# Salma in "My Name is Salma": the Invisible Alien Arab Woman

**Dr. Dallel Moustapha Sarnou**
**Faculté des Lettres et Arts- Département d'anglais**
**Université Abdelhamid Ibn Badis- Mostaganem**

***Abstract***

*Anglophone Arab women writers have taken in charge the voicing of Arab immigrants' agonies.* ***Fadia Faqir*** *is one of these writers. In her novel,* ***«My Name is Salma»****, Faqir puts her protagonist Salma in a constant struggle with her foreignness in a country where she is supposed to be a citizen with all the rights her citizenship might bring to her. In this paper, we aim at exploring the hardships Arab/Muslim immigrants living in the Diaspora and women in conservative Arab societies are facing through an analytical study of Fadia Faqir's protagonist Salma in* ***My Name is Salma****.*

***Keywords: Diaspora, arabophobia, hybridity, colonialism, post colonialism, oppression of arab women, invisibility.***

## *Salma dans "Mon Nom est Salma": La Femme Arabe en tant qu'invisible et étrangère*

***Résumé***

*Les femmes écrivaines arabes d'expression anglaise ont pris en charge l'expression des préoccupations des immigrés;* ***Fadia Faqir*** *en est une. Dans son roman,* ***« Mon nom est Salma »****, l'étrangeté de la protagoniste Salma la place dans un conflit constant, dans un pays où elle est censée être une citoyenne avec tous ses droits. Dans cet article, je cherche à explorer les difficultés que les immigrés arabes/musulmans, vivant dans la diaspora ainsi que les femmes des sociétés arabes conservatrices, rencontrent et ceci à travers une étude analytique du personnage de Salma.*

***Mots clés : Diaspora, arabophobie, hybridité, colonialisme, post colonialisme, oppression de la femme arabe, invisibilité***

## ***سلمى في 'اسمي سلمى': المرأة العربية حينما تكون مهمشة و مغتربة***

***ملخص***

*لقد اتخذت الأديبات العربيات اللواتي يكتبن باللغة الإنجليزية رواياتهن و قصصهن فضاء للتعبير عن ويلات ومشاغل المهاجرين العرب. والروائية* ***فادية فقير*** *هي واحدة من أبرز هؤلاء الكتاب. في روايتها* ***' اسمي سلمى'****، تضع فقيرُ سلمى بطلة الرواية في صراع دائم مع الغربة التي تواجهها في بلد من المفترض أن تكون فيه مواطنة تمتلك كل حقوق المواطنة . نهدف في هذا البحث، إلى تقديم قراءات مختلفة عن الصعوبات التي تواجه المهاجرين العرب والمسلمين الذين يعيشون في المهجر، و في الوقت نفسه نتناول الصعوبات المماثلة التي تواجهها المرأة في المجتمعات العربية المحافظة من خلال تحليلنا لشخصية سلمى بطلة رواية* ***'اسمي سلمى'*** *للكاتبة فادية فقير.*

***الكلمات المفاتيح: مهجر، عربوفوبيا، هجانة، الكولونية، مابعد الكولونية، اضطهاد المرأة العربية، تهميش.***

## Introduction

In the last few decades, world literature has witnessed an important boosting of literary works produced in English by Arab Anglophone, hybrid and/or hyphenated female writers. We believe that these texts have helped bringing more recognition and visibility to the Arab Woman whose identity is perceived as different. English creative writings produced by contemporary Arab women writers go beyond their post-coloniality attributed to them by most critics. They foreground in post-colonial, post-postcolonial, feminist, transnational, transcultural and cultural studies. This multiplicity goes back to the specificity of these writers. They *"…are no less Arabs than anybody else –they merely carry different cultural values as a result of their different social circumstances"*(1).

