

HYBRIDITY AND PROBLEMATIC OF IDENTITY IN GULF STATES NARRATIVE

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ABSTRACT: *Many transformations occur in the daily lives of the peoples of the Arab Gulf. Undoubtedly, such changes have left very deep influence in the varied areas of lives. Writing Gulf States literature in general and narrative in particular is reshaped by the daily events and concerns. The daily social and political, cultural and race/sectarian prejudice issues become the core of the Gulf writers' concerns. In the Gulf communities, migrants come from around the world with their different cultures, languages, religions, but social conventions on the hope of finding their living. The immigrants become a part of the Gulf community and affect the culture and social conventions of the Gulf Communities, regardless of the Gulf people who travel abroad for study or tourism or searching for a better life and come back with new identity and new style of life. How do the writers express problematic of identity and the hybridity in such globalized world and cosmopolitan atmosphere? The article addresses transformations in the Gulf States identity and the rapid changes in social and political arena as portrayed by the Gulf writers in the area of narrative. The article focuses on two narratives by two Kuwaiti writers: Saud Al Sanousi's winning novel of International Prize of Arabic Fiction (IPAF), and the Kuwait State Award: The Bamboo Stalk, 2012, and Sada Al Da'as's Being Black, the winning novel of Kuwait State Award of Appreciation and Encouragement, 2010.*

KEYWORDS: hybridity- problematic- identity- narrative- Gulf- Racism- Black- Kuwaiti

INTRODUCTION

The rise of the gulf narrative comes late compared to the other Arab countries such as Egypt, the pioneering country in the literary works. Mohammed Hussein Haikel's novel, *Zainab* was the first novel in Egypt and in the Arab world in general. Haikel's *Zainab* appeared in 1913 to establish the beginnings of the Arabic narrative. It tells us about the clashes between the classes, the rich represented in the landowners and the poor represented in the laborer or farmers. The protagonist, Zainab, could not marry Hamid because of the differences in their social class. However, the Gulf States differ from one to another in the course of Gulf narration. Some of Gulf countries precede the others in the area of narrative. The decent beginning and slow progress of the Gulf narrative in general shed the light on many reasons for such late rise of the gulf narrative. In the following survey may show the circumstances of each state of the Gulf that assist in revealing the narrative in Gulf States.

The Gulf States narrative has been created by the fast transformations in the lives of the Gulf people. The discovery of the oil and the coming of the migrants to the Gulf States have changed the political, cultural, social and economic structure of the Gulf region. Such changes have pushed the Gulf States to reread their political, social, and cultural reality in a changing world that recognizes no barriers and everything around the people become hybrid and in- between.

All these transformations in the reality of the Gulf States put a big question mark on the identity of Gulf States and create the problematic of identity and a large segment of the people become stateless, *Biduns*, searching for their identity. The Gulf writers address such issues in their literary works, particularly in the area of narration. The Gulf narrative comes full of conflicting and thorny issues created by the new circumstances and the rapid changing transformations in the context of the Gulf communities. Woman empowerment, patriarchal domination, classism, race prejudice, search for identity, globalization and its manifestations, feminism and their dreams remain the rich materials for the Gulf writers. The cultural and religious values are placed under assessment in the Gulf literary works, particularly the narrative. Human rights and the dark side of human being is either one of the issues argued in the gulf narratives. The flow of the migrants into Gulf States reveals the cosmopolitan community in which the cultures and values dissolve to create the hybrid, the hybrid as a human being, a hybrid in culture. Hybridization takes its way to change the signs of the community. The gulf narrative has begun very simple in its story or its art, in its text or its technique. The Gulf literature is not far from the concern of the Arab countries despite the particularities of the Gulf region which have left their influence on the Gulf narratives.

Homi Bhabha argued the term of hybridity as a third space that encompass different cultures. He pointed out that "the sign of productivity of colonial power, shifting forces and fixities, it is the name of strategies reversal of the process of discriminatory identities that secure the pure and original identity of authority. Hybridity is the revolution of the assumption of colonial identity through repetition of discriminatory identity effects" (*The Location* 112). While Lazarus compares hybridity to diversity "hybridity is used as a synonym for diversity and multiculturalism (*The Cambridge* 25). This meaning is true regarding the problematic identity of Gulf States or the issue of ethnic prejudice or hybrid person. Lazarus emphasized that "this kind of hybridization occurs on a level ground of equality, mutual respect and open – mindedness- a vision whose selectivity seems obvious as soon as we hold it up against the harsher material and institutional realities of social life, even in the most ostensibly tolerant societies" (*The Cambridge* 251).

The article focuses on Gulf States transformations, but reconstructing the identity of the person due to the community he/she lives in. Nawal Al Sadawi discussed the significance of the identity and the belonging in 'Why Keep Asking me About My Identity'. She explicated that "identity is a discourse, it is essential to know who is using it, who decides, who labels me, what all this interest to cultural identity means, where does it lead?" (quoted in Al Areqi's *Indigenous Identity*, P. 4). As a result, the Kuwaiti novelists such as Saud Al Sanousi and Sada Al Da'as address such issues in their literary works such as the hybrid and the in- between identity or stateless people (*Bidoun*), the voiceless others who have no right to get the identity of the country who become a part of it by birth or by living for many generations on the earth. They share everything with the community which reveals its racism and ethnic prejudice against such lower classes. The Gulf writers in general and Kuwaiti novelists' in particular discuss such issues in their literary works and they have releases a clarion call for tolerance and coexistence.

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF GULF STATES NARRATIVE

Rise of Saudi Narrative

Hassan Al Nami in his article "*Saudi Narrative: Four Historical Transformations*" argued that "in the experience of Saudi narrative, the historical turn has played decisive role in forming the Saudi narrative, whether in terms of form or context. The narrative was born with the foundation of Saudi Arabia, in a period the narrative was an absent art and the poetry was dominating" (*Middle East Journal*, Sunday, 23 September, no, 12353). In pursuing the first attempts of Saudi narrative, it is found that the first novel is Abdulqadoos Al Ansari's *The Twins*. It was the first narrative published in 1930. It is very simple in its form and context. It does not reach the anticipated standard of art. It attempts to educate the people the significance of adhering to the Islamic and oriental values. It is about the civilization relations between orient and occident. The novel eventually attempts to glorify the orient culture and values and simultaneously exposes the corruption of the occident as it seems the main aim and the message of the novel. It tells us about two twins' different experiences, Rasheed and Fareed, one of the experiences in the orient and the second in the occident. This novel puts the beginning of the Saudi narrative with its weakness, scarcity of literary works and lack of artistic standard observed in the other Arab countries narratives. The narrative is overwhelmed with social reform and living under the conservative community in which the Islamic and social values are glorified. It seems the main aim is to pay attention of the readers to be stuck to their values taken from their Islamic and Arabic civilization.

Then very limited number of novels begins to appear such as Hamid Damanhuri's *Sacrifice Cost*. It addresses a love relationship between a youth and his cousin, Fatima and proposed to her and travels to Egypt to accomplish his study in Medicine. On his travel, he falls in love with one of his friends' sisters. He is torn between leaving his first love, Fatima and marrying the second love. Eventually he has chosen his cousin to keep his promises to his cousin, Fatima. Definitely this sacrifice has its cost in the life of this youth. The genuine beginning of Saudi narrative is marked by the conservative context that meets with the community values and culture. Such attempts in narrative writing continue to 1954. Then the Saudi writers initiate reading for the Arab world giants in literature from Egypt and Al Sham countries. They get knowledge of the language and the new techniques in writing the narrative. The second stage has begun in 1954 to 1989, in this stage many literary works; many other narratives come to support the course of development in the area. Hamid Damanhuri's *The Sacrifice Cost*, 1959, and Hamid's *The Daus passed*, 1963, Ibrahim Al Nasser wrote many literary works such as *The Holes in the Night Dress*, 1961, and *The Death Ship*, 1969. New generation of female writers appeared to occupy a space in the area of narrative, for instance, the literary novels of Huda Saleh Al Rashid. Raja Al Alem, Sameera khashqgi's *Tearing Memory* and *Your Eyes are sparking*, *Drops of Tears*. Hind Baghafar's *The Lost Innocent*, 1972, and Laila Al Uhaideb. Al Qahtani pointed out that "the Saudi narrative has witnessed many failings, particularly in the beginning of its flourishing, and the poetry was absent, while the narrative becomes the art of the era...he added the genuine transformation in Saudi narrative when a decree is issued by the ministry of Culture and Media to pay 30% of literary production for any writer, an a step to support the writers and encourage them, but drive them into the creativeness" (a symposium in International Book Fair about Saudi narrative, 46 circle).

