriented" with a beautiful narrative sense, the events of an entire generation, and the suffering of a whole century, which is inspired by the scenes of the life of a group of friends (Byzantine group) as they were called; various, diverse and dreaming friends: Marxists, Christian Socialists, Jews, who represent the spectra of the homeland and the aspiration of young people during this period, separated by war and torn to throw them in various parts of the earth. Each of these young men took a life path that the war pushed him in its way, separated by war. However, their wandering combined them between faith and atheism, alienation or affiliation, commitment or liberation, eastern or western culture, exile or homeland.

The writer tries to drop what happened in the civil war in Lebanon on what is happening in Syria and the hall region today; perhaps that is why the name of Lebanon was not mentioned in any of the chapters of the novel, maybe he meant that this wandering is not confined to Lebanon and was not limited to it, but rather every Arab country in which a revolution took place, turned after that in war. The societal and international situation and the harbingers of the Arab Spring are present with full force. Many joints in the novel are technically fascinating, enjoyable, and move seamlessly between private and public, current and past, local and global, mental, emotional, and philosophical.

We relied on content analysis of the novel in this research methodology.

### 1. The belonging's trouble of the characters in the Novel

#### 1.1 The concept and types of identity:

Identity is a word derived probably from the Latin "identidem, which is the compound of idem et idem, literally, same and same". (<sup>1</sup>)

We can observe :

- 1) Cultural identity: Some define it as the code through which an individual can introduce himself about the social group he belongs to. He gets acquainted with others as he belonged to this group. (Manhawi 2008, 21)
- 2) The social identity: is a "part of the individual's self-concept, which is derived from his knowledge of his membership in the group or groups while gaining the relevant value and sentimental meanings of such membership.
- 3) The national identity: is the identity used to refer to the individual's homeland, which is identified through official papers and identification cards. (Al Jreibe 2012, 4-5)
- 4) Age identity: The identity that contributes to the classification of individuals according to their age groups. Many researchers emphasized the significance of establishing concepts of identity in humans from a young age because their presence "can significantly contribute to strengthening the relationship with others and make it warm, such as neighbors, members of a group, fellow citizens or even followers of the same faith. This can increase our focus on certain identities, thus enriching our bonds and making us do several things for each other. It can even assist us to move beyond our self-centred lives. (Sen 2008, 18)

Contrary to the above-mentioned, anyone who "adopts a more complicated identity would end up marginalized. For instance, a young man born in France to two Algerian parents has two axiomatic belongings and should fulfil both. (Maalouf 1999, 8)

Relationships among individuals define the characteristics of the individual and the collective identity. The Polish Psychologist "Tagvil" alongside several researchers have introduced the theory of social identity in 1972. He clarified that "the self-derives its meaning through the social context that takes place through relationships among groups; and defines the position of an individual in society. (Zayed 2006, 18)

The characteristics of Adam, the protagonist of "The Disoriented."

Since the beginning of the novel, Adam has been a character who seeks self-reconciliation and overcome several contradictions imposed by the war in Lebanon. This forced him to travel and be an expatriate in France. He pretends to be a warrior who expects to die standing "I am the one assigned with triumphs when the time comes, I will collapse like a tree trunk and keep standing rather than bending" (Maalouf 2013, 11)

With his instinctive rebellion, he believes that repentance in his last days "is religiously worthless and that old Romans have never shown repentance neither have people of my time" (Maalouf 2013, 12)

Burdened by the concerns and issues in his country, he always expected the worst, whether for his country or the whole world. "From that location hanging between the coast and the mountain, we shall witness the end of the world, our world, however, the end of our country, the way we know it. I dare to say, the end of our entire Eastern Civilization". (Maalouf 2013, 35)

Adam sees himself as always in delay, the fleeing person, who travelled from one country to another to have the last goodbye look at Murad; despite that, he refuses to attend his funeral and always adopts the opinion of (females) on how to deal with (males). For example, his return to Lebanon to see Murad for the last time was the result of advice by Dolorees. He would never have met his old university friends Ramzi and Ramez, if it were not for the advice of Samiramis.

Despite his escape from Lebanon, when the war began, he had always stigmatized Murad of treason because the latter exploited the war to be a right hand for suspicious people.

The crisis of homeland extends to constitute an irony for Adam when he attempts to explain the reason for leaving Lebanon. It becomes apparent in his response when he says to Murad: "I did not leave, my country had left."