The particularity of these women is related to the fact that they write in a universal language, be it English, and that most of them are women of two worlds (the mother country and the Diaspora) but also because they may find more liberty in dealing with controversial issues and taboo themes when writing in English. In fact, we suggest that the state of cultural and linguistic in-between-ness peculiar to Arab Anglophone women writers gives rise to narratives that transmit to a wider Western readership a vivid, truthful representation of the Arab world with its cultural, religious and political peculiarity, and that succeed to construct cross-cultural bridges between the West and the Arab world through a trans-cultural discourse. Wail Hassan claims that within each context of reception, an Anglophone Arab writer is seen as a representative of the Arab world (2).

Being invisible and culturally exiled back home, Arab women contemporary writers found their way to visibility and manifesting through creative works of arts, mainly novels and short stories written in foreign languages and published in European countries and /or the States. Leila Abulela, Ahdaf Soueif, Sabiha Elkhemir and Fadia Faqir are no exception. In Leila Abulela's *Minaret*, for instance, through a process of becoming visible throughout the novel, the writer reflects on her protagonist Najwa to narrate how Arab women are being invisible both back home and in the Diaspora. As for Fadia Faqir's best-selling novel *My Name is Salma* – that is a mixture of feminist, postcolonial and post-postcolonial expression of how Arab, Muslim women are undermined and belittled socially, politically and religiously – one of the main themes of this novel is the failure of the female seeking of visibility in her homeland and in the Diaspora.

Fadia Faqir (1956) , as a Jordanian/British author, belongs to hybrid Arab Anglophone writers because her commitment as an Arab literary woman, though writing in English, is to handle a double-voiced discourse with which she represents her identity being an Arab, a woman, and an English British writer. In fact, *double-voicedness* is a concept coined by Mikhail Bakhtin in his *Dialogic Imagination* (1981). By such a neologism, we mean "another's speech in another's language"(358), that is to say there are two voices, two meanings and two expressions; these two voices are dialogically interrelated. It is as if they actually hold a conversation with each other; examples would be comic, ironic or parodic discourse. Double-voiced discourse, in most cases,

expresses the author's intentions but in a refracted way; it serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the explicit intention of the character and an implicit, refracted intention of the author which the critic, and at times the general reader may decipher.

In this connection, Faqir's English writings are *dialogic* and hybrid at the same time. They are dialogic because all through the story we keep on listening to two voices: Salma's voice which recalls the past, and Sally's voice which describes the present. As for the hybridization of Faqir's novels, it is due to, as Bakhtin (3) notes, the mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation, or by some other factor(4); we are referring here to the mixture of English and Arabic at different levels- lexical, semantic and inter-lingual. From another perspective, and although *'hybridity'* has dominated conceptual discussions of mixed identities in the field of cultural studies, the use of 'hybridity' in the field of postcolonial studies is closely linked *to post-modern sensibilities which challenged modernist ideas assuming that fixity, territoriality and distinctive languages and ethnicities constituted themselves as separate identities*(5).

However, hybridity has had its own mesh of social and cultural clashes mainly and particularly for 'subalterns', to use Spivak's concept [1], or those coming from ex-colonized countries to the West to live a unique diasporic experience; this experience is usually interwoven with some disturbing behaviors like islamophobia, Arabophobia, racism and rejection, all of which lead to a constant feeling of foreignness, inferiority and being alien to the host culture and its mainstream people. Despite of a mere will to assimilate and integrate into the host culture, immigrants, Arabs and Muslims more particularly, still suffer from a cultural humiliation, a religious disdain, and social disintegration. In this connection, this research work aims at exploring the state of invisibility both immigrants and Arab women may confront in Faqir's *My Name is Salma*, which portrays difficulties and hardships people living in the Diaspora do face and voices the agonies of women living in Bedouin conservative societies. We will begin with a biographical section to present how Faqir is closer to her protagonist Salma's experience of migration to Britain, and thereafter we display the various scenes where invisibility is perceived through the life experience of Salma in the analytical section.