In seventies, the literary works of Abulrahman Munif enrich the Saudi narrative with many works such as, *Trees and Assassination of Marzuq*, 1973, *Magusi Love Story*, 1974, *Mediterranean East*, 1975, *The Ends*, 1977, *Since We Have Abandoned the Bridge*, 1979, A

World without Maps, collaborative work with Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, 1982, *The Salt Cities*, 1984-1989, in five volumes, they address many significant transformations in the life of Gulf Countries after discovering oil and how the people circumstances change. They address many political issues that make the Gulf Royal families feel unsatisfied towards such works. It is very obvious many critics and the writers of Gulf, particularly Saudi writers ignore his literary works when they talk about the stages of Saudi narrative development. Munif was born in Amman and raised and studied his first education there, he is the hybrid whose mother is Iraqi and his father is Saudi. In 1999, Munif wrote another work, the trilogy of *Ard Al Sawad (The Land of Blackness)* and other literary works that enrich the Saudi narrative in particular and the Gulf literature in general.

The eighties come to emphasize the role of women in the development of Saudi Narrative. A host of women managed to engrave out a name for themselves in the world of narrative. They have been encouraged by the spread of education and the freedom of the females' education in Saudi Arabia. Many female writers participate in many literary works, for instance, Amel Shatta's *Tomorrow I Forget*, 1980, Raja Al Alim's *Zero/Four*, 1987, Bahiyah Bu Subait's *A Pearl from Al Ehsa*, 1987, Safiyah Anber's *Flames in the Ashes*, 1988, Safiya Baghdadi's *Lost and Light Dazzles*, 1987. The themes of the females' works express the concerns and interests of the Gulf woman, their right in education, women rights in general, female oppression in a community known with patriarchal domination. In 1980s, the huge transformation in the social and economic life and spread of female education assist in emerging many narratives, such as Raja Al Alim's *Zero/ Four*. In that period, many writers produce many literary works that bring their names to the literary arena. Then a host of narrative writers appear to present the contemporary era of narrative, for example, Turki Al Hamad, Ghazi Al Qusaibi, Abdu Khal, Yusuf Al Muhaimid, Mohammed Hassan Alwan, Abdelhafeed Al Shamri, Abdullah Al Taizy, Abdelaziz Al Mashri, Abdullah Jifri, Abdelaziz Al Saqabi, and a host of female writers such as Raja Al Alim, Nora Al Ghamidi, Laila Al Jahmi, Maha Al Faisal, Nada Abu Ali, Omaima Al Khamis, Raja Al Sana', and Badriya Al Bashr. Such names whether males or females have developed the Saudi narrative and drive it to the international arena.

Abdu Khal has written many literary works that are marked with literary maturity, for instance, *Death Passes from Here*, *The Mud*, 2001, etc. The contemporary era brings into the literary arena more developed narrative in terms of form and context, art and technicality, and themes and issues argued that very connected to the concern of the people in the country they live in. Mohammed Hassan Alwan's *Digs Breathe*, 2001, Yusuf Al Muhaimid's *The Small Traps*, 2002, Abduhafeed Al Shamri's *the Flood of Thunder*, 2002, Ibrahim Shahbi's *A Female broke The Tribe*, 2002. The contemporary generation managed to take the Saudi narrative into international standards. The Saudi narrative manages to win many inter/national prizes. Many factors contribute in developing and speeding the literary movement in Saudi Arabia for instance, spread of education, press, printing, net and rise of highly cultured and educated persons, whether males or females.

There are many writers have shown their concern about the Saudi narrative and pursue the stages of the Saudi narrative development. Such as Hussein Mohammed's *Studies in Cultural discourse*, Najeeb Mohammed's *New Remarks on Contemporary Saudi Narrative*, Amal Al khayat's *Literary Criticism of Saudi Narrative*, Khalid Yusuf's '*Saudi Narrative and the Challenges*', Mohammed Al Abbas's '*The Fall of Taboo in Saudi Political Narrative*' and others. The writer argued in the book the Saudi political narrative as incomplete and distracted because of fear of reviewer who supposed one of the countrymen who requires standing against

the literary text which violates the cultural and Islamic values of the community, and such control authority may exaggerate in their reaction towards such literary text. The fear of the authority and community make them understand the political text from different perspective. For example, Abdu Khal's novels, for instance, *Throwing sparks*, 2010, release a huge controversy about the context of the novel and its political connotations. It attempts to avoid the explicit political issues; however, you may realize the implicit political argument in the narrative.

There are many literary works that discuss political issues whether in explicit or implicit context. For instance, Ghazi Al Qusaibi's '*Apartment of Freedom*', in which he tells us about Fuad Al Taref, the one who escapes from the parties to his home promises, Sa'd Al Dawsari's '*Al Riyadh, November 90*', it argues the struggle of Haifa and Sulaiman, Ibrahim Al Qudairi's '*Return to the Past Days*', Mohammed Alwan's '*Purity Ring*', Turki Al Hamad's '*The shadows of the Abandoned Alleys*', it address the story of Hisham Al Aber, the hero of the trilogy of '*The Shadows of the Abandoned Alleys*', Mujeeb Al Zahrani's '*Dancing*', it addresses the story of Saeed, the royal Parisian Struggler, Fares Al Hamzani's '*Northern Passion*', Khalid Al Muhahid's '*Allah's Eye*', Yosuf Al Muhaymid's '*The Doves do not Fly in Buraida*',...etc.

The war in the Gulf area and fear of terrorism in the nineties, particularly after the event of September 11, 2001, rise of Al Qaeda as striking force against the international interests change the view of the people not only towards literature, but towards life in general and the writers in different places begin to address in their narrative the issues of terrorism and the war, hybridity, identity problematic, woman rights, human rights, aspiration of communities for better life, and classicism conflict, for example, the war of Kuwait liberation from Saddam Hussein's troops. Gulf writers in general and Saudi novelists as the other world writers initiate addressing such issues in their narrative. Further, openness of the Gulf states to the world through the net and satellite channels have changes the look of the writers to the life and to their narrative. The writers begin to address the people's concerns, and the social and cultural issues such as the literary works of Ghazi Al Qusaibi, Turki Al Hamad, and Abdu Khal.

The Saudi Novels manage to compete with other Gulf and Arab countries narrative to win the international prizes in the area of literature. The Saudi narrative has gained for two consecutive years the International Prize for Arabic Fiction, the two works that send the Saudi narrative beyond the boundaries of Saudi Arabia, they are Abdu Khal's novel *Throwing Sparks*, 2010 and Raja Al Alim's novel '*Doves Ring*', both have won the same prize, International Prize for Arabic Fiction (Booker Prize), however, Raja Al Alim's novel, *The Doves Ring* shares the prize with another Moroccan writer, Mohammed Al Shari, in 2011. Yusuf Al Muhaimid's *The Smell Traps* has won an esteemed Italian prize and another novel, the trilogy of *The Shadows of the Abandoned Alleys*, for the same writer has gained Tunisian Prize, Abu Al Qassim Al Shabi's Prize for Literature. One of Laila Al Jahmi's novels has been published by UNESCO project (A Book in A Journal) and has printed out in many different international languages. Raja Al San'e *The Girls of Riyadh* is translated into many international languages despite the huge controversial talk about such work, claiming it exceeds the boundaries of the conservative community values.