He wishes deep inside if he could combine two homelands, his homeland and the country of his displacement. If he only could kiss Samiramis without any restrictions as he used to do in Paris, without being starred at with rage. (Maalouf 2013, 114)

He led his life, missing the cause and forgetting or pretending to forget his homeland. When Tania suggested a reunion with the old fellows, he rejoiced and enthusiastic about writing to his friends and telling them about the idea. One in the USA, and another in Brazil, he got enthusiastic that he suggested the reunion to Ramiz while on the plane to Amman. He was keen to explore the motivations that drove Ramiz to join the priesthood.

If one considers Adam's behaviors above, one would realize that the returning protagonist from exile, by choice, seeks to fulfil an old dream, a reunion, a gathering around the fireplace on a cold night. If obstacles have prevented this from happening in Lebanon, it could be even sweeter to realize it with the old friends, the reckless youth mates and intimate friends.

Adam, the withdrawn, has been transformed into a participant since his migration for the first time. He began to see clearly as if he awakened after bewilderment, and he overwhelmingly disapproved of his actions. He reached out to examine his surrounding and reassess the whole situation. He also tried to reconfigure the concept of the other in their interest, this time.

"There are many people who turned to be smugglers and thieves; they could have become the best people in life, had societies stayed intact." (Maalouf 2013, 190)

## **1.2 The dilemma of belonging and the relationship to homeland**

All characters in "The Disoriented" have experienced a crisis in their relationships with their homeland. The author made old friends look like one fabric. He came across all segments of the Lebanese society, before and after the war, namely:

-Murad: who represents the war dealers, who benefited and nurtured the plight of war. They did not suffice with selling their identities but also offered everything for sale. They accepted the new homeland identity no matter how faulty and deformed it is. It was alarming of destruction and diminishing. All of this was to have a

luxurious life. His collaboration with the High Commissioner reflected his desire to replace his current life with another.

Tania: Murad's wife is a model of the followers who considered the circumstances in the country convenient. We should be defeated as long as our country is. In addition, "what does one do if your friend disappoints you? When you have no more friends. What do you do if your country lets you down? When it is not your country anymore?" (Maalouf 2013, 66)

They dealt with the whole issue as if this is the way it should be and even attempted to justify the crooked situation in addition to listing its privileges. She sees her country as one which will always have partisanship, chaos, favoritism, nepotism and corruption, yet it is the country of luxurious living, human warmth and generosity.

Her suggestion of a reunion of the old friends indicates that she became aware of the collective concept after being fed up with the regular individual performance for her life with Murad.

- Albert Quithar: the young man, who is disgruntled with war and attempts to commit suicide, yet before he takes his own life, he gets kidnapped and threatened to be killed. After survival, he travels to the USA and becomes an American citizen who works in Futurism. He symbolizes those who fled the hell of war, such as Adam and others, who were consumed by disputes in one country.

He was controlled by emotions of concern, sadness, pessimism, guilt and restlessness with the lack of objectives in life, which would make an individual separated from reality and ideals in life". (Al Kadafi 1998, 187)

- Bilal: a fanatic patriotic person who sees the way out of the crises through weapons and military engagement with parties in conflict. He transformed from a lover of Samiramis to a warrior who dies too soon with the first bombshell to hit the neighbourhood. He went out to preserve his love for Samiramis, yet Bilal could be a symbol of the Chauvinistic Nationalism, which glorifies the country for what it is. His death is an indication by Maalouf that he is not a fan of such trends; the identity would never reveal itself amidst the bullets and smoke of gunpowder.

He believed that it was not his time, neither as a lover nor as a warrior; thus he addressed Adam with all bitterness of the reality and fear of the unknown; "Don't you think Adam, we were not born in the right time?" (Maalouf 2013, 22)

Bilal was only a symbol of the lover who was compelled by circumstances to engage in a war that had nothing to give him. He replaced the locket of his beloved with a weapon. The only thing he was sure of in his life was his love for Samiramis, and he held on to her as much as he held on to faith. However, their lives were full of sweet lovers' quarrels. Maalouf says, through Samiramis; "we had a tempestuous relationship, it is true, we would quarrel, then makeup but none of us would let go of the other." (Maalouf 2013, 225)

- Ramiz and Ramzi are two adjacent models used by the author to express the materialistic interpretation of identity and how it could take a Sufi trend in so many instances after seeking a mirage and a lost hope. The two friends had replaced the lost homeland for an empire of engineering and construction to compensate for the concept of homeland, which was diminishing. As their success increased and their sought objectives were fulfilled, they were shocked to discover, their world is only a virtual one, even though they have been innovative in creating it.