**1. Faqir : A Woman of Two Worlds or a Double Agent for Two Cultures?**

Having decided to write in English about controversial issues related to Arabs and Arab women, Fadia Faqir also has taken a risk to dare this foreign language, dare its culture, and challenge its people who are about to face unveiled truths about the Middle East, the Arab-Muslim people, the Arab woman and the Arab immigrants while reading her English writings woven with an Arab cultural essence. Faqir's choice of English as the language of her fiction may be twofold. Faqir's exposure to English as the language of her education and later profession is a first reason. . In an interview with the academic Lindsay Moore, Faqir says:

"When I was young, I lived next to an English club—a remnant of the British Mandate—that Jordanians were not allowed to enter. East Amman was the place to be then (the late 1950s). I remember that colonial exclusive space very clearly. It reconfigures itself in my writing again and again. Salma, for example, [in My Name is Salma] is always looking into other people's gardens in England; she's always on the outside[(6)]."

What we may apprehend from Faqir's words quoted above is that her choice of English may be a matter of fact for being exposed, and surrounded, by an English club. We also grasp her strong will to assimilate into this foreign space just like her protagonist, Salma, does in *My Name is Salma* [(7)], but both are always on the outside. A second reason for which Faqir writes in English is that she is a British citizen. In fact, Faqir left Jordan because of her father, who wanted her to be someone she was not and could not be: a pious Muslim. Her father [also] wanted to realise his dreams through his children, including Fadia herself. He sent them to the West to be educated and wanted them to go back and take on his battles. However, having been living and educated in a country like England changed Fadia's perception of her being a woman, an Arab and a Muslim; she simply chose her own way to be herself despite of the many obstacles she faced in a diasporic space full of rejection and phobia.

The other reason behind Faqir's choice of English as the language of her fiction is that *censorship and appeasement corrupted Arabic* (from the author's comment posted on her facebook timeline, January 21st at 2:05 pm). Thus, Faqir like many Arab women writers, who write in English – Ahdaf Soueif, Sabiha Al khemir, Betool Khedari,and others, may find in her English writings more freedom in dealing with taboo themes she may not find in Arabic.

Through her experience in a Western country, becoming thus a woman of two worlds, Faqir reconstructed her state of being and her awareness of everything around her. She could understand the wrong thing about the structure of the family in the Arab world— it is an oppressive structure, overtly or covertly, a fact that throws a lot of Arab women in a state of alienness and foreignness albeit being in her homeland. Because the Arab family is a structure with a figurehead, a patriarch who makes all the important decisions and treats everyone as infants, a sense of alienation is to be constantly experienced by other members of the family notably the wife, the daughter and all the female members. This female Arab woman moaning for being alien back home is one of the silent agonies Faqir tries to give voice to through her writings, and through *My Name is Salma* in particular.

Through her writings and the characters she creates, Faqir seeks to voice Arab and/or Muslim immigrants living in the Diaspora, particularly in Britain. For instance when being interviewed by Lindsey Moore who asked Faqir if "Salma is a specific type of migrant. You don't glorify the Diaspora experience", the novelist answered: "I spent hours in the kitchens of restaurants in this country, because my brother worked as a chef; people I knew held down very modest jobs in difficult circumstances. That is my milieu and what feeds my writing. I love that aspect of Kiran Desai's *The*

*Inheritance of Loss* [2]—her focus on the underworld of the USA and on immigrants sometimes marginalizing and mistreating other immigrants. That struck a chord with me**(8)**"; thus Faqir's experience is that of many immigrants who find it hard to integrate and assimilate in a space where they are always seen as 'aliens' because of their religion, color of skin, and culture.

This double-voicedness in raising issues of visibility and invisibility, whether in one's home or in the Diaspora, is to be clearly perceived in Fadia Faqir's novel *My Name is Salma* (or *The Cry of the Dove* US/Canada title). In fact, if we go back to Ralph Elison's conception of the notion of 'invisibility' in his work *The Invisible Man* [3], we accentuate the idea of invisibility as being usually taken to the extreme effect of truly being transparent, unseen by anyone. Reflecting on how the narrator of this novel describes his invisibility by saying, "I am invisible ... simply because people refuse to see me**(9)** ", we generate a same portrayal of *My Name is Salma*'s protagonist as being *invisible* because she is being refused to be seen in different situations, by different categories of people and in different places.

