SELF-REFLECTIVE WRITING- META-FICTION IN MODERN ARABIC LITERATURE: THE CASE OF AHLAM MOSTEGHANEMI'S *"DELICIOUS AS A SEPARATION*

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ABSTRACT: *Meta-fiction refers to containing a critical text within a literary text, where the author introduces his personal vision of the writing process, the challenges of it, the tools, language, significations, and his relationship with reality. This study's purpose is to explore the meta-fictional features in Ahlam Mosteghanemi "Delicious as a Separation". Dealing with the comprehensive structure requires looking closely on three levels: Para-text, the main text, and the post text. This study will deal in: What is the role of modernism in spreading the phenomenon of meta- fiction in Arabic novels? What are the origins of meta-fiction in classical Arabic literature? What are the meta-fictional contents and significances in "Delicious as a Separation"? What are the different forms of meta-fiction in the novel, their functions and meanings? How is the meta-fictional content related to the feminist content in this work? The Results indicate that there are Meta fictional roots in classical literature, The self-conscious writing focuses on writing as a craft, as if the writer states "I write therefore I exist".The purpose of the feminist meta-fictional is to draw attention to the issues associated with women's writings.Meta-fiction has a therapy role for unspecified people So that the implied reader will be absent, and he tends to imagine and withdraw from reality, to confirm the adherence to this reality again.Meta-fiction reminds us that what we read is a fictional work, and confirm our reality and communicate with it.*

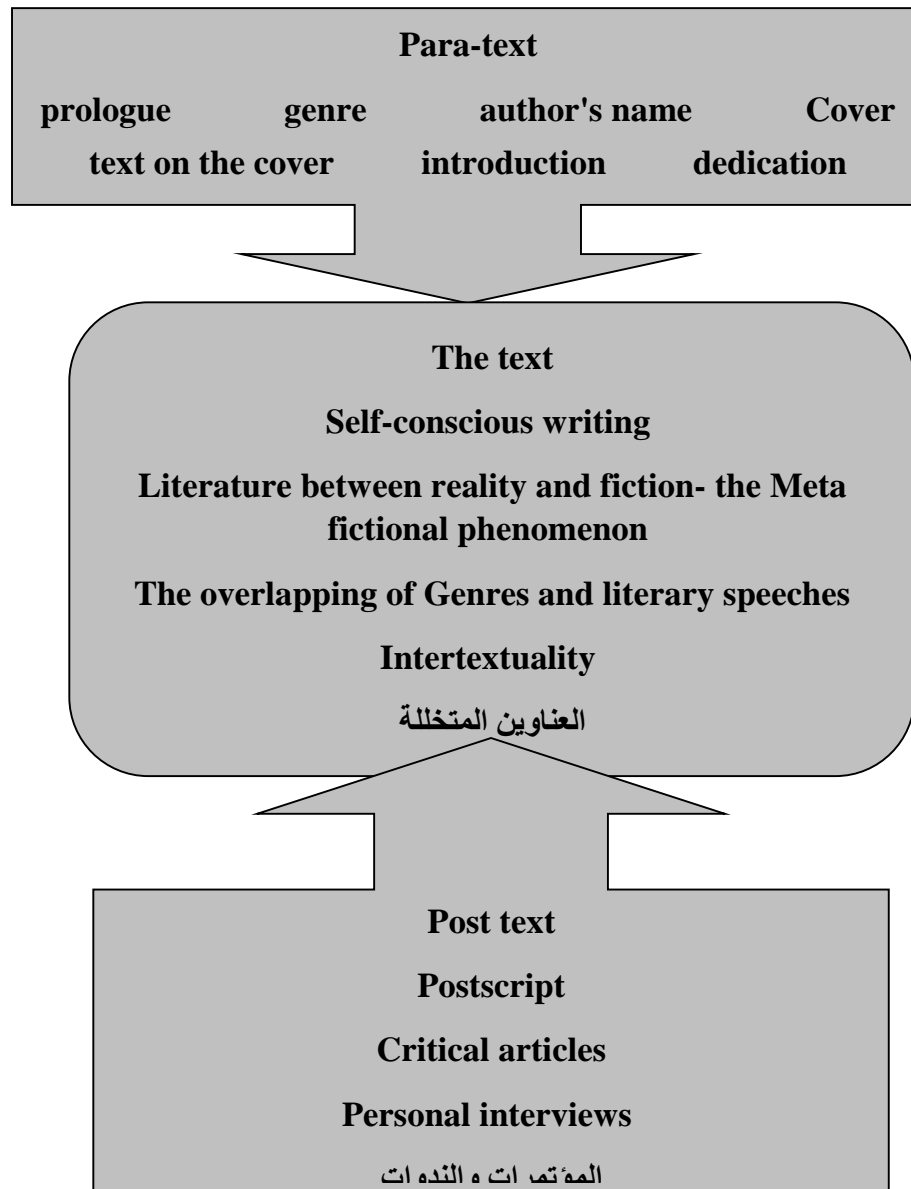**KEYWORDS:** Metafiction, Arabic literature, postmodernism, feminist literature.

INTRODUCTION

Meta-fiction is considered to be a prominent literary phenomenon in the Arabic novel; it refers to as containing a critical text within a literary text, where the author introduces his personal vision of the writing process, the challenges of it, the tools, language, significations, and his relationship with the readers, etc. Meta- fiction first appeared in the Western novel, and reached the Arabic novel by the ends of the twentieth century because of post- modernism. The Arabic novel is characterized by breaking the traditional expressive styles, and searching for renovation, Innovation and blurring the boundaries, especially the boundaries between literature and criticism.

The meta- fictional content specifically emerges in Ahlam Mosteghanemi's (1953-) novels, appearing as scattered pieces in the novels, which is dominant in her trilogy:

Memory of the Flesh (1993), *Chaos of the Senses* (1997), and *Bed Hopper* (2003). While in her last work *"Delicious as a Separation"* (2019) the meta-fictional content takes over the entire novel. This study's purpose is to explore the meta-fictional features in Ahlam Mosteghanemi's experience in her work *"Delicious as a Separation"*, using the method of applied theoretical studying. Beginning with observing the meta-fictional phenomenon as it appears in theoretical critic's writings, and then make a conclusion. Some of the questions this study answers are as follows: What is the role of modernism in spreading the phenomenon of meta- fiction in the Arabic novels? What are the origins of this phenomenon in classical Arabic literature? What are the meta-fictional contents and significances in Ahlam Mosteghanemi's work *Delicious as a Separation*? What are the different forms of meta-fiction in the novel, Their functions and meanings? How is the meta-fictional content related to the feminist content in this work?

This study deals with the different forms of meta-fiction in terms of their appearance in the comprehensive structure of the literary work. This comprehensive structure is referred to as everything that surrounds the main text, begins with the book cover and ends with its last page, which includes what lays between the two. Dealing with a comprehensive structure requires looking closely on three levels: para-text, the main text, and the post text. The first level includes any text that precedes the main text such as the title, the author's name, the genre and the dedication. While the second level refers to the main text including sub titles, footnotes, prologues, and side notes. As for the third level, it refers to as the short texts which follows the main text, also known as postscript, and it includes notes and comments. Para texts and post texts are rich with meta-fictional elements which contribute to the enrichment of the main text and its significances as a whole. In addition, there is a possibility that they may include meta-fictional features that do not appear in the main text. Therefore, it is significant to detect all the possible meta-fictional forms, which is only possible through applying the suggested model. The following graphic organizer (graphic number 1) describes the levels of the suggested model.