The family problems started to escalate for Ramzi and erased the features of the homeland, be it the country or home. Everything was lost, and even the self was lost, which he closely contemplated in books of priesthood in his old days.

The author says through him, "at the beginning of my life, I dreamt of building the world, yet at the end of my life, I built nothing." (Maalouf 2013, 338)

In another quote, he says, "I spent my life building, but when I look back, I do not find myself proud of anything I built." (Maalouf 2013, 255)

Ramiz, the objective equal of Ramzi, travelled the world, striking deals and undertaking projects. However, whenever he remembered the destruction in his homeland, he started to build and construct for others until Donia, his wife, complained to Adam: "I wish Ramiz would contact me now and then; to tell me if he would spend the night in Singapore, Dubai or Kuala Lumpur." (Maalouf 2013, 278)

Nevertheless, he carried the same pain as Ramzi did: the increasing feel of contempt and inferiority, let alone defeat.

"I belong -by birth- to a defeated civilization, and although I do not want to deny my origin, I am destined to carry such stigma with me." (Maalouf 2013, 261)

In another quote: "in Paris when you speak in Arabic, don't you tend to speak down?" (Maalouf 2013, 262)

The author used two similar names intentionally (Ramiz and Ramzi). They are both derived in Arabic from the root (RAMAZA), which means to symbolize. He wished to clarify to the reader that the beginnings, which are more or less the same, usually lead to similar objectives, even through different means. They both sought to replace the concept of identity, "the objective of our constant search for identity and building resumes that connect the different parts of ourselves to make us one. The self is described in psychology as recapturing the illusionary satisfaction of feeling full." (Hall 2008, 150)

- Samiramis is a symbol of liberated identity until falling apart and is the closest to embody what Lebanon, as a country and people, have ended up to. She lost her old love, Bilal, who died in war and took with him all spiritual supply that a woman could need. Thus she fell in the post-war swamp (Lebanon), which bursts with temptations until the morning, feeding on the remains of its countrymen, whether under bombardment and dust or those who fled to exile by choice.

She pretends to observe traditions and conventions when Adam gets off the taxi and attempts to hug her and gives no actual response, "Adam, you have lived in expatriation for so long, that you no longer recognize traditions in the country." (Maalouf 2013, 31)

Yet, she would not mind such a thing when they are in isolation. "If you kiss me before leaving, I will not shout for help." Then after taking things too far in the first night of making love, "Adam, you need to ensure the door is properly locked." (Maalouf 2013, 42)

She would not mind being drunk and having lust. She sees the Champagne as the alternative for freshwater." (Maalouf 2013, 44)

Moreover, she profoundly feels alienated in her own country, let alone self-lost; she is one of those who have lost the feeling of national belonging. Thus she fell, alongside others, in the trap of unilateralism and with a trend of self-centeredness. The philosopher Ernest Gellner once wrote that in modern society, "A man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears... this is a side of or maybe the actual core of the nationality problem, to have a nation is not a basic characteristic of humanity, but currently, it has become so." (Hall 2008, 149)

- Naeem is a Jewish Lebanese immigrant to Brazil; he fled the war. Running away from confrontation applies to him as much as it does to Adam. The author does not talk much about him. However, we find Naeem as unilateral to identity; he sees no issue in the mates gathering but tells his mother of his travel to Lebanon were blood, war and fire. He also sees Brazil as the promised land rather than Palestine, which could be attributed to him being a Jew who is used to displacement. Even when he speaks about food and his extreme insatiability, one would feel that something cannot be stored in this person's mind. The most favorite thing for him is to reserve a table at a restaurant. It seems that this applies to him and extends to his wife Rachel, who shares such trends. Her restaurant is her sole occupation, in which she enjoys making different sorts of food. However, she only approves anything if Naeem does. Thus, they have not found an identity on earth; they chose to bury it in their bowels.

### 1.3 The identity transformations for the characters of “The Disoriented.”

The author was keen to introduce the reader to the old friends using the awareness current (speaking with oneself) and presenting the incidents in a flashback manner but in his way. He did not follow subsequence in presenting the incidents for several reasons; the first is that he speaks from memory, and the second is to achieve suspense and surprise. After the message got across to Adam, it notifies Albert's suicide; everyone was surprised that Albert was alive. After a hot night with Samiramis, or (Samy), he was surprised to know that she and Bilal were lovers. At the end of the novel, or a bit before that, we were astonished that Albert Quithar is a homosexual, married to an American friend (James). We believe the author resorted to such a thing to preserve sympathy between the reader and Albert, the young man who committed suicide. Had the reader known, since the beginning, of his homosexuality, he would have lost sympathy towards Albert and would not have cared about the hindrances he faced in life and how its consecutive strikes tumbled him.