Thus, our analysis of this novel is going to be from this perspective, that is to see and grasp how Salma, the protagonist, archetypes oppressed Arab women by going through a same circle of invisibility and *alien-ness* both in Hima (her home village), Lebanon where she has been rescued, and England that represents a constant asylum and a permanent diasporic space where she becomes officially Sally the British citizen but never metamorphoses culturally and religiously into a visibly British woman.

To begin with, *My Name is Salma* is the story of a young Bedouin unmarried woman, Salma, from an unnamed country in the Levant. Salma becomes pregnant out of wedlock and flees the bullet of her brother who plans to kill her to restore the family's honour., for illegal pregnancy, before marriage, is considered a crime in such a culture.

In order to save Salma from family 'honour' killing, her teacher takes her into protective custody. Salma spends several years in prison, where she gives birth to her baby girl, who is taken away from her immediately. She is then rescued and adopted by Miss Asher, under the name Sally Asher, and taken to England. Being alien, with dark skin, Bedouin and Muslim, Salma faces a new set of problems: she has to find a new identity and a life for herself in a society, which is generally unsympathetic to head scarves. Readers of *My Name is Salma* may receive fascinating insights into the Arabic and Bedouin cultures in which Salma was raised (a tribal community in Hima). The story of *My Name is Salma* is told through first-person narration and a flashback technique. Moreover, *My Name is Salma* may be considered typical of creative post-colonial literature on both thematic and linguistic levels. On the thematic level, the novel reflects the major characteristics of post-colonial writings: the preoccupation with identity, homeland, the diasporic experience and belongingness vs. homelessness.

This novel interweaves multiple perspectives. It has a non-linear temporal framework, and a fractured narration that underlines the main theme of this story, that is the duality of

vision, being Bedouin in the past, and then becoming British in the present. *My Name is Salma* has a duality of vision. The narrative keeps jumping between the past and the present. *She is shackled by her past. The human mind works randomly; it free-associates. If you want to represent thought process, your form can never be entirely linear*[(10)].

It is one of the narrative tools used in *stream of consciousness technique*. Faqir genuinely and creatively made a perfect use of this technique to weave a duality of vision and perception for the reader: to carry the reader from one culture to another, to fuse the past with the present, and to superimpose and juxtapose two same situations of invisibility and foreignness Salma, as an Arab woman, was and is stuck in.

**2. Salma: The Invisible Bedouin Woman Immigrant**

As an analytical part of my paper, we will present different situations and extracts where Salma /Sally feels alien whether in her village Hima back in the Levantine or in England her new home country. Starting from the title of the novel, *My Name is Salma* (be it the first title given to the novel before the US and Canada title *The Cry of the Dove*), it can be read as if Salma is seeking to introduce herself to the world around her, and she would not present her name unless she is invisible and unknown to people. This can also be interpreted as an attempt to escape a state of invisibility.

All through the first pages of the first chapter, "*Where the River Meets the Sea*," the reader faces images and scenes portraying Salma and Sally's awareness of being an alien both in her culture in Hima and in the foreign culture in England- an awareness mingled with a bitter feeling of pain and chagrin:

"*If I did not know me I would have said that I was Salma, but my back was bent and my head was held low. I wrapped my trembling body with the warm towel and sniffed the air*" (p 12) Salma was then alien even to herself, and this confession made by the protagonist after long years of her stay in Exeter is simply an inescapable result for being considered as strange and invisible, wherever she goes and whenever she appears: by Elizabeth (the owner of the hostel where Salma lives in Exeter), by Mahmoud (her brother who is the omnipresent threat for her staying alive), by Parvin (her Pakistani friend who would later be Salma's guide to assimilate and adopt to the diasporic life), by her tribe back in Hima ( where she was condemned to killing and/ or willingly disappearing from her tribe's and family's memory), and by many other members of her 'new' country, England (where people like a doctor see in her the exotic image of castaway Arabs/Muslims).