The Saudi narrative does not stop at this stage; however, it attempts to go through the scientific fiction. It is the narrative that gives rains to human mind to reflect what he imagines and what could be imagined. Nora Al Shamsan is one of the youth who reveal a sort of concern with the scientific fiction. She has published a novel entitled *Transformers*, 2015, Sindibad House for publishing and distributing, Cairo. The publisher is very concerned to introduce for the work

by showing the significance of the scientific fiction by brining the words of Farouq Al Baz who pointed out "the scientific fiction represents the literary initiative and one of the human features is that does not recognize restrictions to his mind. The scientific fiction arouses the love of curiosity and interrogation that motivate the child to search for more knowledge" (*Alfajr Fen*, 1). He added that the famous Egyptian Scientist who is Nobel Laureate emphasized that "the beauty in America and that makes it get developed, science fiction does not kill and has no limitations and all organizations encourage. The real scientist is the one who loves his knowledge and he has to dream and imagine the world, otherwise, he would not bring something new to humanity" (*Alfajr Fen*, 1).

Decent Beginnings in Qatar Narrative

The beginning of the Qatari narrative appears late compared to other Gulf states. The beginning is very decent and may not reach the standard or art of the novel. A host of names rise in the area of narrative, particularly in the area of short story such as Yosuf Al Na'mah, Widad Al Qawari, Kulthum Jabr, and Hassa Al Awadi. However, the genuine long narrative writing rises very late in comparison to the other Gulf States such as Saudi Arabia and United Arab of Emirates. The early literary works of Shu'a Khalifa and her sister Dalal may put the first foundation for the Qatari long narrative. Then many names rise in the literary arena of Qatar such as Ahmad Abdelmalik and the promising novelist, Abdel aziz Al Mahmud to bring the Qatari narrative to the contemporary era. Dalal Khalifa has published many literary works that come to stabilize the position of Qatari novel in the Gulf region. She has written: *The Legend of Man and Lake*, 1993, *Distant Wild Trees*, 1994, *From The Old Seas to You*, 1995, *Our Life is the Festival of days and Nights*, 2000, whereas her sister Shu'a has written *Crossing to the Truth*.

There are many names bring the Qatari narrative to the literary arena such Ahmad Abdelmalik and Abdel Aziz Mahmoud. Abdel Aziz Al Mahmoud's *The Pirate* brings good reputation to the Qatari novel in the Gulf region and gains a huge success and esteemed reputation. Abdel Aziz Mahmoud concentrates his attention on the historical novel in which he sees the significance of realizing the old history of the Gulf region. It is the historical novel that narrates the great history and civilization of the area. It exposes the struggle of the men of the area to mould the history of the Gulf region in particular, and the Arab World in general. It is not easy work to come back to the book of history of the Gulf Area to be combined with the art of fiction without manipulating with the historical facts as the author's concern to expose that significant period of the Gulf history that requires to be taught and studied in the schools and the universities to be in contact with this golden period of history which change the reality of life for the Gulf countries and make their future brilliant. Abdelaziz Mahmoud observes in such historical period a unique school for the new generations to be familiar with their Arabic and Islamic civilization and their old history.

The writer of *The Pirate* realizes, but overvalue the historical novel because its significance to the new generations to build their future on that historical foundations. *The Pirate* tells us about a bloody conflict at the beginning of nineteenth century between the British Empire and the Arab tribes in Gulf Region to dominate the Gulf region. The writer addresses in his novel the story of the precious sword decorated with jewels. There was a feverish race to gain the precious sword. The ships of Arhma bin Jaber, the pirate, have bounced on the British ships on its way to Ibrahim Basha, the leader of Egyptian army, carrying the precious sword given by the British supreme delegate in India in tempting to ally with the British Empire against the

Gulf tribes and to topple Al Wahabi movement and its allies from Arab tribes in the Arab Peninsula. And many events occurred to change the reality and the future of the region forever.

Nora Al Sa'd wrote *the Document*, 2010, that novel which documents the historical and political events in the second half of the twentieth century. Muna Fadl argued in her article " *The Document*" that the critics view this work as a critical historical and political work and does not reach the artistic literary work. (Al Wasat Journal, 8 April, 2013, no, 3866). She wrote story Collection entitled '*Journals Seller*', 1989. Hashim Al Sayed wrote *The Window of Grieves*, the novel addresses human being's grieves, worries and troubles, the grieves that open a dialogue with human psyche to reach at end to satisfaction and integrity with its destiny. He wrote many other literary works, for instance, *The End of the Road*, *The Whispers of Summer*. Hashim Al Sayed has written many other works: *After The Arab Spring: The decisive Battle*. It is one of the literary works connected with the Arab spring. He exposes the dialogue in cartoon characters that brings distinction to his work and the first work adopts such style in the dialogue between cartoon characters which argues the issue of the Arab spring from different corners. He has written another book in economics such as *Anarchism of the World of Fund and Business*. Jamal Al Fayeze wrote *The Foam of the Mud*.

There are many problems that impede the progress of narrative writing in Qatar. There is no genuine encouragement to the youth authors to publish their literary works. As a result, the Qatari narrative rises very late compared to other Gulf states and could not compete for any international prize such as International Prize of Arabic Fiction (IPAF) or other Arab literary prizes as their counterparts novels in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait. Abdu Khal's *Throwing Sparks*, 2010 and Raja Al Alim's *Doves Ring*, 2011, and Turki Al Hamad's narratives managed to gain many prizes in Saudi Arabia. Saud Al Sanousi's *The Bamboo Stalk* managed to win the (IPAF). To overcome such failings and to push the narrative work in Qatar forward, the General Foundation of Cultural Area- Katara- launched a prize for the distinctive literary works. It has launched an electronic site of Katara prize, www.kataranovels.com. It is a yearly prize granted to the distinctive narrative works and it comes to support, but encourage the narrative writing. The foundation has appointed a committee to judge and evaluate the distinctive narrative works. The head of Katara Foundation Khalid Al Sulaiti emphasizes that the Katara prize comes to shed light on the significance of Arabic narrative. It aims at establishing national and international existence of the Arabic narrative and leads the Arabic novel to compete with the other narratives whether in the Gulf Area or in the world in general. Such prize, undoubtedly, will lift the spirit of the writers and raise the cognitive and cultural awareness of the people. The privileges granted by this prize are not only financial benefit, but also it translates the distinctive narratives into many international languages as English, French and Spain. It works also on printing out and marketing the unpublished narratives that will win the prize. The prize is granted to the original Arabic narrative and the candidate supposed to be alive to deserve the *Katara* prize.

The growing concern of Qatari cultural organizations is explicit. Abdel Alziz Al Mahmoud's novel, *The Sacred Sail*, witnesses a sort of celebration in Hamad bin Khalifa's University under the sponsorship of Qatar Foundation. This novel comes to enroot Abdelaziz Al Mahmud's concern with the historical novel that addresses the historical issues required to be recognized by the new generation as his earlier novel, *The Pirate*. Students in schools and universities are in need for such novels that present a historical period of history in Gulf Region

Production of narrative in Qatar is still limited compared to other Gulf States. Zakiya Mal Allah pointed out in (*Cultural Trends*, *Al Waten Journal*, no. 5833, 23-8-2011) that "the reasons

behind the scarcity of narrative productions refer to the lack of the genuine encouragement that leads the author to disappear from the literary arena. And he has no rights as an author or creative writer" (p.3). Huda Al Nuaimi, a literary figure, argued in *Al Waten Journal* no. 5833, 23-8-2011 that "the literary production in Qatar is not parallel to other Gulf states in the region because the number of writers is very limited so that it is normal to find a limited number of narrative works (p.4). Ahmad Abdel Malik emphasized in *Today Journal*, 17 Feb, no, 13396, 2010, "the novel as any other literary forms, it becomes a sort of business between the publisher and the writer together, I don't think the publisher pays the writers for his literary works, on the contrary, the publisher gets all his publishing rights from the author first and before even publishing the literary works" (p.1).

Ahmad Abdemalik enrich Qatar literary arena with many distinctive works whether in the area of literature or in the area of media. He has published many literary works in short story area and novel. He has published two collection of short story: *Room 405*, 1997, and *Female Papers*, 2001. In the area of novel, he has published *Exiles Bosoms* 2005, *The Bomb*, 2006, *Faz'e: The Martyr of Gulf Reform* (under publishing). He wrote many other works in prose: *Letters to a Burning Woman*, 1982, *August*, *The Terror*, 1991, it is a sort of documentation of Kuwait invasion. *Migrant to your Eyes*, 1992, *Without Diplomacy*, 2007, he addresses many social issues. Further, Ahmad Abdemalik has published many other works in the media.