Para-text

| prologue | genre | author's name | Cover |

text on the cover   introduction   dedication

The text

Self-conscious writing

Literature between reality and fiction- the Meta fictional phenomenon

The overlapping of Genres and literary speeches

Intertextuality

العناوين المتخللة

Post text

Postscript

Critical articles

Personal interviews

المؤتمرات والندوات

This study consists of two main chapters divided into subchapters: chapter one introduces a theoretical critical approach of the significance of the term "meta- fiction", its origins in Western criticism, and its roots in classical Arabic literature, that along with the meta-fictional features in the Arabic novel and the feminist literature. The second chapter introduces the applied approach exploring the meta-fictional features and its different forms in the main text *"Delicious as a Separation"* by applying the model of three levels: para-text, main text, and post text. In addition to exploring the literary intertextualities, and in the end conclusions, followed by a list of references.

THEORETICAL APPROACH: META-FICTION IN ARABIC LITERATURE

The Term, Its Origins and Significances:

Meta-fiction refers to a type of literary texts "self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (Waugh, 1984:2). It is the writer's self-reflection of him taking the role of the critic in narrative texts referring to its own narrative position and expressions. it is also a critical text within a narrative context," a kind of writing which places itself on the border between fiction and criticism, and which takes that border as its subject" (Currie, 1995:2).

This term is attributed to the American writer "William Gass" in the beginnings of the seventies, he described literary works which take narrative as its subject. , Gass definition of meta-fiction was similar to that of Patricia Waugh. Saying that " literary term describing fictional writing that self- consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in posing questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (Gass, 1970:25).

However, the idea of meta-fiction existed in other older works, the most famous ones being *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, and *Tristram Shandy* by Sterne[1], both are novels written in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Khreis, 2001).
In his research of the topic, Muhammad Hamad highlights the problematic side of translating the term into Arabic. The difficulties found because of the existence of different significance of the word "meta" that is being included in many different terms which are translated very differently as well, such as: the elaborating fiction, meta-novel, criticizing the criticism, the elaborating novel, beyond the novel, narrating the text, the different novel, the narcissistic narration, meta-imaginary, and beyond the narration. This confusion shows the uncertainty of Arab critics in accurately translating this term. Taking into consideration that the term is still new and uncommon among critics (Hamad, 2011).

The Meta-Fictional Roots within the Classical Arabic Literature:

Western critics have acknowledged the existence of this phenomenon in works dated back, approximately 350 years before the actual appearance of meta- fictional texts, older works such as *Don Quixote by* Cervantes. As for Arabic literature, it seems to be differences in the literary situation and the emergence of genres. The novel is a modern literary genre. Therefore, we will research the features of the phenomenon in other literary genres. We assume that meta-fiction was recognized as a phenomenon, but more as scattered elements with no specific link attaching them together. Thus, it is not possible to discuss meta-fiction as a phenomenon in the classical Arabic literature, but more as pre-signals that perhaps express the innate tendency of the creator to see himself through his work. The pre-signals of this phenomenon goes back to the pre-Islamic poetry where we find- meta-poetical traces -which is the parallel term of the

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[1] Read the meta-fictional analysis of this novel: Christensen, Inger. *The Art of Metafiction*. A Critical Study of Selected Novels by Sterne, Nabakov, Barth and Bechett. Oslo: Universitetfort, 1981. pp. 15-36.

researched term in this study, an example of an obvious meta-poetry is the saying of Abid ibn al- Abras:

"Ask the poets if they delved within the meters of poetry like me, or if they can dive better than me within poetry and rhymes" (Ibn al- Abras, 2003:65).
Moving to the era of Umayyad caliphate one can notice the spreading of stories and anecdotes and the emergence of the movements of different sciences and creative writings. add to that, poets dissing each other within poetry, which enriched their poetic vocabulary, making the poetic oral tradition self-reflective of its own tools and terms, an example of that is the saying of al- Farazdaq:
"I was gifted the poems that the genius ones left behind after death such as Al Hutayya, Imru' al-Qais, and Al MuKhabbal" (al- farazdaq, 1987: 423).

 In the Abbasid caliphate many examples of meta poetical traces can be found in works of Abu Nuwas , Ibn al- Rumi and Al- Mutanabbi , and obvious meta- fiction in Maqam and in *Resalat Al- Ghufran* (***The Epistle of Forgiveness)* by Abu al-ʿAlaʾ al-Maʿarri and in *Al Tawabe' and Zawabe'* by Ibn Shahid al- Andalusi . The self- conscious poetry is very clear in the Abbasid caliphate era since poetry focuses on issues related to its own development and main building units, and its exposure to the surrounding effects which made it controversial as Abu Nuwas says:

"Give attention to the remains of the beloved one's house in your poetry instead of your exaggeration in describing wine. An aggressive governor forced to describe wine, for I am helpless and I cannot refuse his orders. I obey the Caliph even if I had to take a big responsibility "(Abu Nuwas, 1997: 203-204).

The era of the degeneration is full of poetic works, which is purposely composed to include high literary language, rich with many linguistic terms in grammar and rhetoric and other fields. This focus on the language helps establishing it as an expressive tool, and shows its importance and ability to compose different worlds of writings within the world of poetry. If we take al- Baha' Zuhair as an example, we can see examples within his work of this meta-linguistically phenomenon:

"I made your love News my priority, all of the known love News are unknown" (al-Baha' Zuhair, 1964:111).

Meta-Fiction in Modern Arabic Literature:
During the sixties, a group of Egyptian short stories writers came into the spot, such as: Yusuf al-Qa'id, Son'allah Ibrahim, and Jamal al- Ghitani. They went into a confusion phase between innovation and experimentation, but a closer look at this confusion may indicate to the reader the connection to the meta-fiction. Some examples of novels in which they contain meta-fictional traces are: *Tilka al-raihah* (the smell of it) by Son'allah Ibrahim (1966), *and The complains of an Eloquent Egyptian* by Yusuf al-Qa'id However, meta-fictional pre-signals are not limited to novels only, but they exist in short narratives as well, as in *the Five Lovers* by Yusuf Sharuni, and Yusuf Idris's stories which are characterized by their meta-beginning and meta- language (Hamad, 2018).

In the seventies, the meta-fictional traces began to expand, it got deeper and became more self-reflective of itself. Nabil Sulayman discusses Sidqi Ismail's novel *Disobedience*, as a novel, and when he wrote his later novel *the Incident* these questions moved to the main text, where we find the ninth chapter titled "about the novel pattern". These features, along with other similar features show that reflective self of the novel itself, and the novel shows the dissatisfaction of the author with the traditionalism that took over his works (Suleiman, 2003). This show clearly that this development is not always related to time, since Western meta-fictional novels were found even before the modernist era such as: *Don Quixote by* Cervantes (1605)*,* Bewitched Palace (1936) by Tawfiq al- Hakim and Taha Hussein which is the oldest example of an Arabic meta-fictional novel.