The third reason, which justifies the intentional lack of subsequence in incidents, is that the author sought to make the reader feel the confusion and instability Lebanon suffered from and how they reflected on the characters and created a chasm between imagination and reality. This was obvious in the skilled narration of the author through narrating memories, reading old messages by which the huge differences among friends in the past and present show.

Amin Maalouf says, “let us observe a man in his fifties on the street, this man in 1980 would have announced with pride and without any confusion (I am Yugoslavian). If one asked him closely, he would say he resides in the Bosnia and Herzegovina, and he, by coincidence, comes from a Muslim family. If we run into the same man in war, he would spontaneously answer, I am Muslim, and might grow his beard according to Sharia or maybe add instantly, I am Bosnian. He would not appreciate it if we remind him of his Yugoslavian nationality. Today, if we ask someone on the street, he would say I am Bosnian then I am Muslim and would affirm regularly going to the mosque. However, he would stress that his country constitutes a part of Europe and hopes to see it as a part of the European Union one day.” (Maalouf 2013, 15-16)

What could be inferred from Maalouf's text is that identity is usually influenced by surrounding circumstances, whether positively or negatively. Sometimes, they magnify to obsession, and at other times, they shrink to the point of denial and contempt, and this is how he tackled the characters of his novel.

Albert saw the salvation of the homeland crises through ending his life. He was the same person who conducted a study in Futurism and planned for tomorrow after being infuriated by yesterday. His travel to the USA had contributed to his psychological healing temporarily. Adam never imagined his friends to gather without Albert, who was the wisest, the most sarcastic, the brightest, in addition to the most pessimistic. However, this hardly showed in his letters since he settled in the USA.” (Maalouf 2013, 328)

Travelling to the USA enabled Albert to reevaluate his old behaviors, which had undergone a great deal of thought, and “the social practices undergo scrutiny constantly, and are reformed in light of the information, which would lead to the existential replacement for its nature.” (Giddens 2005, 37-38)

Albert is only a model of the change the “modernism” concept has created.

The person who had suffered from depression returned to Futurism after absorbing the concept of Modernism in the American approach. Antony Giddens sees that “the patterns of life created by modernism has distanced us from all conventional for the social system in an unprecedented manner, the transformations relevant to modernism whether externally (the external extensions) or internally (the internal extensions) which are deeper than most sorts of change”. (Hall 2008, 147)

David Harvey supports this opinion in that Modernism is also “a non-ending process of internal interruptions and fragmentation on the inside.” (Hall 2008, 149)

According to those above, the features of Samiramis, the lover, have disappeared and were replaced by Samy, the mistress. Additionally, Tania called for a reunion again after separation was the nature of things.

## 2. The Conflict on which Incidents Are Based

### 2.1 Symbolism and Projection in "The Disoriented" between the Identity of the Individual and the State

The protagonist attempts to gather the old friends. After we cited the psychological characteristics of the protagonist, we can find similarity between the individual and Lebanon as a state; the protagonist attempts to gather his old friends, and Lebanon tries to pick his countrymen after the war consumed them.

We note that the friends of the protagonist represent all segments of the Lebanese society; for instance, Murad had traded everything and imposed his system on the beneficiaries of such plight (Tania), and they forgot or pretended to forget the tragedy of the homeland as opposed to the lustre of money, prestige and influence. The disaster was horrifying, and the countrymen, who enjoyed their comfort, could choose any solutions through which they could overcome the homeland's circumstances. Adam described them "we used to start our lives as students with a glass of alcohol in our hands and rebel in our hearts." (Maalouf 2013, 31)

The friends lived with that "friendly hostility that kept their minds awake and evaded them the restrictions of conventions and traditions." (Maalouf 2013, 441)

The suggestion of reunion came from Tania, the old landlady of Murad's house, who was consumed by greed until Murad died. It symbolizes the game of interest before the deceived who are waiting for a breakthrough from the trouble makers.

The House symbolism is old and used in international literature, where the protagonist disputes the big house, either by ownership or division.

The author used the name Murad on purpose. For the first instance, it is someone you would imagine with a short trimmed beard and obvious obesity, which only lacks, in our contemporary time, some loose Ottoman outfit.

The Ottomans or Murad have to go through battles to defend their empire or the big house located in the vast village of Murad.

An epoch has ended, and another has started, and the Ottomans State has diminished. Several countries have replaced it, and the citizens have become friends. Murad died, and there is a funeral. What use is it to attend the funeral if not for crying, wining and praising the deceased?