Narration Development in United Arab of Emirates

The first rise of the Emirates narrative backs to Rashid Abdullah Al Nuaimi's novel, *Shahinda*, 1971. He is one of the pioneers of the literary movement in Emirates and he is the founder of the literary narrative in Emirates by his first literary work, *Sahinda* which was published in 1971 to be the first novel in United Arab of Emirates. Rashid is a member of ruling family in Ajman and his efforts extend to cover many aspects in Emirates: politics, media and health. He has gained many significant positions in Emirates and the most significant one is his work as a foreign minister of the United Arab of Emirates from 1990-2006.

There are many literary novels begin to rise to stabilize the position of the Emirates narrative in the Gulf states. Some of the literary works come later to impose themselves in the Emirates literary area are Abdullah Al Nawuri's *A Neck Looks for Necklace*, Mohammad Obaid Khabash's *Always occurs in Night*, Ali Abu Al Rish's *When Grieves Awake*, *The Coast of the Hero*, and *Wounds on Time Wall*, Mohammad Hassan Al Harbi's *A City Events on the Beach*, and Sultan Al Qassimi's narratives that focus on the historical events. He wrote the *White Sheikh* and *The Revolting Prince*, Mansour Abdelrahman's *The Man who Bought his Name*, and *The Son of My Master*, *Al Sultan*. There are a number of females who engrave out a name for themselves in the Narrative area such as Mayson Saqr's *Rayhana*, Asma'a Al Zar'ani's *The Leaving Body*, Rihab Al Qailani's *Fingertips Separation*

The growing development in all aspects of life in Emirates has influenced the literary area. Many factors speed up the transformations in literature in general and narrative in particular, such as the rise of oil, foundation of United Arab of Emirates, rise and progress of the different means of media as press, publishing houses, printing, satellite, internet and computer. All such factors assist in making a quantum leap in cultural and social life in Emirates. Many Gulf writers utilize their talents to expose the history of the Gulf region such as Sultan Al Qassimi's literary works: *The White Sheikh* and *The Revolting Prince*. Ali Mohammad Rashid's *The Cost of the Hero* is one of the narratives that shed light on a historical period in the Gulf region. Other writers also from different gulf states show their concern about the historical novel that

glorify the past of Arab peoples. The Qatari Abdelaziz Al Mahmoud's literary works address the ancient history in the Gulf region such as *The Pirate* and *The Sacred Sail*.

Many other literary works come to enrich the Emirates narrative such as Mane' Saeed Al Otaibi's *Karima*, Hassan Juma Al Jabi's *Grieves of the Daughter of Sad Destiny*, Basima Yunis's *Angels and Devils*. Ali Abu Al Rish has enriched the literary movement in Emirates with many literary works; he reflects the reality of his community in narratives and discusses the issues that touch the concerns of the people. He has very long history in writing the narrative. He started his career with *Confession* 1982, then many other novels follow such as *Sword and Flower*, *Blood Ashes*, *Window of Insanity*, 1990, *Idol Hill*, *Mujbel Bin Shahwan*, *Salayem*, *Spirit and Stone*, and *The Statue* 2001.

Omani Narrative Movement and its Stages of Development

The early literary works of Abdullah Al Tae'e consider the beginning of the Omani narrative regardless of the lack of the artistic elements and its weakness as a narrative. The early beginnings of Abdullah Al Tae'e were in 1939 in his literary work *Ahlam* and then it came *The Angels of The Green Mountain*, 1958 and *The Big Sail* in 1972. Those novels represent the first bricks in the foundation of Omani Novel. Salem Al Tawiy'a pointed out that "the scarcity of narrative writers refer to the lack of contact with the details of life and employ them in very long narrative, instead, they are tied with the self and empty such feelings psychologically in stories begging exposition and declaration...on the other hand, lack of community existence in the narrative text as characters, environment, events and the last one is the raw material for any narrative work, particularly for the novel" (2).

Abdullah Al Tae'e's early beginning in writing the novel makes him historically the pioneer of Omani narrative. In eighties and nineties, The Omani narrative initiate flourishing and a host of writer contribute in developing the Omani Narrative whether, males or females. Many novels emerge to enrich the literary arena in Oman. For examples: Saif Bin Saeed Al Saedi's *The Autumn of the Time*, 1988. Saud Al Mudafer's *Al Sheikh*, 1991, and Mubarak Al Mamari's *Frahidi Street*, 1997. At the end of the nineties, Al Mamari wrote his first novel and other names such as Hussein Al Abri, Mohammad bin Saif Al Rahabi. The concern of the early novels expose the historical events, the problem of the detainees and the victims in the historical war.

Ahmad Al Rahabi argued that the poetry of Oman is the most perfect literary type in Oman. In *Hamad Al Shakili's Models from Omani Narratives*, has selected models for Omani novels such as Mohammad bin Saif Al Rahabi's *Journey of Abu Zaid Al Omani*, Hussein Al Abri's *The Bang* and Ali Al Ma'mari's *The Whisper of the Bridges*. The writer emphasizes that among the obstacles faced him in writing such book is scarcity if not lack the scientific studies about Omani narrative.

The Omani female writers are not absent from the Omani literary arena. The Omani woman has managed to fill in the gap in the early Omani works which seems lack the elements of art and standard of good novel. The first literary works addressed the historical events but it could not present such events in a perfect narrative. Omani woman as scholar or a writer exert a lot of efforts to put for herself a name in the history of Omani narrative. Muna bint Hibras Al Sulaimiya prepares *Nature in Omani Novel*; She addresses three novels in her study: Badriyah Al Shahi's *Circling where Embers*, 1999. In such novel, Badriya has managed to overcome the obstacle of the early Omani narrative and presented a unique work in the terms of form and

context, and art and theme. The second novel addresses in the Book is Abdelaziz Al Farisi's *The earth Cries, Jupiter Laughs* and the third one is Hussein Al Abri's *The Red and The Yellow*. New literary works begin to take place in the Omani narratives such as Jukha Al Harthi's novel, *Sleeping*, 2004.

Huda Hamad is one of the new youth who are concerned with narrative writing and her early writings in the area of short story. She has graduated for Halab University in Syria, 2005, and has worked after graduation in the Cultural division in Omani Journal; and then moved as an editor to *Nizwa Magazine*. She has published the first collection of her short stories entitled *Salty Backbite*, 2006, and *Exactly as I Want*, 2009, and *The Sign is Orange Now*, 2013. In the area of the novel, she has published *Things Are not in Their Places*, 2009, This novel has won the first position in Arabic Creativity Contest in Al Shariqa and it also obtained the best published work from Omani Writers Society in 2009. The novel is reprinted under the project of 'A Book in A Magazine', in *Nizawa Magazine*. Huda Hamad also has published *Who Counts the Stairs*, 2014, under the name of: A Professional: Najwa Barakat's Novel Project. Huda has written Omani cartoon series '*Day after Day*'. Huda takes the materials of her literary works from the community and the people around her, particularly, the rural issues and the issues of the simple people and their daily events.

Omani woman has contributed in developing the Omani novel and make a quantum leap in the narrative writing. The Work of Badriya Al Shahi's *Circling where Embers*, 1999, was a turning point in the history of Omani novel. Jukha Al Harthi has published another novel: *The Ladies of the Moon* and Ghaliya Al Saeed has published *Sabira and Asila*, 2007. Mohammad Abdullah Zarooq pointed out "The Omani novel involves with the Arabic novel in general more than its connection with the Gulf novel, if there is a type of narrative called Gulf Novel" (4).

Bahraini Efforts in Narrative Writing

Bahraini Narrative is concerned with identity problematic, gender, woman issues, human rights, human conflict, classicism, patriarchal domination, man and woman relationship and other daily issues. The Bahraini novel comes to express growing transformations and the reality of daily life. Bahraini novel comes late compared to other Gulf States as Saudi Arabia. The first novel was Fuad Obaid's *Memories on Sands*, 1966. Obaid earlier wrote a collection of short stories such as *Badriya on the Life Road, Contemplations and Whispers in Love*, 1961.