Elsewhere in the story, we read "Using his master keys, the porter opened the door and let in a short, thin, dark young woman … when she looked at me she could only see the slit of my eyes and a white veil so she turned to him. 'Where does she come from?' 'Somewhere in the Middle East. Fucking A-rabic! She rode a camel all the way from Arabia to this dump in Exeter,' he said and laughed. 'I am not going to share a room with an Arab,' she spat […] I looked at her straight hair and long fringe and turned in my bed. **The smell of hurt and broken promises filled the brightly lit room**." (P15)

In this extract, we perceive an Arab woman facing a strong resentment from people around her because she comes from 'somewhere' called the Middle East. We also see how a scornful alien is she even to her gender compatriot, Parvin, who can be seen in this extract as an *Arabophobic* like many other British or Immigrants other than Arabs. However, even Parvin belongs to the Orient if we go back to Edward Said's conceptualization of the Orient (2003). According to Said, the West has created a "dichotomy" between the reality of the East and the romantic notion of the Orient. The Middle East and Asia are viewed with prejudice and racism. The West has created a culture, history, and future promise for the East. On this framework, rests not only the study of the Orient, but also the political imperialism of Europe in the East. He discussed the dialectical relationship between Occident and Orient as is a manifestation of "us versus them*."* (P8)

Thus, based on the British colonial and imperial experience in India, Pakistan and Indochina, the Pakistani British Parvin does belong to the same imaginative geography perceived as the exotic Orient Salma, the British Bedouin Arab woman, belongs to. This Western, British visualization of people, like Salma and Parvin, is an old new story that dates back to some centuries ago and still persists, mainly after the 9/11 drastic events. We read Parvin's words: '*You know, Salma, we are like shingles. **Invisible**, snake-like. It slides around your body and suddenly erupts on your skin and then sting sting.' Parvin said and laughed.* (P25) Parvin was, in this extract, talking about homeless and immigrants or 'those who either without a family or were **trying to blot out their history'** (P25), i.e. the Orientals.

Following Said's definition, the Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles. In contrast, the American understanding of the Orient will seem considerably less dense, although recent Japanese, Korean, and Indochinese adventures ought now to be creating a more sober, more realistic "Oriental" awareness. Moreover, the vastly expanded American political and economic role in the Near East (the Middle East) makes great claims on understanding of that Orient**(11)**.

This discourse is clearly read through Elizabeth conversations with Salma/Sally. Many scenes gathering Salma and Liz (Elizabeth who is the owner of the semi-detached house Salma hires) clearly portray an oriental view of the *Other* who is not a native British, who thus is alien and who is legitimately scorned. In the very beginning of the novel, we read Salma's presentation of Liz as follows: "*Liz, Elizabeth, Queen Elizabeth I, Her Highness, my landlady was still asleep.*". This description encloses an orientalist view of Elizabeth who may represent as such the imperial power and the British Empire more particularly. Then, in a further scene where Salma and Liz are sitting together, we read:

"It was a rare occasion when I was watching television with Liz. 'Was that the shadow Chancellor?' I asked Liz. 'No, the Prime Minister.The Chancellor

does not spit,' she answered and looked at the television screen, not wanting to be interrupted. 'Who are these puppets?' I asked. 'Foreigners! Aliens like you,' she said and smiled. 'Like me?' I asked. 'Yes, illegal immigrants,' she said. 'I no illegal,' I said losing my English. 'Yes, you are. You must be,' she said. 'Would you like a cuppa?' I asked, imitating my friend Gwen and trying to change the subject". (P23-4)