In later periods, similar features appeared in *Screaming in a Long Night* (1946) by Jabra Ibrahim Jabra*, the Beggar* (1966) by Naguib Mahfouz, and *Fadel al-Azzawi's Beautiful Creatures* (1969) by Fadel al-Azzawi.

In the eighties, nineties and the last decade of the twentieth century, Arabic literature was full of many meta-fictional novels throughout the majority of the Arab world. These novels were rich of different forms of the phenomenon. Some of the famous authors in this period were : Edwar al- Kharrat, Jamal al- Ghitani ,Son'allah Ibrahim, Ibrahim Aslan, Yusuf al-Qa'id, Radwa Ashour, Nura Amin, Ibrahim Darghouthi, Waciny Laredj , Ahlam Mosteghanemi, Tahar Ouettar , Mohammad Berrada, Ahmed al- Madini, Abd al- Hai Modin , Bensalem Himmich , Mohammad Shukri , Laila al – Othman , Samihah Kharis , Elias Khoury , Jabra Ibrahim Jabra , Abdul Rahman Munif , Ghazi al- Qosaibi , Hanna Mina, Emile Habibi , Izzat Ghazzawi , Sohail Kiwan and others.

Meta-fiction does not occur unexpectedly, but it is rather a reflection of a universal philosophy related to modernism and post modernism. Literature is not disconnected from reality, it is a cultural artistic expression of a creative individual's vision of existence, blending in which results into thinking turning into expression. Literature turns into a record of revolution in reality. The dialogue between textual reality and reality outside of the text is not based on a sincere representational relationship, as the postmodern novel strives to move away from reality as a result of questioning this sincerity. What matters to the meta-fictional novel is its paper world, and therefore the interaction between different fields, such as religion, politics, history, and the meta-fiction. Inside the meta-narrative, it may provoke a reader trying to evaluate things and view them by seeing reality.

The meta-narrative does not provide meaning at the same level of the attempt to destabilize the meaning, it resorts to stylistic techniques such as metaphor, paradox and parody to make the reader in front of more than one level of significance, and thus it destabilizes the reference to the references of the reality in which we live in (Ommundsen, 1993). The strategy of the Meta-fictional novel depends on on focusing on the phenomenon in order to deny it. This remind us that what we read is a fictional work in order to feel the paper of the work, and thus we wake up and confirm our reality

and communicate with it. This interruption of reality with another reality is not a final alternative to it, not an eternal interruption, but rather a language maneuver that quickly brings us back to reality (Hamad, 2011; Khurais, 2001)

Meta-Fiction in The Feminist Novel in Modern Age
Feminist meta-fiction as Gayle Greene defines it is women writing concerning women's writings, specifically as a reaction of the novel conventions created by the patriarchal system (Greene, 1991:36). The feminist meta-fictional novel is considered to be one of the forms of novel writings in post-modernism. Despite the emergence of this form's characteristics in the modern era. Since Virginia Woolf was one of the pioneers in this writing form through critical novel writing, she was able to predict the theory of meta-fictional writing earlier with her novel *Unwritten Novel* (1920) using critical writing in this novel.

The purpose of the feminist meta-fictional is to draw attention to issues associated with women's writings, like women's struggles to be equal in their rights with men, writing distinctly, and standing up against men's monopoly of language and literature in reality. Meta-fiction is one of the many tools that could be used in the feminist writings, but it is especially a tool used to see the critical side of the narrative, and expressing the self-conscious side of the author through his work, all of these being important topics of women's writings. Arab feminist novelists focused on the meta-fictional themes and techniques, using them as elements that distinguish them from novels written by males. One of the most distinct themes is the sufferings of Arab creative women when writing because of the patriarchal powers. The circle of feminist novel's protagonists has expanded to include more female protagonists, such as writers, journalists, artists and fighters all as a result of women being more involved in new different career paths, especially the fields of art and journalism. In addition to female author's cultures being reflected in their literary works, and that is by using techniques like intertextuality and referencing many different artists and works from various cultures. On the linguistic – stylistic level, there is an intensive and intentional attention in feminist writing about" the expressive function which focuses on the role of the addresser, meaning the presence of the female as an addresser, which is considered one of the general characteristics of feminist writings. In addition to that, there is also the linguistic function which made critics claim that women's literature is full of repetition and chatter. But this characteristic could be explained by the idea of women writers having the desires of keeping a strong communication with the other, and confirming themselves". (Benmasod, 1994:151). The feminist novel is full of meta-language since the original gender of the language is feminine, but it turned into masculine due to male's authorities, therefore women try to return the feminine form to the language by emphasizing the poetic side of the language. (Hamad, 2011).

The applied approach, meta-fictional traces in "Delicious as A Separation"

Para-Text
Gerard Genet has referred to a number of controls such as authors' names, introductions, titles, dedications, interlaced titles, dialogues, interrogations, and others as thresholds that have historical and textual employment contexts and compositional functions that

reduce a central aspect of writing logic (Al-Hajmari, 1996: 16-17). At this level we will explore the title, the writer's name, the cover photo, genre, and the dedication.

The Title
The title refers to as the literal work that represents it, interpretive titles concerns us and they are according to Levinson "serve to announce or support an interpretation of the work as a whole, in a fairly sharp and central way "(Levinson, 1985: 37). The importance of these titles lays in them being interpretive, considering the interpretation process a critical practice of the work. The titles are shortened as much as possible and its textuality is a short version of the literary work, as if the title equals the main text, despite the title being short it interprets the whole text. (al-Jazzar,1998:30).

 By looking at the title *"Delicious as a Separation"* we can notice that the title does not contain any conventional novel topics but rather topics which is related to writing and the criticism of the literary work. Since the word "delicious" refers to the enjoyment of production after the writer's long hiatus due to her last book *You Need Eagerness* in 2014. The writer pointed out the hiatus in her book:
"You haven't created a novel since 5 years... what do you exactly need to create a new novel […] the question made me nervous , and I was surprised that it's been five years since the last time I published a book " (page 21). It is the enjoyment of the new birth of a work after a journey full of challenges in writing and confusion in creativity, as well as the audience ability to share this enjoyment after passionately waiting for her new work. The book also looks "delicious" as well, because the inspiration for writing came in by coincidence, and coincidental matters bring more joy than awaited ones:

" when it comes to writing , life can gifts you a coincidence that makes it easier to write a book, and it can give you a person who inspires you with a beautiful text when you couldn't write one for years, for an unknown reason " (page 18).

The phrase "as a separation" has several meta-fictional meanings. Since it creates a critical view towards the work and a tendency to compare it to the former works of Mosteghanemi. This work particularly considered significantly important in Mosteghanemi's journey, because there is a "separation" from the themes that she included in her former works, especially the collective national themes and patriotism mixed with feminist themes. It is therefore a "separation" of reader's expectations of Mosteghanemi's works, this thematic "separation" is a result of disappointment in collective issues full of delusional dreams and hopes the author had. An emotional "separation" of a collective concerns causing misery and disappointments, and an attempt to express personal concerns related to writing:

"It is just a recipe of a less sad depressing separation […] why are you late author... Then returning with a book about separation? maybe because you are focusing on the nation's concerns, your ink is dry out of awe, abandoning your dreams which were as big as your delusions, and the biggest separation , that is of your dreams" (page 18).