In seventies and eighties, there were a real progress in writing the narrative and short story in Bahrain. Mohammad Abdelmalik began his early attempts in writing short stories, then, he moved to write novels. He wrote *Holes in the Lung of the City*, 1970, *Death of the Carriage Owner*, 1972, *We Love The Sun*, 1975, *Al Jathwa (The Flame)*, 1980, *The Siege*, 1982, *The River Running*, 1984, and *Love Night*, 1998. The Eighties and nineties present new names and new literary works that reveal their literary works more matured whether in the form or the context. The literary works of Hussein Mahroos, Ahmad Al Muathen, Abdullah Khalifa, Waleed Ashim, Fareed Ramadan and other names that drive the Bahraini narrative to better position.

Bahraini woman contributes in establishing a solid ground for the Bahraini narrative such as the literary works of Fawziya Rashid, Fathiya Nasser and others. Fawziya Rashid was the first Bahraini woman who wrote a novel. She has published three novels and a collection of short stories, Fawziya Rashid's *The Secret Anxiety* and *Transformation of Strange Knight in Arab Countries*, and Laila Saqr wrote only a novel, Fathiya wrote three novels and Muneera Aswar

has published one novel. Anisa Al Sadoom in *Novel and Ideology in Bahrain* pointed out that "it is not easy for the readers or scholars to find a copy in bookshops even for new publications that make the readers borrow or get a copy of the novel from the author himself/herself to read or make review" (15). Here Anisa spots the light on the shortage of the novels in the market. The publisher and the community bear such responsibility to assist in publishing new edition and make the literary works available in the market.

Abdullah Khalifa's concern is about the historical and Islamic legacy. He wrote many literary novels that are involved with the Arabic and Islamic history., for instance, *The Head of Al Hussein*, *Omer bin Al Qattab*, *A Martyr*, *Othman bin Affan*, *A Martyr*, *Ali bin Ali Taleb*, *A Martyr*, *Mohammed*, *A Rebellion* and he wrote other works such as *Spring* in its two parts: *The Voice* and *The Black Water*, and *The Song of Water and Fire*, Ahmad Al Muathen wrote many novels such as *A Female does not like the Rain*, *From Cement Forests*, and *A Man For Selling*. The themes addresses in Bahraini novels are not different from other Gulf states issues regardless of the settings variations. Abdelqader Aqeel addresses in his literary works reconstructing the identity from different cultural and social dimensions. Bahraini writers pay more attention to the concerns of people of Bahrain, the reality of their daily lives and their look for better future.

Kuwaiti Narrative and Booker Prize

Kuwait is one of the Gulf states which enrich the Gulf literary arena with a lot of literary works, particularly in the area of narrative. It may come the second Gulf state which occupies the second position, after Saudi Arabia, considering the number of published novels and the number of the narrative writers, whether males or females. The beginning of the Kuwaiti novel refers back to the late of forties when Farhan Rashid Al Farhan wrote the first Kuwaiti novel, *The Pains of A Friend*, 1948, that one which opened the gate for many other novels. The Kuwaiti novel is known in the Gulf states Map of narrative and it brings a good reputation to the Kuwaiti narrative, particularly by competing and winning the International Prize for Arabic fiction. The beginning of the third millennium has culminated the narrative Kuwaiti writers to reach the international standards and compete with the other Arab or Gulf states for prizes in the area of novel.

Many names come later to stabilize the position of Kuwaiti narrative by presenting many new, distinctive works that develop its techniques in form and context, and pay more attention on the artistic elements of the novel. The early beginning of Kuwaiti narrative is marked by the literary works of Faran Rashid Al Farhan, Sabiha Al Mishari, Abdullah Al Ghalef, Noria Al Sadani, Fatimah Ali, Khalil Mohammed Al Wadi, Nasser Al Dufairi, and the development of the narrative is culminated by the works of Ismail Fahd Ismail and Laila Al Othman, Buthaina Al Essa, Taiba Al Brahim, Fawziya Al Shaweesh Al Salem and many other names who contribute in flourishing the literary movement in Kuwait.

The second stage comes to solidify the Kuwaiti position among the Arab and Gulf states. This period of seventies, eighties and nineties assists in stabilizing the elements of arts and accomplish the missing in the early works. Moving to new techniques in the form, context and in narration that could be touched in Ismail Fahd Ismail's late literary works. The literary production in Kuwait is huge compared to other Gulf states from quantity and quality of the literary productions. Ismail Fahd Ismail has written more than twenty two novels that started to get published in the last three decades of the twenty century and continued his works in narrative to extend to the first decade of the third millennium. Such novels, engrave a name

and a significant position for Ismail Fahd in the world of Arabic novel in general and the Gulf states in particular.

The list of the narrative writers is very long, including males and females, for instance, the narrative works of Taiba Al Ibrahim, Laila Al Othman, Khawala Al Qazwini, etc. Woman in Kuwait narrative contributes in establishing and flourishing the Kuwaiti art and literature. Fatima Yusuf Al Ali considers the first Kuwaiti woman who wrote a novel, *Faces in Crowding* in 1959 which was published in 1971. Sabiha Mushari's *The Cruelty of Destinies*, 1960 and Noria Al Sadani's *Deprivation*, 1968, which were published in the sixties to be the early works of woman in Kuwait. Many works are followed in the seventies such as Ismail Fahd Ismail's *The Sky was Blue*, 1970, Fatimah Al Ali's *Faces in Crowding*, 1970, Laila Al Othman's *Laila Chooses her Death*, 1977, Taiba Al Ebrahim's *Springs Thorns*, 1979 and many other narratives. In eighties Ismail Fahd Ismail's *A Step in Dream*, 1980, Laila Al Othman's *The Woman and The Cat*, 1985, Khawala Al Qizwini's *When Man Thinks*, 1987, and many other literary works for Ismail Fahd Ismail and Laila Al Othman. In nineties, many other narratives emerged to support the position of Kuwaiti narrative such as Taiba Al Ebrahim's *Man Extinction*, 1990, Khedr Abdelatif Al Khader's *Dreams On Wind Way*, 1992, *The Shadows of Fact*, 1995, and many other novels for different writers.

The beginning of the third millennium makes the novel more present in Kuwaiti narrative, but it moves the Kuwaiti novel to compete with other Arabic and Gulf novels for inter/national prizes. Many works appear to find a place in the narrative world such as Fawziya Al Shaweesh Al Salem's *Muzoon: The Desert Rose*, 2000, Faisal Al Sad's *Astonishment*, 2001, Hamad Mohammad Khatlan's *Ahlam's Dreams*, and many other distinctive novels which find its way to the Kuwaiti narrative map. Then it appears Saud Al Sanousi's winning novel, *The Bamboo Stalk*, 2013, to culminate the success which the Kuwaiti novel fulfilled in the Gulf region or in the Arab world in general. This novel brings a name for Kuwaiti narrative to the international arena. It wins the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF), through Booker Foundation (The Arabic Booker 2013) and the winner of the State of Kuwait Prize. It presents the genuine problematic of identity, hybridity, racism, lack of identity and its consequences which are caused by the phenomenon of foreign maids working in the rich houses of Arab families in Kuwait or other Gulf countries. Saud Al Sanousi wrote another novel, *A Prisoner of Mirrors*, 2010. It won the Fourth Laila Al Othman Prize, A word for novels and short stories. Another novel that discusses the problematic of race and identity or the mixed race is Sa'da Al Da'as's *Being Black*. The novel is the winner of the State of Kuwait Prize, 2010. Both novels will be the focus of this article to trace the genuine factors and main reasons behind reconstructing the indigenous identity of the Gulf countries and how the hybrid or in-between person will feel lost and unable to adapt himself/herself with the new circumstances in a world he supposes to live in and be a part of it.

Al Sanousi's *The Bamboo Stalk* and Search for Identity

Al Sanousi's *The Bamboo's Stalk* addresses many social and political issues in Kuwait in particular and Gulf states in general, such as lack of identity, but reconstructing of identity due to the variables of the person lives in. The novel addresses the hybrid that is torn between two communities, two cultures, two languages and many religions adopted by the person's relatives. It pays the reader's attention to the stateless people (*Biduns*) who spend their lives in search for identity, for citizenship despite the passing of many generations and the new born babies become *Biduns*. It also spots the light on the woman right and her right to participate in elections and competes with the other males for the parliament and contribute in the political

life and be a part of the decision makers. War consequences and police officers corruption are other issues addressed in the novel.