Adam decisively rejected the idea of attending the funeral and was forced to pay respect to Samy. This could imply that Lebanon had a dummy attendance for the Arab League Conferences where it was on again/off again. The Arab Conferences, held here and there, are only assemblies for whining and crying, just like Murad's funeral.

Adam, Tania and other friends had felt excited about the reunion, but their funeral attendance was only a red herring.

Nidal, whose name was selected carefully by the author, stands as a symbol for terrorist attacks that have afflicted Lebanon. Since the first meeting between Adam and Nidal, we can sense a language beyond the lines that do not promise well. Whenever they discussed anything, such as Alcohol, Nidal would be infuriated and pour it on Adam. This would create a new identity crisis and problematic issue of faith. , "you do not wish to see what the West sees, anything on our site is seen with hostility, everyone agrees that alcohol is a social plague, but it is sufficient for you that Islam condemns alcohol consumption and thus it becomes a matter of individual freedom for you, even for people like yourself." Maalouf aimed by such dialogue to symbolize the unlikelihood of consensus between different religious currents, let alone Christians who constitute a substantial number in Lebanon. If you look closely at the term "yourself" used by Maalouf, you would realize there is an immediate reflection for what Maalouf wanted to convey; inferiority in perception and bigotry by Nidal or Islamists in general, and how they hardly recognize tolerance.

“Shouldn’t the historian be neutral between the assailant and the victim? Between the predator and the prey? Between the killer and the killed? Stay neutral and not appear as the defendant of your people? Is that objectivity? Is it righteousness for you?” (Maalouf 2013, 376)

With such description – and as a representative of the religious current, Nidal is far from being lenient in his discussion with Adam, even if he is not convinced. He forgot that one who reduces identity to one sole belonging puts men in a biased, sectarian, bigoted, dominating, and sometimes suicidal attitude and often transforms them into assassins or supporters of assassins; their vision of the world is deformed and equivocated. (Maalouf 1999, 31)

Naeem is the one left of this gathering: the Jew who spoke about himself as if he is introducing a humor section. “I will never be ashamed by my insatiability; it is a blessing from heavens to adore food. In the morning, you are awakened by the aroma of roasted coffee; it is the aroma of Brazil, the most beautiful aroma in the world, so your mood betters, and you tell yourself, you shall eat three feasts before the end of the day, three daily feasts, one thousand and one hundred feasts a year. Who says insatiability is a sin? It is a gift from heavens; it is a blessing and an art.” (Maalouf 2013, 454)

The most convenient comment on such section came by Adam, who described it as: “the best marriage between luxury and bestiality”, where the Jewish appetite appears to be consistently excellent. With regards to his stance on Israel, Naeem seems to be neutral- despite being Jewish. His father used to use an idiom that says; if your son steals money from your house and bets on a horse, you will curse him, but you will never wish his horse to lose. This is an obvious statement by Naeem to say that he supported the state of Israel.

The dialogue above is the best evidence that Naeem could not care less about Lebanon, let alone his conviction of Israel, as he stated before. Jews believe in direct ethnic emplacement, which means the concentration of the displaced. They also believe that "humanity ends with the Tribe and the linguistic group and sometimes with the borders of the village ... which entails that other tribes and groups do not have such privileges and do not belong to humanity, and they are (evils), (the apes of the earth) and (the eggs of lice)". (Bonoist 1968, 78-81)

Naeem did not meet his old friends since the university years. This symbolizes the distancing of Jews after the establishment of the state of Israel. Adam seems resentful towards Naeem, even if he tried to expose fake smiles and fake amity.

Ramzi, who left what no sane person would go, symbolizes those who isolated themselves from identity and from their homeland to inside the land, hoping to find shelter in the displacement they feel and dissipate their serenity.

The author chose the incident of Adam’s sleeping in the monastery and generated a secondary event that supports the major incident: "the self and identity". He also chose the timing of ascending the mountain with Ramzi at dawn. Ramzi said to Adam: “this is the best time to distinguish black rocks from white ones” (Maalouf 2013, 435)

And when Adam walked, he felt under the influence of a magical drink. This ascending had awakened his feelings.

He asked him about why he returned, and after contemplating and thinking, he answered, “I came back to pick flowers, and he expressed the beauty of the task and its severity simultaneously”. Because picking a flower would honor it although it ends its life.