"Neither women issues nor men's concern me."
"- then what concerns you?"

"Nothing concerns me anymore, I'm dissociated from my previous delusions, I'm trying to get my strength back and write again" (page 141).

In addition to that, "Separation" has direct effect on creative writing, since the writer gets attached to the protagonists of his former works, and faces difficulties in detaching from them to immediately start creating a new protagonist. This difficulty is obviously shown through the writer's attachment to the protagonist of her novel *Memory of the Flesh*, Khaled Ben Tubal .whom she recreated in *Chaos of the Senses* and *Bed Hopper*, so this novel is written as a "separation" from this protagonist, in order to create a new protagonist in a future novel, it is also a separation from the character of the virtual man which the author described in her work, deciding to leave him after discovering his past love for her friend:

"If it was hard for the reader to get separated from a protagonist whom they lived with no more than novel reading period, then how can the author get separated from protagonists who he lived with for the years spend writing the novel? […] Khaled should finally die because I cannot leave him behind me. I want to cry over him, to mourn him, and bury him with my hands... My hands I used to create him. even protagonists become more important when they are about to leave, and even fictional men whom we loved in a virtual world, we have needs to meet them for the last time in a book, to tell them whatever we forgot to say in a previous book, asking them questions about separation that the ink did not give us a chance to ask, so we can finish the story and heal. "(Page 35, 37).

Separation is not limited here to the one of the protagonists. But, it rather includes the separation of the virtual world with the social media world, this world which wastes the writer's time, and drains her creative energy for having many followers and spending plenty of time reading the comments in her pages, and in order for the author to continue her creative reading, she makes the following decision:

"I must cut ties with this virtual world, to close all my pages and accounts and be by myself, I need my darkness to write , I never heard of anyone writing under spotlights " (page 49).

Author's name:

Knowing the author's name may put the reader in a position where he develops meta-fictional thoughts beforehand, supported by other elements in the text and others. Even if the author is overwhelmed and this novel is his first work, whether it contains meta-fictional elements or not, the reader will always develop a pre critical view of the work by building expectations before reading the work, such as thinking that the work is not artistically ready, or that the author is inexperienced enough affecting the text in terms of form and content.

Whomever looks at the name of "Ahlam Mosteghanemi" which appears on the top of the book cover as the author of the book, will have expectations related to the title and the personality of the author, as a woman and as a liberal feminist writer. Since Arab readers have a good knowledge of the struggles of feminist writers in the Arab world, especially the liberal ones. Ahlam Mosteghanemi being an Algerian liberal writer

makes her a part of the meta-fictional category, since women related writing issues are defiantly considered to be a meta-fictional topic of itself.

The cover

Picture number 1: The book cover for *Delicious as a Separation* by Ahlam Mosteghanemi

The drawing appearing on the cover has symbolic meta-fictional meanings reflecting a conscious critical vision of the writer towards her previous works and her current experience. Since the picture of the feather which is a traditional writing tool, represents the traditional style in Mosteghanemi's previous works. Works that hold past memories and collective concerns causing misery to the author. A misery that many Arab authors inherited through generations since the beginning of the pre-Islamic period poetry, which was usually shown through the habit of crying over the ruins of a beloved one's house. We can notice that the feather here is surrounding the letter "Alef" in the word" separation" , which is a clear reference to the language and the alphabet's expressive possibilities , since "Alef" is the first letter in the Arabic alphabet, and a starting point in writing :

"To write means to remember, and to remember means to struggle. Therefore, it is not possible for happiness and literature to be combined, same goes with Arabs and happiness. Because the first saying by an Arab poet was "stop moaning over a memory of a lover and a house". Ever since then, the curse of Imru' al Qais has been upon us, fourteen centuries of crying over a lover or a house or a country we left behind." (Page 13).

As for the image of the birds coming out of the feather, they represent the desire of the author to break free from her traditional style in the previous works. Which means to break free from the misery related to the idea of remembering, and to break into a wider horizon, where the author can be more expressive and free. And maybe the flying birds towards the top reflects the artistic progress of the author after setting free. The group of birds perhaps indicates the variety of significances and styles that the author may use after getting her "freedom" which is reflected in the synergy between the linguistic elements and the visual images: the image of the feather (traditionalism) coming out of

the word "separation" (separation from the past), flying into the air and turning into birds (variety) flying (freedom) towards the top (artistic progress). The author talks about her desire to break free in the text, and to focus on her dreams and going beyond the reality to find happiness, she indicates that it is a desire to break free from the miseries caused by the limitations of the reality:

" it is my right to consider my health , and to write every once in a while by taking it easy, just like dreamers do , as if nothing concerns me , since I cried in most of my works , because I was concerned with a nation that did not care for me being concerned with it. "(Page 13).

The cover could also have another meta-fictional meaning, since the title "*delicious as a separation*" is written in cursives letters resembling a sailboat, the feather with the Aleph resemble a sail. So, one can say that the author expresses the idea of sailing through writing, the sea representing the talent of the author, and the choice of using blue is a reference to the ink, since it is a common color used in ink. In "Surah (18) al-Kahf", there is a clear connection between the sea and the ink: (Say, "If the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if we brought the like of it as a supplement." (Surah 18: verse 109). There is a resemblance in the spelling of sea (Bahr) and ink (Hibr) , as well as the word "midad" (which also means ink), and the word "madad (supplement).

The Genre

The definition of genre of the text indicates a critical approach of it, and in the case of Moseteghanemi's text we can notice that she is purposely it is not defined by her, and is done through not mentioning anything related to the genre, not in the main text and not even on the cover. The current works is unlike her previous works where she mentions the word "novel" on the covers of her trilogy and her novel *Black Suits You So Well*. She rather refers to the book as "this book" in the text: "why are your late author … then returning with a book about separation? " (Page 18). This intentional invisibility of the genre reflects an obvious critical approach, it is an indication of the ability of the text having several genres,   though this opinion is controversial in literature theory and criticism, and Edwar al-Kharrat was one of the most famous contributors to this opinion by coining the term "transgenic writing " which is a new type of writing where the boundaries of literary genres or what is called the purity of genres are crossed , and genres are mixed , contrary to the classical theory of genres (al- Kharrat, 1994). When reading "*Delicious as a Separation*" we can definitely see the mixture of genres. Since it is a mixture of a meta-fictional autobiography, a novel and elements from the epistolary novel. All mixed with literary criticism. The idea of the author crossing the critical-generic boundaries shows the desire of the author to break free from the literary conventions, besides her desire of giving the readers the choice of defining or not defining the genre of this work.

The Dedication:

The literary works are usually dedicated to people related to the author, such as relatives, friendships, teacher- student relationships. also this applies to anyone who has credits in shaping the author's personality, or helping with the work or even a relation

of affiliation. Where the author dedicate his book for his homeland, country or society. Sometimes it could be dedicated to some readers such as the political ones, authors, thinkers, or the ones with strong values in the nation, or to an anonymous, or even to nobody.