The Bamboo Stalk argues the story of A Filipino housemaid and her son, Jose or Issa who is a half Kuwaiti and half Filipino who returns to Kuwait after eighteen years, Josaphine who left her country to Kuwait on the hope of finding better living and improve her family's future in Philippine. She works in a rich family house where she meets the only son of the rich family, Rashid and the spoiled son of mother Ghanima and father Issa. Ghanima does not agree on her son's marriage from one of his classmates in the university due to the differences in class. Rashid under such disappointing situations, he had an affair with the Filipino house maid, Josaphine, and agrees with the maid to marry her secretly. However, the plan fails because Josaphine becomes pregnant with Jose Mandoza, or Issa Al Tarouf, and Rashid under his mother pressure to abandon his wife, he sends her to Philippine to raise Issa there. He sends her money from time to another until Rashid has taken by Iraqi troops a prisoner during the first Gulf War. Later on, she is informed he was dead. Josaphine struggles to survive in her country on the hope that the child, Issa will come back to his father country to find better life that may compensate him the years of deprivation in Philippine. The novel is categorized into six parts: Issa: Before the Birth, Issa After the Birth, Issa: The First Loss, Issa: The Second Loss, Issa: on the Home Margine, and At Last: Issa Look Back.

The novel begins to concentrate on many stages of Issa life, whether in Philippine or in his Father's home. The novel spots the light on his struggle in search for his identity. He is torn between two identities, two names, two languages, two countries, and many religions adhered by his mother's family in Philippine or his father family in Kuwait. He heard about Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, however, he does not recognize well any one of such beliefs. Al Sanousi treats very sensitive issues: the foreign maid working in the rich family houses in the Gulf States and he deals with hybrid or mixed race who dreams to live normal life in his country while his life bears contradictions that make the person as Issa Al Tarouf feels lost and confused. The novel raises the question of identity, stateless *Biduns*, human rights, woman rights, social and political equity and equality, policemen corruption, and war consequences that make of it a daring work that discusses the social and political issues which consider taboo for other writers.

Al Sanousi in one of the interviews in *Arab Times Journal* emphasized that "more importantly is the protagonist's search for his identity, for a name, a religion, a country, and a sense of belonging. Another important question is in what light did he sees us as a people? No doubt, he saw us in a negative way". Issa is in search for a homeland, a faith, and identity that ends his confusion and distraction. The novel puts a big question mark on unspoken world. Catrino Pinto in her review of the novel pointed out that "everything in *The Bamboo Stalk* is double, two identities, two countries, two languages, and even two manuscripts". The protagonist is the first person point of view, Issa who leads the readers to his worlds. Issa begins his narration to catch the reader's attention to the dualism and hybridity in his life even in the easiest manifestation of his name "my name is Jose, it's written like this in the Philippines, we pronounce it as in English, Jose. And in Arabic it sounds, as in Spanish, Khose, in Protégées is written with same letters, but it's pronounces Djose. Here in Kuwait, all those names have nothing to do with my name that is Issa. (*The Bamboo* 17).

The problem of Issa is not only a problem of one of the hybrids, but also he is torn between two cultures, two identities, two names, two languages, many religious considerations for his mother religion, Catholicism and his friends appreciations and faith in Buddhism or his father

relatives religion which is Islam. A lot of people are suffering from such loss problem, their experiences manifest more miserable life for many illegal children. Issa argues such problem "it was not me the only one in Philippine who was born from Kuwaiti father. There are many sons of Philippines from Kuwaiti fathers or Gulf or Arabs. Those their mothers have worked as a housemaids or those whose mothers have affairs with the tourists who come from their countries looking for cheap pleasures that offered only by a body exhausted by hunger" (18) and Issa continues to clarify that problem of the hybrid who are lost between their fathers countries or mothers' "there are who practice the vice to satisfy his instincts and on the other hand, there who with poverty practices to fill in his stomach and the price in many circumstances sons without fathers" (18). Here the sons become victims for their parents' recklessness and irresponsible behavior. Issa has no guilty to find himself unwelcome in his father's country. The differences between races and classes forbids Issa's father to marry the girl he loves under the plea she is not from the same class or level. Here the beginning of the loss for Rashid who finds himself under the pressure of his mother, Ghanima and the disappointing life to marry Josaphine, Issa's mother, secretly. This sort of marriage is not accepted in the Gulf rich families such as Ghanima's family. The restrictions by the community and the family lead Rashid to loss as it leads his son later to suffers and become a victim for a guilt he does not commit, just he is hybrid or in- between. Al Sanousi wants to spot the light on such fake barriers that may lead the lives of the people to the worst.

Issa's mother has left her son to unknown future, the anticipated future when he comes back to Kuwait and finds his father and may be his father may compensate his son the years of loss and confusion. However, the destiny may not spare his father to let Issa enjoy his sight with his father's face. His father was taken by Saddam's troops to know that he died while resisting Saddam's troops. She does not teach him his culture or religion, neither his father's nor his mother's. Under the pressure of poverty and the need to earn her living, she has left Issa for years to teach him what he supposed to be. Many short visits to the church or his Chinese friends who take him to the temple, or his hearing the voice of *Athan*, Calling for prayers from the mosques of Kuwait make his life confused. Issa spends his time in search for identity: the cultural identity, the religious identity, the social identity, the identity that guarantees for him to live in peace. The cultural identity, the political identity, the social identity, the religious identity, and the identity that may satisfy him and the people around him. He practices many social, political, religious, cultural rituals that every one of them contradicts the others. In his mother country, Philippine, he heard the wise words of the leader of Philippines who struggled against the invading Spain. In Kuwait he has heard how the national anthem of Kuwait leaves its impact on his vulnerable character. Many social and cultural and religious codes that leave Issa lost. "my mother has neglected my religious education, on the hope that Islam is waiting for me in my father's home" (63).

Issa casts the blame on his parents who left him with hybrid identity, two languages, two cultures, two names, two countries and he feels lost and to which one he requires to offer his love and loyalty. "if they agree (*his parents*- my emphasis) on one thing, only one thing, instead of leaving me alone, confused in very long road searching for explicit remarks of my identity, just one name I turn while one calls me with it, one home I was born in, I memorize its dust, one religion I believe in, instead of appointing myself a prophet for a religion belongs only to me" (63). From here the reader may realize the suffering and the state of loss which Issa lives in and undoubtedly he recognizes well his parents are a part of his suffering and loss. He does not feel that he belongs to any of lives. He yearns to his mother's home because he could not feel peace or receive welcome from his father's relatives. They sacrifice him, fearing from the

bad reputation which may tarnish the family reputation, how does Rashid, the spoiled man, from high class and rich family marry from inferior class? Reputation for ATarouf Family, Issa's father family, is significant. They do not hastate to sacrifice their son to keep their reputation. "if only were like the bamboo tree, which does not belong to anything! We cut a piece from the stalk, plant it without roots in any land, the stalk won't take long to grow roots...it grows anew, in a new land without a past, without memory" from here we may be in touch with the great misery which Issa lives in.

Issa could not get rid of contradictions in his life. "I'm the martyr's son, Rashid, and at the same time, I'm the son of Philippines housemaid" (214). He looks at Kuwait from his words as a paradise that would puts an end to his torment and loss, however, the lovely picture of Kuwait in the mind of Issa at his mother's home does not continue when he sees the reality of Kuwait and communicates with their people. This lovely picture fades away under the tangible reality of the community of Kuwait. "Kuwait for me false truth...or a real falsehood, I don't know...however, Kuwait has many facets...it is my father's home which I loves, my family which my feelings are contradicting towards it ...my exile which I hate,...Kuwait are disappointing its son with their look of contempt" (324). "Kuwait before many years was a paradise which I will win one day, which the people there tell me about" (386).