The above conversation between Liz and Salma carries a multiplicity of meaning and multi-layered nuances. First, we interpret Liz's answers as a legitimized belittlement and vilification of whoever is *Other*, hence a foreigner who must not be visible to a Westerner. The other thing we comprehend from the above extract is that Salma, who feels unfairly undermined despite of her British citizenship, tries hard to imitate and mimic -*mimicry repeats rather than re-presents.... and in that very act of repetition, originality is lost, and centrality de-centred* **(12)**. By imitating Liz's English, Salma simply loses hers and then melts in Liz's personality, and it is this way that she is invisible again.

In another scene, we are shocked by Salma's reaction when Elizabeth injures her arm. Drunk, Liz injured Salma's forearm while she was trying to take a whip out of Liz's hand. Liz was hitting bottles with the whip imagining she was talking to some Indian upah's and wallahs (maids): "*Slaves must never breathe English air*," (P185) Liz said while Salma was waiting for a taxi to take her to the hospital. Surprisingly, Salma lies to the doctor and tells him she cut her hand while chopping salad. Salma's reaction may be considered as a empathizing with Liz's state of being herself alien to the new world she is living after she was a daughter of a rich family and having Indian maids all around.

Because Faqir has extensively used the flashback technique in this novel in order to create a duality of vision and analogizing the past to the present and the present to the past, the reader gathers bits and pieces of Salma's state of foreignness and invisibility both in the past and in the present. In the past, she suffered from a state of *alienness* among her family members and tribe twice- when being a woman growing sexier and when falling in love and having an affair with Hamdan. Unnaturally, being a beautiful, sexy woman, who was seduced by her lover condemned Salma, back home, to death whether a metaphorical death, i.e. ,when being disowned by her father, or a literal death when being haunted by her brother, Mahmoud, who is in charge of killing her to restore the family's honor.

'Your breasts are like melons, cover them up' my father haj Ibrahim said.

'Your tuft of wool is red,' my mother said, 'you are impulsive.'

My brother Mahmoud kept an eye on me while brushing his horse; I started hunching my back to hide my breasts, which were the first thing Hamdan has noticed about me…I fell in love instantly when I was the reflection of his shoulders in the water. When I started watering the vegetables beds three times a day and fondling the horse my mother shouted, 'Salma, you stupid child, are you in love?' (p12).

In the above extract, we spot three situations of gender-based *alienness* that is the very 'product' of the patriarchal nature of Salma's back home Bedouin society. First, we see the father denying Salma's growing-woman body and disclaiming the

appearance of her very feminine traits, the breasts. Her mother, too, accuses Salma for being impulsive because of showing the feminine beauty of her body, her hair. Mahmoud's resentment is expressed through his hatred and rejection of his sister's body of a woman. As for the last part of the extract, it shows that love, a natural need for any human being, was denied to Salma by her mother. Salma's foreignness among her family and tribe, in this case, is a gender-based exclusion of Salma, an exclusion followed by a cruel punishment when falling in love and having an affair with Hamdan, who was the first punisher by giving up on Salma.

In England, in Salma's new home city, we discover another aspect of Salma's foreignness, her double name: Salma vs. Sally, a fact that many Arab immigrants do face too. The Arab-American writer Sam Hamood describes the fragile fusion of foreign names with Arab names, a fact that reflects Arab immigrants' *alienness* in new hosting countries. In his poem "Dying with the Wrong Name", he makes clear that what is lost in forced assimilation is more than a name: it is an identity, a history, and a self. Hamoud writes "*there is something lost in the blood"* **(13)**. This loss of identity is perceived when Salma went back home for her daughter:

"The Taxi ride to my village took about two hours from the airport. With my dyed short hair, straw hat, sunglasses and short sleeves the Bedouin taxi driver, with the red-and-white-chequered kufiyyah fixed into place by a black rope, assumed that I was a *khawajayya*: a foreigner… He thought that I had come to their country to study their way of life and get them some money to encourage them to continue living in squalor, sleeping with their camels and sheep. '*Cigara?'*… 'No thank you,' I said." (p275)