In her book" *Delicious as a Separation*" Mosteghanemi did not specify the people whom she is dedicating the book for, but it was rather randomly done. and that is contrary to most of her works, where she dedicated the books to specific people whom she had a personal or a national relationship. For instance her book *Memory of the Flesh* whom she dedicated to Malk Ben Hadad and her father, and *Chaos of the Senses* which was dedicated to Mohammed Boudiaf, Slimane Amirat and her father. As for *Bed Hopper* it was dedicated to her father, and the great honored men of this nation. While *Black Suits you Very Well* was dedicated to her friends. However, this book her dedication was as the following:

"Whatever… since all mailmen betrayed our mail boxes, and these are letters delivered to the sea instead of a mail box, I sent it in a glass bottle, for those whom have no address to send to anymore."

This dedication has meta-fictional dimensions because it refers to chapter three of the book "letters not read by Camellia" and to the idea of writing this chapter. In this chapter, the author adds a group of letters that she wrote to her friend Camellia, but instead of sending them to her, she wanted to keep them to herself to avoid regretting what she wrote later, which is explained in the text:

"We should not prevent ourselves from writing a letter whenever we feel the need to talk to someone, on the condition of keeping it to ourselves… to resist the desire to sending it because we will probably regret what we wrote later! This where the idea of writing letters to Camellia came from, I keep them to myself, hoping to change my mind before it send them, or for her to change her address " (page 84).

The dedication also indicates the type of the receiver of the book, it is an undefined receiver, meaning that she does not choose the type of readers she writes to, but rather writes spontaneously free of any external influences or authorities , such as reader's expectations and ratings of her writings , especially since readers are different in their thoughts, tastes and cultures, which means that taking all of this into account will be impossible, and considering it will lead the author to failure. But, freedom will lead him to thrive in art and literature. For that, the author gives advice to the book or maybe to herself saying:

"I write as if no one will read you" (page 19)
"Author, don't apologize for what you wrote… or did, as Darwish advises. Don't be afraid of what you write, let it be your first decision when writing a new book "(page 62).

The text
When we talk about the level of the text, we mean dealing with the book space which goes beyond all para-text forms. The text includes sub titles of the chapters, and the

quotes under each titles, ending with where the writing ends. In this level we will Discuss the four meta-fictional contents: self- conscious writing, meta-literature, feminist meta-fiction and intertextuality.

Self-conscious writing
Writing as a craftsman is one of the most prominent themes representing the meta-fictional phenomenon in *Delicious as a Separation*, since the author sees herself as an author sometimes but other times as a novelist. We see that she mentions her previous works and themes, and the circumstances surrounding her writing the books:
"I'm not here because I have answers or a prescription but because I'm a writer. Writing is what I'm really good at, therefore for ages I wrote a lot about emotions' antagonism" (page 8).
"- are you a teacher?
- No, I'm a novelist.
-[..]
- I write historical novels with an emotional hint, but in actuality my specialty is feelings and human soul" (page 160).

The idea of writing this work, the journey and the struggles
a main topic in the book, and the verb "write[2]" and its derivations such as (library, writing, book, writer, writes...) are the most repeated words in the book. The author talks about the difficulties of her journey by thinking of it as a hard work to do which requires huge efforts, especially in its first steps. These difficulties are reflected in the distraction the author has to face, her stress and purposely making up excuses to distract her from writing, such as doing chores and eating:

" it is known that authors get nervous before writing , they come and go , and make up excused to run away, starting from the first page " (page 27).
The author confirms the difficulties of writing in this era, because of its constant changes and speed. Especially when it comes to feelings and human relationships, scenes pass quickly once a creator comes up with them:
"What are you waiting to come from me in the middle of this tornado? How can a one create when one of his hands is attached to a train, and using the other to write a scene" (page 10).

One of the challenges the author faces which has negative effects on her productivity in literature is laziness. Meaning that she does not strive for literary production because she believes that the quality of her production is more important than the abundance of production, even though she takes hiatuses between her different works which give her a space for creativity, yet she emphasizes the necessity of using the time for writing especially in the speed era:

"George Eliot's saying "abundant literary production is a social offence " might do me good, but on the other hand a creator wasting his time on something else other than writing is a literary offence , (page 23),

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[2] "Kataba" in Arabic and its derivations are "maktabah,kitabah,kitab,katib,yaktub"

One of writing's hindrances is communicating with others, whether in reality or virtually if a writer is willing to write a book he should detach himself from the outside world, and to not waste his time with communication:

"You need your selfishness in order to say "no" to those taking your time even in the name of love, a writer should be generous in everything except for time" (page 123).
Love is also considered to be a hindrance to creative writing, since it occupies the author, as for love expressing through writing, it does not equal involving in real love, but making it up for the sake of writing:

"I learned from Nizar[3] that love takes over creative energy, and that it is a conspiracy against creativity, occupying your time and instead of writing, your job becomes to wait and be worried. (Page 184).

One of the meta-fictional themes in this work is the description of the process of writing, in attempt to answer the following questions:

Does writing happen consciously or unconsciously? Does the writer write her texts willingly, or is there a muse or inspiration behind it? does the writer get herself prepared to start writing, or does writing come to her while doing other things ? . The author mentions two modes for writing: the first one being prepared to write by finding a quiet place where she can isolate herself from others, spotlights and virtual communication, enabling to get inspired to write. The second one is distracting herself from writing by doing repeated chores at home to get away from thinking about her actions which enable her to get inspired to write. It seems that the author gets inspired in both cases, whether she prepares herself to write or not:

"Half of the creativity is controlled by the location [...] where do I run away to for inspiration to come upon me and write a book " (page 25).

"very often, inspiration comes upon me when I'm busy doing chores at home, especially when I am doing repeated works such as washing dishes […] because this repetition makes me break free from me thinking about my actions, giving me a chance to look for plots that I would not find even if I had my papers in front of me for hours " (page 44).

The theme of writing motives is very prominent in the book, being an important meta-fictional theme answering the following questions :why does the writer write... does he write to express pain, or to document history, is it to fill a personal need, or to commit to reality , or rather a desire to change reality ? . In Mosteghanemi's case it seems that her psychological motive is the main motive for writing, since writing is considered a window to express pain, which is caused by separation that cannot be expressed outside of literature. Therefore, it seems that literature in general is a resort for unhappy people,

[3] Nizar Qabbani

because happy people would express it in real life, also the level of literary writing increases and decreases according to the level of pain felt by the writer:

" what really hurts us is not told but written, writing is a silent telling, a pain with no voice […] literature does not like happy people, because happy people have no time for writing […] for me to write , what I lack is neither stories nor pretty texts but pain , something that deserves my pain for " (pages 87,91,92).

As for the specific motive for writing this work, as it was mentioned in the main text, is the desire to heal people who got hurt by love because of separation. Which could refer to readers or even the author herself. The author plays the role of Shahrzad healing the sick Sharyar . Turning the story into something that equals the safety and breather that exist in real life.