The second issues discussed in the novel is the issue of stateless, *Biduns*. Issa is shocked when he hears that Ghassan, his late father's friend, tells him that he cannot travel because he is *Bidun*. This is a sort of identity problematic, the right of identity and citizenship, who deserves?!! if Issa is hybrid and mixed raced, Ghassan is *Bidun* and this stigma turns his life to hell and drives him to disappointment. "I cannot travel; I'm not A Kuwaiti...from where you are, then? He (Ghassan) answered instantly *Bidun*...I have not heard about this country before (Issa replied). Ghassan keeps silent and I asked stupidly as usual, does *Bidun* one of the GCC?" (191). Here the reader may realize the simplicity of Issa's thought and his innocent questions which show his simple thinking.

In Kuwait, the people who has no citizenship called him *Bidun*, even if he is born in Kuwait, he will stay *Bidun* and the look of the community towards him lower. *Biduns* do not represent one generation and they serve their country as the others but they may not enjoy the country citizenship and they continue stateless people. For instant, Ghassan is one of those *Biduns* who may not get his full rights as the others who have Kuwaiti citizenship. They are not allowed to travel, they don't give them the document required to travel. The community may not marry them because they do not like to take risk with their relatives and the newborns who will find themselves stateless and *Biduns*. They will inherit the loss and humiliation of their father's life. Ghassan could not marry from Al Tarouf family because of this lower look and they do not want their daughters suffer with their husband in the future, their children would not be granted the citizenship and they will pursue the same road of their parents. Issa finds other people are suffering like him; Ghassan is one of them who do not want to rethink his marriage because he does not want to bring children who will suffer from such action. Here Al Sanousi stresses the old issue of *Biduns* who work with the other Kuwaiti in developing and defending the country, but they meet with ethnic prejudice and discrimination. They stand with the other Kuwaiti to defend Kuwait during Saddam's occupation but such works may not help them to be treated on equal terms with the other Kuwaitis, the holders of the citizenship.

Issa could not grasp the sense of such unfair word that indicates racism and race prejudice. "He is *Bidun*, I hate this naming which I don't understand despite Ghassan's translation of it, he is without citizenship, created like this. *If he was a sardine fish born in Atlantic Ocean, he would*

be an Atlantic fish. If he was a bird in one of the Amazon forests, he would be an Amazon bird (my emphasis). But his parents were born in Kuwait, and he was born where his parents were born. He does not recognize another home, only this home, working in its military area and defending of it during occupation, he is *Bidoun*" (192). Here Issa's ironic tone is clear how such man serves his country in war or peace and he does not deserve to be given the citizenship. *Biduns* are confused and feel lost. It is endless problem. This minority group is inherited a cancer that spread in the bodies of *Biduns* to let them stateless or without citizenship. The author wants to drag attention of the readers and the community to such identity problematic which *Biduns* find themselves in. They are without identity, rights, equality and they feel lost and look for the mercy of God to end their suffering while the community pays no attention to their misery. The bird which was born in Kuwait deserve to be called a Kuwaiti bird, what about a human who sacrifice himself in defending of his country, doesn't deserve to be treated on terms of equality and equity. This novel comes to put a big question mark on the hybrid as Issa, and *Biduns*, who are stateless and have no citizenship. Both are lost and are unwelcome in the community. They spend their life in search for their identity.

Another issue argued in the novel is the issue of migrations into Gulf states, particularly females who work as a housemaid and their endless problems which continuously appeared in the daily journals. Many titles tell us about the housemaids' troubles with their employers, killing the baby to take revenge from her employer, commit suicide ... etc. *The Bamboo Stalk* comes to stress the corruption in police stations that makes the women who has no residence permit to have an affair with the corrupt police men to be forgiven and released. Simultaneously, it puts us before a huge suffering and sacrificing of the female migrants to feed their family which almost live under the poverty line. "I've been working in Kuwait without a valid residence permit for months after running away from employer's house. I have a family that will die of hunger if I'm deported, said the old woman, The young woman turned to me and said: it doesn't look as if you have anything to offer? She gave a vulgar laugh" (180). The young woman always gets rid of punishment and deportation by illegal acts. "I've often paid for my residence permit by illegal means, either in an empty room at the police station or in their car or in an a apartment things like this take place, she said do you know how many police men's numbers I have on my phone? She concluded defiantly." (189). The young women sell their honor to be released. This acts show how the corruption is rampant in the police stations, it is limitless, 'do you know how many policemen numbers I have on my phone?' This is to show illegal acts and actions that tarnish the reputation of the policemen.

Another issue may be mentioned here is participation of the women in the competition of the parliament. A woman begins to fight for her rights and compete with the males for political positions in the country. However, the community still looks at women as a weak person who may not perform the responsibilities and duties perfectly. Other people encourage such a step that give the woman an opportunity to share with the man the leading positions as an expression of freedom and equality. What do the politicians use in their political campaigns? Sometimes it does not exceed being false mottos to attract the people to elect them. Hind Al Tarouf calls for *Biduns*' rights in her campaign while she could not accept her brother's son in the house because he is hybrid and his mother from a lower class that may tarnish the family name of Al Tarouf.

The important thing that the novel drags the reader's attention to is the consequences of the war in both countries: Kuwait and Philippine, participation of Philippines in Vietnam war, and their liberation war against Spain. Issa has lost his father in Gulf war, the war of his father's country

liberation from Saddam Hussein's troops. Issa's grandmother Mendoza, came from Vietnam war confused, lost and felt the emptiness and meaninglessness of life that made him spend his time and his money in roosters' wrestling, on the hope to win such roosters' competition. He neglected the family needs and became selfish to spend the family money on roosters' fighting. War made the creative people leave their countries to find a safer place, as Ismail Fahd Ismail In Kuwait, if not it will end the skills of the people to let them circulate in a vicious circle that may put an end to their skills and dreams while pursuing the peace, the safety and the necessities of honorable life. The *Bamboo Stalk* managed to argue very significant issues that touch the lives of Kuwaiti people in particular and the gulf countries people in general. It is worthy of winning the prize and it deserves to be addressed as one of the most significant literary works in the Gulf region.

Sada Al Da'as's *Being Black*

Sada Al Da'as novel, *Being Black*, 2010, is the winning novel of the Kuwait State Prize for Appreciation and Encouragement. It addresses the problematic of race and racism, the problematic of identity and hybridity, the issue of ethnic prejudice. It tells us about Fawzi who travelled to America to accomplish his higher studies in the area of theater and acting. He meets Juan, the African American woman who wants to marry a man with a light black skin to get her children less black. The story is not the story of Fawzi, the black skinned man and the black Juan who dreams to get married from her knight, despite the differences in culture and civilization, to assist her to forget her black skin; it is the story of their mixed race son, the hybrid, Jamal. Juan does not succeed to live in the white area in Chicago. Fawzi dies in an accident and his wife has decided to return to her husband's home, Kuwait, to find better future for her son.

It is the story of their son, Jamal, or Jamail as an American name. Jamal, the hybrid, who is permeated with two cultures and two religions, and two languages, and two names. He is not very different form the protagonist of Al Sanousi's winning novel of International Prize of Arabic Fiction, *The Bamboo Stalk*, Issa. Both novels are narrated by the protagonists of the two novels who are hybrid and search for a new identity in their fathers' home that assist them to be easily in contact with the people of their fathers' homes.

Both of the heroes go through two hard experiences, one in their mother's home and the other in their father's home, while the fathers and the mothers in both novels have different nationalities, different religions, different languages, different cultures. And the two protagonists find themselves unable to adapt themselves with the new lives in their fathers' home and the beautiful image in their mind about their fathers' home does not continue longer. It is vanished as soon as they become in contact with the new style of life, the new people, the new culture, the new members of the family who look at them as hybrid, or a source of disturbance.

From the beginning Jamal, in Sada Al Da'as 's *Being Black*, her destiny that makes him black and live this sort of life and go through varied experiences in his life, " my body does not choose its color. I have come as my people come, after my genetics have decided that I'm Black" (1). The issue of race and color catch attention of Jamal and it has its influence on his life, whether in America, or in Kuwait."I was screaming, shaking, and announcing to the world my blackness, Jamal is my name, blackness is my color, I wish it was not my color" (2). From here the reader may touch the pain of Jamal when he finds his friends and classmates in America or Kuwait have fair skin and white while they call him names because of his

blackness. Simultaneously, his mother, Juan, feels such feelings that she is lower than the other. She talks to herself "how dare strengthening my relationship with Melissa: she is an image of American beauty while I'm an image of its ugliness" (35).