This extract reflects how strange to her home society Salma became. It also reflects that after years living in Exeter, Salma metamorphoses into a "*khawajayya"*: a foreigner, but a foreigner vis-à-vis her home country and the hosting country alike. She, after years, comes back home to look for her daughter, Leila, she never saw, and will never see as her daughter was killed. And she leaves behind in England, her son Imrane whom she knew she would never see again after her departure. Thus, we can see that Salma has lost her past when losing her daughter the very first day she gave birth to her, and when coming back home to look for her, and she lost her present when leaving behind her one year old son with his English father. She, at last, lost her future having been killed by her brother Mahmoud. Thus, by losing the past, the future and the present, Salma is so alien to her own world. This is what explains the state of a permanent psychological exile she lives all through the story.

## Conclusion

Faqir's protagonist, Salma, represents many facets of a state of *alienness* and invisibility from different perspectives, at different levels and in different contexts. All through my paper, we have presented various scenes where Salma faces a bitter state of foreignness: as an Arab immigrant, as a woman, as a sinner, etc. By presenting these different images of alienness through the character of Salma, we aimed at gathering different

bits and facets of a cruel state of invisibility mainly Arab immigrants may face.

Fadia Faqir, in creating such a character, has managed to voice many silent people whether those living a cruel diasporic experience mingled with Arabophobia and thus total marginalization, or those oppressed naïve women whose destiny is drawn by the patriarchal rules dominating societies, like the Bedouin one. Salma is more than one entity; she is the oppressed woman, the marginalized Arab British citizen, the foreigner, and the lover loser. Salma, as a concluding statement, embodies the state of invisibility any one of us may face.

**Notes**

**[1]**In her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?"--originally published in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg's ***Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*** (1988), Spivak encourages but also criticizes the efforts of the subaltern studies group, a project led by Ranajit Guha that has reappropriated Gramsci's term "subaltern" (the economically dispossesed) in order to locate and re-establish a "voice" or collective locus of agency in postcolonial India (and other postcolonial countries).

**[2]*The Inheritance of Loss*** is the second novel by Indian-American author Kiran Desai. It was first published in 2006. It won a number of awards, including the Man Booker Prize for the 2006. The major theme running throughout is one closely related to the effects of post-colonialism, particularly the loss of identity and the way it travels through generations as a sense of loss.

**[3]*Invisible Man*** is a milestone in American literature because it brought visibility to the Afro-American community of the south through a nameless narrator, who describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the **Invisible Man** he imagines himself to be.

**Works Cited**

**1-** Steven Salaita, 'Vision: Arab-American Literary Criticism', *Al Jadid Magazine,* 8 (2002)<http://www.aljadid.com/features/VisionArabAmericanLiteraryCriticism.html>[accessed: 08 September 2012].

**2-** Hassan, Wail. *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature.* Oxford: Oxford University press, 2011, P158.

**3-** Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination**: Four essays***. Texas: University of Texas Press, 1981.

**4-**Young, R., *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race*. London: Routledge, 1995.

**5-** Bhabha, Homi. Third Space: an interview with Homi Bhabha.Rutherford", *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990.(207-221)

**6-** Moore, Lindsay. *Arab, Muslim, Woman: Voice and Vision in Postcolonial Literature and Film* . London & New York: Routledge, 2008, P1.

**7-** Ibid: P3.

**8-** Faqir F., *My Name is Salma*( London: Doubleday, 2007)

**9-** Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. Doubleday Publishing Group, 2010, P6.

**10-** ibid:6.

**11-** Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books, 2003,P1.

**12-** Bhabha, Homi. *Location of Culture.* London & New York: Routledge, 1994, P88.

**13-** Hamood, Sam. *Dying with the Wrong Name*. New York: Anthe, 1980. p19.