"I need the remains of your story to write a delicious text, And to carry out an emotional reconstruction of the hearts in which love caused all kinds of destruction" (page 91).
This statement is a sign of the possibility of using literature as a tool for therapy, also known as bibliotherapy, which is, using literary texts as tools for therapy and treating the human soul and purifying it from accumulated troubles by relying on the ability of the text to reach the deeps of the one being healed, and the ability of the therapist to work as a mediator between the two sides the healed one and the text (Younis, 2016).
In this work, it is often talked about the tools the author need to create a work. The details may look small but they express the amount of effort the self-conscious narrative does in order to pay attention to its expressive tools. some of these writing tools mentioned in her works include: ink, papers, sticky notes, a pencil, eraser, notebook, computer and others:

"nothing is on my table, I got rid of my protagonists in order to write this book in new spirit, I steamed my desk, like Isabel Allende on the eighth of January each year, I read the spells and I stick small yellow notes on the front of my desk to remind me of some of the needed instructions, and added some of my favorite quotes" (page 123).

Writing tools are a passing point of different writing times, they hold significances that represents the era where the writer lives, and her own personal attitude towards this era, and its updates especially the technological updates and its effect on writing. After insisting on using traditional tools to write like pens, papers and drafts and rejecting using the computer, we find the author using the keyboard of the computer as a tool for writing. However, despite the easy accessibility of this device, it has the danger of the loss of writing especially for those who cannot use it:
"I stayed like an idiot till my last book "Black Suits You Very Well " writing on tens of papers and tearing them apart, wasting many hours copying my writings , but then just like Arabs do, I gradually broke my boycotting and I secretly typed using a device which I rejected before " (page 48).

For the author, the writing tools seem to be less important than finding the location to write where she can isolate herself from the outside world alone with her papers:

"Writing is not about papers, pens, a computer or inspiration. Half of creativity is controlled by the location (page 25).

For writing, isolation is needed, but to make up for the isolation, a "silent " pet is needed to break her loneliness without it breaking through, so she chooses as cat:
" the first authors talked about the benefits of having a cat, for an author to have a cat it is like accompanying another writer that does not spy on him, or gossips to him or about him, he is in no competition with him not does he has to be in a one. An author needs the existence of an annoying nor talkative creature to socialize with when writing "(page 51).

In this work, the author is occupied with the language and its expressive contexts. For example, she criticizes the use of the expression "forever" in the Arab political context and in the human relations. Especially in love relationships, because using it is misleading and is a distortion of reality. By talking about the topic of separation in her book, the author shows the readers that there is no place for eternity when it comes to human relations because they change quickly in this era of speed. Therefore there is no need to use expressions related to eternity, because its beauty does not last but it leads to miseries:

"How is it possible for linguistics to not pay attention to two words that exist only in Arab politics, meaning nothing unless in a context of poetry and romantic songs. As small as they are they cause the miseries of millions of humans, how oppressive the two words of "forever" are, can love lead to oppression? For failures, stuck for ever in school, I thought I might write them a book to give them some answers for the exams, hoping they won't suffer anymore because of two word "(page 16).

The author also indirectly criticizes the masculine nature of the language, even the feminine adjectives that are supposed to end with a feminine sign, and are devoid of it. One of the examples of that is using the word "lazy" (Kasul) which is used for both male and female. But the author purposely uses a feminine sign for the adjective, describing herself as lazy (Kasulah) in attempt to restore the feminine nature of the language:

"I am a lazy woman (kasulah), or lazy (Kasul) as the doctor Ghazi al- Qosaibi used to correct me, May God have mercy on him" (page 22). One of the meta-fictional themes in this book. is the description of the relationship between the author and her readers, being as strong as a biological relationship or even more than that for the attention the author shows to her readers. But on the other hand, she talks about the cons of this relationship as well. Cones that readers constantly criticize her in order to control her and interrupt her life, this criticism often being destructive, objecting the author not taking reader's tastes into consideration when writing her works, and sometimes the motive behind these negative feedbacks is mere jealousy and envy. Her constant communication with the reader via internet sites causes the author to be distracted and lost and it deprives her from being honest because of the readers' observations and the need to write briefly in these websites:

"ever Since I said in an emotional moment that "the ink's kinship is stronger than blood kinship," my family book began to include everyone who reads my works , and I turned into a writer with twelve million "guardians" over me , the tribe of my ink is controlling my destiny now, and my readers became my guardians " (page 47).

"When you are promoted to being close by a reader, your only concern becomes to continuing earning the respect of whom became your now parents, and who one day trusted you " (page 157).

ever since I got a cellphone into my life، I earned millions of humans but lost my own self، I want to ask myself to a date، to invite her to cup of coffee where we can have it together in a spot with no internet connection, telling her honest things, that cannot be written on Facebook, and not briefly written using Twitter's characters limits " (page 122).

furthermore, the author talks about the issue of her writings affecting her readers and their important decisions, such as the effect of her book the art of forgetting on her son's girlfriend who decided to break up with him upon reading the book M telling him "your mom is right" (page 173). The author therefore wonders if it is possible for her to choose her readers. Since readers can choose which authors to read, but an author cannot choose his readers:
"How can an author know for whom to write? Only a reader can have the luxury of knowing who to read, that is the reason Malik Hadad demanded to choose his readers in one of his novels "(page 173).

Meta-literature
Throughout the text, we can notice that the author creates literary artistic standards that must be followed in order to add an artistically beautiful value to the text. By creating those standards, the author mixes literary criticism and creative writing together. And by combining these standards, readers can have a clear idea of what a successful and beautiful text looks look like. The author often starts mentioning these standards by using the form "afa'al " (superlative adjectives), since this form indicates criticism and comparison in literature. "the prettiest of all novels", "the most unique text", the most beautiful story". The author uses lots of terms from the world of literature and criticism like: creativity, protagonist, character, plot, literature, poetry, novel, story, letter, text, inspiration, fiction, criticism, telling, narrative, brevity, eloquence, art and other. These standards could be summarized as follows:

1.   Breaking free from the internal and external authority of censorship :
This freedom leads to honest telling, meaning to write spontaneously without thinking of the logic behind the words or trying to appeal to the audience: "the truth is that I do not write for anybody, and I do not know what to write exactly. This book is written for own sake, this might be the perfect recipe for a successful book "(page 12). One expression of freedom is not defining the receiver in letters writing, indicating the necessity of not directing the text to a specific reader: " the most beautiful novels are letters that are not read by those whom I wrote for " (page 60). " attempting to satisfy

readers with their different attitudes and tastes is Impossible, it is "the perfect recipe for literary failure" (page 62).

2.   Going with the flow of feelings, and choosing the first words in a text spontaneously:
When the author goes with the flow of this feelings, his writing becomes more honest which affects the receiver. The first words in the text are the most honest ones therefore they should be written from the heart rather than rationally: "do not choose your words carefully, do not correct your first heart flow, because the honesty of letters is what fascinates us rather than their eloquence, as well as its effect rather than the length" (page 67).

3.   Creating immortal protagonists :
An author should carefully choose his protagonists: "because he will end up looking like them " (page 35). Immortal protagonists stay in the memories of the author and the readers, since "their real life starts when we close the book, we start speaking and acting like them, recalling their details, missing them, expecting to meet them, wanting to date them in another book, or in reality " (page 36). As a result of that, the possibility of recreating the same protagonist in other works is born, as the writer did with "Khaled" in her trilogy.

4.   Unplanned endings :
One of the artistically beautiful standards is for the ending to be unplanned by the author before creating the text but rather to open up the text for unlimited possibilities for surprising and unexpected endings " it is said that the most beautifully novels are the ones in which the author does not know the ending beforehand " (page 247).