Jamal hates to be treated on terms of racism. Everywhere he goes he finds a sort of discrimination. In the neighborhood, in the streets, in the schools, and even on movies, they remind him of his blackness, his inferiority, and his disrespect. "I wonder everyday 'why all the servants on movies are black, and why are all the blacks servants? What does Hollywood want from us?! What does it want to reach? Does it want to kill us alive? Does it push us to skin ourselves? Eradicate our roots? Does Hollywood happy with our tears before sleeping?" (68). One of his white classmates asks him "why don't take a shower?" Jamal could not get rid of his classmates question to be neat and clean, he spends many hours in the bath to be clean. He thinks he may change his black skin by taking a bath. His mother wants to alleviate what he receives daily from his classmates and from his community. The boy believes in the idea of spending a long time in the water, it may make him white, however, his mother emphasizes "you will not be clean like them because you are clean like me. I don't dare telling her 'I wish I could be clean like them, not like you" (122).

Jamal's concern with his mother's religion, Christianity, and his father religion, Islam is not that care that may make him stuck to one of such religions. "I still remember the Carbondale moments which I spend in the church with my mother, the people, particularly my race, were obsessed by the God who lives in every cell of their bodies which are prepared for release" (215). The people there in the church do not think as Kuwaiti friends think about the black people who believe that "every black is a slave, every slave control by *Jinni*" (215). Jamal still remembers his father's words concerning the faith "there is no good in a faith that may be shocked by a place or a book or a priest". He finds himself torn between two faiths and he could not expose any real concern about one of them. However, he emphasizes to his father at that early age that "I love them both", The Christ and the prophet Mohammed who represent two religions, Christianity and Islam. He is not in a situation that may let him choose his religion and faith. Both of Fawzi and Juan have suffered of racism in their countries, however, Juan exposes to the readers her racism when she recognizes Fawzi as one of the Arabs and one of the Muslims, she confesses after his death and talks to her husband's phantom "My lover, do you know what I told to myself when I see you 'Arab and Muslim' oh My God what a miserable planning?' I was a shamed to be racist before you...but I recognizes how much I'm a racist" (122).

Juan recognizes later, after the death of her husband, and her moving to Kuwait to live with his relatives that her husband has practiced discrimination against his sister when he refused to marry his sister to a man who is different from his family in his religious doctrine or sect, there is a sort of intense love between his sister and that man who believes in shii Islam. Fawzi has deprived his sister from her lover and she spends her life without a husband or a family, the hate and hatred against her brother who deprives her from happiness under the plea of the man belongs to shii Muslim, not Sunni as Fawzi's family. Here Sada Al Da'as sheds the light on one of the significant issue that puts barriers between families in Arab countries in general and Gulf states in particular. By such works, Fawzi has destroyed his sister's life in response to his false decision and his racism which he spends his life suffering from. As a result, Fawzi leaves in his will that they have to bury him in the graveyard of shii Muslims in Kuwait. He wants to atone for his sin and his injustice against his sister. "don't forget my beloved, I don't like to bury only under the Kuwaiti dust, and whisper in the ear of my little brother to bury me in shii

Muslims graveyard, please" (134). He emphasizes in his will to be buried in shii Muslim graveyards" don't forget my beloved, the graveyard of Shia in Kuwait" (134).

Jamal has suffered from discrimination from his relatives and his people in Kuwait. They have calls him names as *alkhal* which means black and *Abd* that means a slave. It is used for the lower class. "I remember that sometimes one of my classmates calls me *alkhal*, I imagined it is a Kuwaiti title used by closed friends" (176). Jamal feel strange even in his father's home. He could not adapt himself with the new circumstances. He feels confused and torn between two identities and two cultures and two languages as the hero of *The Bamboo Stalk*, Issa, who at last has decided to go back to his mother home in Philippine. Jamal recognizes well that "my home is no longer the home we live in, but the place which I am able to settle inside us" (158). He wants to live in a home in which he feels peace and safety, a place where no one practices ethnic prejudice or discrimination against him, even if this place does not belong to his origin and his roots. Jamal is in search for an identity that brings respect and peace to his life. He is in search for internal peace that could not be found in his father's home, Kuwait. "in Kuwait everyone calls me a slave, every black in the gulf is a slave project, darling. And who call us with such names continue to justify 'all are the slaves of Allah', they have thought that they are deceiving Allah, they claim our equality before Him, and they decide inside them that the only black people are His slaves" (69).

The curse of racism follows him to his father's home, sometimes they call him *alkhal*, in other times, they call him a slave in such Islamic and Arabic country in which Islam has not recognized a place for racism and the only standard is the standard of faith and piety, in the Holy Quran, "Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is that believer who has *at Taqwa* (he is one of *Al Muttaqun* (the pious). *Al Surah Al-Hujurat*, ayah 3. Jamal could not marry the girl he loves in Kuwait because he is black and discrimination will continue as a vicious circle in the life of Jamal who will prefer to leave Kuwait to come to his mother's home in which he may find his roots and his peace. Both protagonists of *The Bamboo Stalk* and *Beings Black* favor to leave their fathers' home, Kuwait, to go back to their mothers' homes that may find peace and security, that internal piece that may be found in one identity, in one culture, in one religion, in one nation, in one language and under the shadows of one country.

CONCLUSION

Gulf states literature appears as a reflection of the need of the community to express the hopes and the ambitions of the Gulf peoples. It is as an urgent demand for the rapid transformations in the structure of Gulf communities which influence all facets of life and human identity becomes endangered because of immigrations of many nationalities with their languages, cultures, religions and traditions after discovering the oil in the gulf countries. The Gulf writers address many issues in the narratives such as problematic identity, human rights, woman rights, woman participation in political and social life. The taboo of religion, politics, and sex become addressed in many literary works and the taboo is broken by such literary works. The issue of stateless people such as *Bidouns* are discussed honestly in many works, and the stories of the hybrid that are torn between two languages, two cultures, two religions, sometimes even two names argued openly in many daring literary works.

The search of identity, ethnic prejudice and stateless people as the *Biduns*, and classicism are some significant issues argued in the literary works of Gulf writers. The novels focused in this

article found that the problematic of identity which appeared as a result of marrying the Gulf citizens from other nationalities which results in producing the hybrid who is torn between two languages, two cultures, two religions, two entirely different styles of life, and even two names such as Issa (Jose) in Al Sanousi's *The Bamboo Stalk*, and Jamal (Gmail) in Sada Al Da's *Being Black*. The two protagonists, the first point of view, could not adapt themselves with their fathers' culture and their homes, eventually they found themselves returning to their mothers' homes in which they were raised and spent their childhood memories. They felt lost and they suffered from ethnic prejudice and the hybrid or the mixed races person was not welcome in their fathers' home. The false allegations of politicians in equity and equality is exposed in Al Sanousi novel when Hind Al Tarouf competes for the parliament election and she puts in her political campaign to call for equality, for the *Bidouns'* rights in citizenship, however, she could not accept her brother's son, Issa who is hybrid and the calls for equal rights become a slogan to move the minority's emotions towards her political campaign. The hybrid, as Issa and Jamal, could not live in their fathers' home as hybrid because the community has not welcomed them, leading them to return to their mothers' home.

The corruption of the policemen which appeared in Alsanousi's novel when they let the girls who paid for their illegal residency by having sex with them and get them released. In *Being Black*, Fawzi has suffered from discrimination as a black man, however, he practices racism in different way when he deprived his sister of marrying the man she loves because the man believes in different doctrine of Islam, shii, and in *The Bamboo Stalk* Rashid's mother does not give approval to her only son to marry the girl he loves because she is from lower class that leads him to marry secretly the Philippine house maid and have a hybrid child. The article found that hybrid and problematic identity and stateless people as the *Biduns*, and human rights and woman rights, corruption of the policemen and politicians, contradictions of the people in their words and their works are some issues argued in Gulf narratives and they are endless problems. The article showed that the children, as Issa and Jamal, are the victims of their communities' ethnic prejudice, racism, and their parents' irresponsible behavior.

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