The countrymen require the sun to rise, ascend above their crises and transcend above incidents to distinguish black rocks from white ones. So that they gain the blessing of distinction after a long era of differentiation, became acquainted with each other and recognized those who are loyal to their soil. The disoriented returned to their homeland and sacrificed their souls for their country to see the smile of satisfaction at their homeland’s face after the prolonged tears. Those are the ones whom the author symbolizes as the flowers and who retrieve the disoriented, discover who traded them, misled them and conspired against their



dreams, who have inherited conspiracy and have made a profit of blood and who are the wolves in sheep's clothing.

## **2.2 The Impacts of the Concepts of Globalization on the Characters of "The Disoriented"**

Globalization means, "To make something internationally spread, in its orbit or application, so that the world would become a lot smaller place than it is, due to modern communications and the ability to exchange knowledge." (Al Jabiri 1997, 135)

The prime motive for facing globalization stems from defending the cultural identity and predicting the risks that threaten such identity. Protecting identity is supporting the existence of societies and their sustainability in harmony and unity. The past connects to the present, and individuals have a sense of belonging to the same values that justify their mutual existence. This is because the cultural identity is based on distinction and the desire to support such excellence about other cultural entities.

It always has to do with the coexistence with the other, whom we strive to interact with, that secures such excellence and independence. Human history has recorded such interactions, which have often been violent and robust.

This was why so many wars and alliances, yet they have all ended by achieving a sort of balance, which satisfies all parties. This can be realized when all feel their homogeneity on their national personalities or (cultural identities). The fact that should be established is that there is no one cultural identity but different models of cultural identities. These come as the result of development and various historical experiments. Al Jabiri says about cultural identity: "the genuine expression of historical privacy for one nation and the perception of this nation of the Universe, life, death, man, his functions, abilities, limitations, and what he must and must not hope for." (Al Jabiri 1997, 120 )

The establishment of the "ego" concept speeds up the cultural misappropriation of identity. The fall of Murad expresses such apparent psychological collapse. His fall apart was consecutively followed by the fall of his wife, Tania. Such identity becomes debatable when it is disputed and what is supposed to be steady, coherent and stable becomes destabilized through suspicion and insecurity." (Hall 2008, 149)

"The kingdom of precaution collapses and awareness becomes an open target to all breaches, and then technology starts engineering such temptation and creates reasons of attraction for it. Let alone the breakdown, which will afflict the values and create a new system of standards that would increase profitability, egoistic individualism, and the instinctive materialistic dispute that lack any humanity. Yes, the culture of globalization - like economic globalization, will instil the satisfaction of the body, but will kill the soul and lead the moral and human content of human behavior to decay." (Bilqiz 1998, 96)

The rest did not manage to escape the trap of globalization with the established concepts. Albert Quithar, for instance, became a homosexual and married his friend James. This is the echo of a system that gradually dominates anyone in it and encourages individualism. It convinces one that his reality is his individuality, and it supports the indifference towards the social perimeter and connects it to an obscure international framework.

Deepening the personal choice, which is the egoistic trend in an individual, in the name of freedom of choice and the freedom of personality, the desire to realize excellence, the rejection of traditions, and the inclination to everything new and novice in addition to neutrality, that is the separation of the individual from the concerns of his surroundings.

Tackling it with indifference and coldness, devoting the spirit of decay from all social, religious, ideological values and disconnection to all matters or principles, spread the negative spirit, and submission, freeze resilience are all approaches that promote normalization and affiliation as well as compliance." (Bilqiz 1998, 98)

Samirasmis takes permission from Dolorees to spend the night with Adam (as will be illustrated in chapter three), and she allows her to.

After establishing all those delusions in minds, the actual destruction process starts, represented by connecting people to no state, no homeland, no nation. After the cultural voiding for identities is complete and as long as globalization is a world of commercial institutions, international networks, the world of Doers, the controlled, and the consumers of all commodities, images, information, actions and all that are imposed on them.” ( ) (Bin Sharit 2011, 97-109)

### 2.3 Samiramis and Dolorees

For the first instance, the title may seem obscure. However, if one contemplates both characters, he would note that they are almost identical, extreme kindness, generosity with no boundaries, and exaggerated care for Adam under all circumstances.

This chapter could be connected to a previous chapter, which tackled symbolization and inference. Yet, we will not apply this sort of classification to two bipolar characters and their substantial impact on Adam's life, the novel's protagonist. Thus we are keen to read them in isolation from the other characters.

Samiramis started as a student at Medical School; as a young woman, Bilal dwelled her heart until he died in the bombing. The family immigrated to Lebanon as they fled the tyranny of Abdul Nasser's men. It had come to their knowledge that Samy's father provided shelter in his own house for the person who attempted to assassinate Abdul Nasser. Therefore, he decided to flee rather than confront a dark destiny.