5.   Alienation from the "inspiring" character :
The author meeting a weird character which becomes the source of inspiration for writing " the most beautiful feelings, and unique texts are inspired by stranger whom there is no hope of meeting them again " (page 170).

6.   Separation from reality
Authors should be occupied by writing and thinking of it as their biggest project, therefore getting involved in a love story in reality should be avoided " the author too, as he rows with one hand to reach the ground of creativity, should have no other choice but to write, with the ink in front of him and the time as an enemy behind him, needing nothing but to have a free hand to survive. One of God's blessings is that each time when love tries to hold my hand, I hold the hand of destiny instead, the choice was between my hand and his. To him to hold my heart, or for me to hold my pen "(page 208). If there is no choice but to be separated from reality, where will the author get his energy for writing? To answer this question, the author says that "for authors the illusion of love is better than a love story" (page 201). And that "art is the son of distances and deprivations , and the son of impossibilities and fiction, therefore it is assassinated by reality […] your questions, curiosity, fears and obsession are the ones triggering the explosion of creativity's fountain "(page 180). Literature is in no need for realistic stories since "the most beautiful stories were born within the imagination

of the author"(page 197). On the other side, the author indicates the possibility of a mixture between reality and fiction, where the author's imagination is translated into a real story the author lives in real life : "the myth of Pygmalion also assures that art always draws artists into unexpected places, where they cannot differentiate between reality and fiction […] we represent love , and we write about , and we fall in love of love itself, because art makes it more beautiful and we rise when we write about it , and then we stop knowing how to find a foothold between reality and imagination. Love is born within our imaginations before it is ever born within our hearts" (page 181). One of the aspects of the overlap between reality and fiction is the author being affected by the characters of his novels , to the point of falling in love with them : "usually, it is the author being in control of his characters, except for me, I created a protagonist who is in control of me , and I feel ashamed in front of him if I ever gave up my values , and gradually this ink creature became the one managing my life" (page 35).

Feminist Meta-Fiction
 within the text, we can find feminist meta-fictional content which specifically describes women's writing in the Arab society , and her sufferings because of the patriarchal male authorities, one of the practices the author mentions is to have an outlook of pity against women in attempt to discourage women's writings , as if they are doing something exhausting or against their natures , in addition to an attempt to restrict them in term of age when writing, a woman writer should quit writing after turning thirty, and before getting any signs of aging , which is contrary to the "prestigious" and "dignified" view of men writing in an older age. This implies a sharp critique of the patriarchal community, which binds everything in a woman's life to her body and external appearance, this statement was made by the mother of the writer to prove that it is the Arab woman who adopts patriarchal thoughts and imposes them on herself and other women:

"Every time she saw me write till late at night, she would sigh and with a tone of pity tell me: Mydaughter, you grew older you should take a break from writing ". My mom thinks that writing for women is similar to a fashion modeling career that starts at the age of eighteen, and is finished at the age of thirty. So a female writer should quit when she turns thirty, before the first wrinkle and the first white hair appear. […]But my mother will be more tolerant of these people than with Nawal El Saadawi if I show her her photo. Their messy white hair makes their appearance full of dignity and wisdom. But when it comes to the appearances of female writers, it will not reassure her of my own future "(page 26).

In addition to that, Arab female writers suffer from the restrictions imposed upon by the authority of external censorship, which makes her less free when it comes to writing and expressing. Especially when it comes to writing about love, since a female writer becomes the subject of suspicion and criticism. Readers often attempted to connect many different details of Ahlam Mosteghanemi's personal life to the details of the female protagonist "Hayat" in her trilogy, some even claim that the trilogy is an autobiography of the author herself. At some point, this external censorship turns into an internal censorship that the female writer imposes upon herself and her writings as

a way of protection from the external censorship. So writing ends up being restricted by the restrictions of the author herself that restricts her freedom of expression:

"Here I am being a coward from the first sentence, can a sentence terrify me this much, when it gets away from my own censorship? […] as for this book, the pride of a lover is controlling me, as well as the terror of an Arab woman that was turned from a deer into a chicken by the society, and who is when it comes to love, is supposed to think a lot before talking, because she might cause a strong lightning and get burned" (page 66).

Among the accusations against feminist writers are their subjective bias of women, anti-men attitudes and incitement to men through their writings, which negatively affects the relationship between the two sexes. Mosteghanemi rejects these accusations that were personally directed towards her, assuring that she never meant to go against men through her writings, even if other female writers did, and that her book The Art of Forgetting is meant to be a way to mentally support her friend who went through a hard separation. As for the trilogy, it is a project of glorifying a man with characteristics that amazed men themselves:

"actually, contrary of what you believe , I'm one of the few authors who has no scores to settle with men, but rather life gifted me the most wonderful one […] perhaps, this ceiling of masculinity is what made me extremely sensitive to those who has lack of it" (page 188).

Intertextuality:
Intertextuality means "a text including thematic or narrative elements from previous texts, that look as if it a part of the text but it is more of a relationship" (Yaqteen , 2001, 99). The evoked texts fulfill the requirements of modernist interpretations, and the writer's desires to intensify his intentions, so that they get separated from the old significances a holding he renewal form and its significance, but it does not nullify the originality of the previous text, but rather proves it as an expression of the time span of the texts, And its communicative capabilities as components of culture and signs in language and literature. Intertextuality helps expressing the significance in an indirect way; hence, it intensifies the meanings of the text and stimulates the reader to participate actively in the interpretation of the text. Intertextuality relies on the evocation of texts from various fields: religious, literary, heritage, historical and mythological, including the names of people and works. As well as texts from previous works of the same author or the same work in a previous occasion. This is a kind of internal intertextuality that expresses a cross-narrative vision of the writer, and a language and discourse that characterize it. (Hamad, 2011).

Intertextuality is dominant in the *Delicious as a Separation*, where we can find many intertextualities of both Arab and Western cultures, mostly in the literary aspects. This provides momentum for writing as a reflective subject, and It embodies the difficulties of writing, while the writer's presence and culture are highlighted through this extensive monitoring of the worlds of writing and creators. Intertextuality is also used in this work to demonstrate a certain literary phenomenon, which confirms the role of the writer-

critic. The author either creates a discourse between her and the invoked texts, a discussion or a modification for the text, and then merges them in the context of the text while preserving her independence through the use of double quotes. This confirms the deliberate intentions of the writer to choose this method. As for the forms of intertextuality in this book, it can be summarized as follows:

1-   Quoting writers, authors, thinkers and celebrities. An example of that is" the writer Joanna Trollope said "The world's tragedy is that men love women, women love children, and children love cats"? Maybe she should've added about children loving cats, that Chinese people also love them, chasing them everywhere and cats ending up as dishes on their tables!" (Page 8). The main text also contains quotes from Voltaire, Ibn- Alarabi , Cioran, Mansour al- Rahbani, George Eliot, Kafka, Michael Jackson, Laura Ingalls, Marguerite Yourcenar, Marguerite Duras, Isabel Allende , Tawfiq al-Hakim, Taha Hussein, Nietzsche, Goethe, Victor Hugo, Nawal El-Saadawi , Patrick Poivre d'Arvor , Haruki Murakami, Youssef Chahine, Nikos Kazantzakis, Luciano Pavarotti, Agatha Christy , Ghazi Al-Gossibi, Nizar Qabbani, Ghassan kanfani, Henry Miller, Russell Banks, Al- Aqqad, Saleh al- Taher, Mark Twain, Malik Haddad, Tariq ibn- Ziyad, Napoleon, Gibran Khalil Gibran and others.
2-
3-   The including of the names of Arab and foreign literary works, and example of that the writer saying: "that is why the duo of love and war is what enrich literature, beginning from Homer's *Odessy* till *Hemmingway in Love and War*, Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak, *Love in the Time of Cholera by Marquez*, and *Najma* by Katen Yacine . All of these immortal works were based on these two facts " (page 11). In addition to that, we can find other literary works mentioned such as *Look Back in Anger* by John Osborne, *The Days* By Taha Hussein, *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf, *Muqaddimah* by Ibn-Khaldun , *The Old Man and the Sea* by Hemmingway , *The Little Prince* by Saint-Exupéry , *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende , *Letters to Anne* by Francois Mitterrand ,, *Bed of a Stranger* by Mahmoud Darwish, *Letters to a Hostage* by Saint-Exupéry, and others.
4-
 3-quoting poetry from different poets, classic and modern :" Ahmad Shawqi went so far as to describe his funeral and have mercy on himself, seeking the mercy of the adored" the sleepless one being tortured by love, everyone who visit him cries and have mercy on him " (page 17). We can also find different quotes from Imru' al-Qais, Abu Firas al-Hamdani, Antarah ibn Shaddad, Jamil Buthayna, Nizar Qabbani, Mahmoud Darwish , Gunter Grass and others.

4 internal intersexuality from the author's mentioning of her own previous works: *The Art of Forgetting, Chaos of the Senses, Bed Hopper, Memory of the Flesh, and Black Suits You So Well*. As well as quotes from the works. An example of that is: "I came to you my lady to give you the kiss of forgetting ". Is he for real? who does he think he is, talking as if he is on a duty from a human organization to save me, using my own poem " oh forgetting , give me your kiss"" (page 130).

5-   including the names of Arabic songs, or parts from them, as it was stated in her saying: "If our nation had a song that can summarize our condition and state to a

psychologist , it would be Fairuz's song " go ahead, do not come, and lie to me … tell me that you will come go ahead .. And don't come ""(page 14). in addition to quoting Umm Kulthum, Farid al-Atrash, Abd al-Wahhab, Shadia, Nazem al-Ghazali and others.

6-   Quotes from Quran, and an example of that is her saying: "after every ending life gifts us a beginning, and after each hardship God promises to give us ease, he even promised twice "(with hardships come ease, with hardships come ease)" (page 18).

7-   Using mythological intersexuality, such as the myth of Sisyphus, Pygmalion, Eve and the apple and others. An example of that is her saying:" as in the myth of Sisyphus, the higher we raise the rock of love, the more disappointment rolled us out of our delusions "(page 132).

8-   Including proverbs, old and traditional sayings :" in both the train of love and life I encountered nothing but idiocy " going up and going down"" (page 12), "they took him to school when he got old " (page 26), "oh, unfair, for you I would make my tribe's children orphans " (page 29),   "do not say I till the death of the eldest in the neighborhood" (page 29), "she wanted to steam but she burned her wedding's groom (page 63), "like a runaway from death, he fell into the hands of souls taker " (page 193), and others.

Post-Text:

The post –text level transfers the significance weight from the text to the outside, to its dimensional level, so that this level deepens the meanings of the first level, has a discourse with it, and gives it a kind of objective scientific value. Post- text is not just a simple meta-fictional feature, but it rather adds to the general significance of the work and its interpretive points, giving a clear space to the intentions of the writer to show, so that it can contribute to the process of demonstration, leading to the writer being a reading partner to the reader. We should also remember the feature of the mix ups between the authority of the writer, the reader and the critic in the postmodern era, where the novel became the place for these type of relationships and interactions between the different authorities. Where the writer insists on the directing the reader to a specific interpretation of the work, which is considered part of his intentions. He puts himself in the shoes of the critic in the post text level, so he creates all these directions, after finishing his role as a writer in the level of the main text.

On the last page of the book the author approaches the readers directly, saying:
"Dear reader, this is a page for you… I definitely would have loved for you to write a letter, but you cannot find a mailman to mail it.. Therefore, hide it within the pages of this book, and gift the book copy for whomever you want, without any signatures or names, only novels enable us to smuggle feelings and prolong their lives between the folds of a book" (page 252).

The object behind this direct approach is to motivate the readers to engage with the idea behind the book itself, since it a group of letters written for no specific receiver, and no personal details of the one writing them. Therefore, these letters can help its writer to be completely honest about his feelings, and break free from any external authority censorship, in addition to that, the author encourages readers to actively participate in

the creative writing by doing a similar project to the project of the book itself, so we can find that she left a blank white page beginning with the word "write" with a drawing of a feather which indicate letters writing (picture number 2).

Picture number 2: last page of *Delicious as a Separation* by Ahlam Mosteghanemi

This speech directed to the readers has meta-fictional significances as well, since it indicates the genre's being mixed as we discussed previously in the level of "para-text". This work is classified as epistolary sometimes or as novel. It also refers to the idea of fusing the literary text and reality, as the writer says, "Only novels enable us to smuggle feelings" indicating that the narrative text carries with it feelings or perhaps real experiences that the writer goes through, so he expresses it through writing the novel alluding that what readers are reading is fiction.

On the last cover page, we find important metaphorical features, including a statement by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, who expresses, her opinion of , the writer Ahlam Mostaghanemi, referring to the uniqueness of this project and its contents, and finding it worthy of being a "major issue" :

"She is a great woman, and a huge writer, a pioneer in her field, a militant descendant of authors who throughout history have embraced major issues".

CONCLUSION

This study used theoretical means and a model of meta-fiction in modern Arab literature was applied all through it, particularly for Ahlam Mosteghanemi's book "Delicious *as a Separation* (2019). Theoretically, the study discussed the concept of meta-fiction and extrapolated its roots into classic and modern literary texts, while on the applied level; it analyzed the text *"Delicious as a Separation"* and its meta-fictional features by using three levels:

Para-text, which means the texts coming before the main text such as the title, dedication, the name of the author and the genre of the text.

The main text: in which the study discussed on four levels: the self-conscious writing, meta-fiction, feminist meta-fiction and intertextuality.

Post text: the study focused on the role of the author or critics in talking about the work after the publishing, as well as the importance of notes, that follows the main text to direct towards certain meanings.

Based on this study we can conclude that:

There are Meta fictional roots in classical literature, especially in Quran and pre Islamic poetry, which continued in later decades as well.

The self-conscious writing focuses on writing as a craft, as if the writer states "I write therefore I exist".

The purpose of the feminist meta-fictional is to draw attention to the issues associated with women's writings, like women's struggles to be equal in their rights with men.

Meta-fiction has a therapy role for unspecified people So that the implied reader will be absent, and he tends to imagine and withdraw from reality, to confirm the adherence to this reality again.

Meta-fiction reminds us that what we read is a fictional work in order to feel the paper of the work, and thus we wake up and confirm our reality and communicate with it

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