As soon as Adam arrives, we note that Samy transformed into a lover after settling for being the mistress. It seems that Adam's arrival has brought her feelings to life and awakened them after a long hibernation.

The old Samy came back and volunteered to assist the protagonist on his mission, which he needs to accomplish. She goes with him to the monastery and cares for him in all aspects, starting from breakfast, dinner, colours of suits, the participation of the protagonist in the reunion, and in bed. The author elaborated on the night Adam spent with Samy and made it clear that Dolorees blamed him for being too silent while making love. “I explained to her that words of love that come simultaneously across my mind are in Arabic, and I abstain from saying them because she does not understand them, so she said, I need you to whisper them in my ears even if I did not understand them and teach me the right words and how to pronounce them. Eventually, we started making love in Arabic.” However, he regretted telling such a thing, Samy and asked her not to say a word to Dolorees...I swear by my father's soul that I will not mention anything you said to Dolorees, nor any living soul, are you happy?” (Maalouf 2013, 352)

The word happy reflects the keenness of Adam to satisfy Dolorees and his concern that she might get upset, even over trivial issues. However, she and Samy are friends, and even though Adam knew so many other ladies.

The conflict of identity has been decided, Samiramis with all the charm and fascination of the East instead of Dolorees, the Parisian girl who represents the solemnity of exile and wisdom.

It is clear to anyone reading Dolorees' letter to Adam that she was encouraging him to visit Lebanon to see his friend Murad, who was dying. “when she told me that I never returned to my homeland at all, I thought it was quite weird and deviant, particularly that you explained that you were not threatened at all, and you would not take the chance of losing your life or being confiscated, this was only an attitude on your part, because your country has disappointed you. Your attitude, from my point of view, was deviant and somewhat sick. Therefore I pledged to heal you.” (Maalouf 2013, 319-320)

As for wearing the doctor's gown in the previous section, she did not express her opinion; but she even permits Adam to make love to Samy voluntarily. She was not trying to do him a favour, nor was she trying to be obscene, but she was in an attempt to heal him. “Add to that what happened with Samy, I promised her not to blame you for what had happened, and I will keep my word because I am as responsible as you two are for what happened... it never occurred to my mind that a woman would request to borrow my boyfriend to spend the night with him, it was an unbearable request...” (Maalouf 2013, 319-320)

Dolorees justifies permitting Adam by saying it would enhance and boost Adam's relationship with his homeland.

Before the reader assumes the obscenity of Dolorees, we address the author and say: Thank you for conveying your message. Adam has torn apart between two identities; an identity he acquired by blood and his roots, and another by accolade and acquisition. As if he was trying to say to the reader, could you see how puzzled I am? The mother can be as ugly as God wanted her to be, but she shares your features and your blood and everything you know about motherhood. Do the women you have made love come in an equal position as the one who had fed you? There is a vast difference between the buyer and the bought item.

Maalouf says, "Since I left Lebanon in 1976 to settle down in France, I was asked with all the good intentions in the world, whether I felt as a French person or as a Lebanese, and I always answered this and that." (Maalouf 1999, 7)

## **2.4 The implications of the end in "The Disoriented."**

The title of this chapter is connected to a question: How identical is Adam's character with Amin Maalouf's?

In fact, after studying the novel, it turns out the two characters are not wholly identical; because Adam is the model Amin Maalouf wished to be one day.

Adam is the savior, the one he waited for and who has not yet come out from the darkness. He is the one who assembles the fragments of homeland and alerts their ignorance, he is the one who reconnects the residents to their land, and thus there is no similarity between the two of them at all.

Adam is the father of humanity; he gathered them since the dawn of history. The author bets he will return to carry the burden off the shoulders of the Lebanese people and take them back to purity. He who deviates from it would be doomed, and he who is distracted from it would be a conspirer.

The protagonist refused to attend the funeral in its degraded Arab inference. He sought to hold an assembly for the friends to attend, for dialogue rather than play a role. This has an intelligent indication by the author that the solution in Lebanon will not come but from the inside, by its people who are fed up with the formal events; the events, which only led to more aggravation and blaze.

"We tend-mostly- to identify ourselves in our endangered belonging, sometimes through feeling the incapability to defend it. Thus we conceal it, and it stays deep in the shadow, waiting to avenge. Whether we reveal or conceal it, announce it as a secret or create a commotion around it, we always blend with it. Only then, the accused is overwhelmed with belonging, color, faith, language or even class, the whole identity. Those who share such things collaborate with him, assemble, take action, encourage each other, and confront the other. For them, the affirmation of their identity is necessary, a courageous liberating action. (Maalouf 1999, 27)

The author chose an open ending; the car driver died; the car was smashed, in inference, to the state of limbo the homeland suffered and still suffers from. It needs a leader, a new Adam, a new resurrection, a new car driver that can drive where all people can assemble; to express their desire to stay rather than decay, in forgiveness rather than weapons, in a fresh start which differs from all others. He affirmed that our perception often imprisons others in their narrow belongings, and our perception can liberate them as well. (Maalouf 1999, 24)

The author chose the death of Ramzi and the survival of Ramiz. The death of the former has a clear indication that the escape he exercised on such people is out of the question in the upcoming period, which requires construction after long destruction. A period that does not identify with false isolation for the sake of a phony hope; peoples are entitled to write their history and distance themselves from the actual battlefield, which does not play a role at all, but rather a manipulation that surpasses all conspirers gathered.

For the sake of all the above, and because the protagonist had not been born yet, he leaves the reader wondering, when will he emerge and will the people surrounding him feel the labour? In addition, when will Lebanon have a real leader to resurrect them, in reality rather than fiction?

The author leaves the door of hope wide open for the Arab reader of different nationalities, belongings, and ethnic roots; so that everybody follows up (Lebanon or Adam), who have an unresolved destiny, one who surrenders to being hospitalized.

Therefore, the author disengages from his protagonist after his injury and starts a solo narration from the awaiting assembled people who never arrive at the shore, to clarify to the readership that even if Adam and Maalouf sound like one person since the beginning of incidents, it was time for them to separate after the accident. It said like the author was in a dream, and when he awoke in astonishment. "I am the Adam you believe I am; I can elaborate about the past but not about the present. The ending scene is the most indicative, as embodied in Dolorees' who saw that Adam's unresolved attitude is neither new nor reprehensible. It is the destiny that awaits our planet, to be in between, or the middle, which is in the middle of nothing, a phase that cancels the features of people and incidents on purpose, to retain the creators as spectators backstage.

Adam points out the irony of bearing the first man's name while foretelling the end of his civilization. Throughout the novel, he insists on the impossibility of his living happily in his native country. However, it is only at the end that he thoroughly describes the Eden from which he has been expelled. Near the end of the novel, he recounts his childhood friendship with his older neighbor, Hanum. That lady forgave Adam's deed to voyeur her, and a close friendship took place between the two. As a gesture of forgiveness, Hanum invited Adam to join her in her morning coffee because he drinks it without sugar as a punishment. She asked him what he was reading and listened patiently to his answer, despite adventure books not being her cup of tea. Because Adam was eager to please her, he quickly began reading books he knew she would find interesting. Adam's adaptation to his neighbor's taste in books and coffee was a step toward accommodating "the other," representative of how openness and flexibility go a long way in smoothing over tensions between neighboring sects. Hanum's sense of being violated and Adam's embarrassment could quickly have degenerated into animosity. By treating each other with graciousness and respect, Hanum and Adam transformed this moment of potential conflict into the basis for a friendship.

Accommodation, openness and generosity: these characteristics of Adam and Hanum's friendship provide a window into his idea of a society capable of overcoming sectarian conflict. Equally important is the act of forgiveness that makes their friendship possible. In his career as a historian, Adam lectures that war almost always involves wrongdoing on both sides. Clemency is all the more important in this view because it is required of all parties in a society trying to heal from political trauma.

المستخلص:

جدل الهوية بين المؤلف وشخصيات "المرتبطين"

سندس فوزي فرمان

زاهرة توفيق أبو كشك

يعرض البحث اشكالية الهوية والانتماء لدى كاتب وشخص رواية "التائهون" لأمين معلوف – و ينقسم البحث لجزئين : يتناول الجزء الأول مفهوم الهوية وملامح بطل الرواية "آدم" وعلاقته بشخصية الكاتب ؛ وكذلك اشكاليات الانتماء والهوية وما تسببه من صراع وتحولات في شخصيات الرواية بسبب الحرب التي تدور في وطنهم. أما الجزء الثاني فهو مخصص لعرض الصراع الذي تقوم عليه أحداث الرواية نتيجة لإفرازات نظام العولمة كما يشمل هذا الجزء دلالات الترميز والاسقاط لبعض أبطال الرواية إضافة إلى دلالات النهاية في رواية "التائهون".  
كلمات مفتاحية: أمين معلوف – التائهون – الهوية – الانتماء – العولمة.

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