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Alienation à la Madeline: The Migration Experience of a French Woman in Radwa Ashour's *Blue Lorries*

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Migrant individuals in the Egyptian novel

In the postcolonial Egyptian novel, the stories of migrant individuals usually narrate the experiences of Egyptians or Arabs relocating to a foreign country, or non-native individuals living in Egypt. This essay is concerned with the migration experience of Madeleine, a French expatriate in Egypt in the novel *Farag* or *Blue Lorries* (2014 [originally 2008]) by the Egyptian author Radwa Ashour[1]. Before delving into Madeleine's story and analysing the representation of a Western feminine image, it is crucial to revisit briefly the recurring theme of this image in Arabic literature, particularly in Egyptian literature. This examination sheds light on the perpetuating stereotypes that have shaped the portrayal of western women, providing a valuable and necessary backdrop to the divergent depiction of Madeleine.

In an effort to contextualize, Rasheed El-Enany surveys the Western representations in Arabic literature and traces it from the contemporary period back to the late nineteenth century. Since this essay is interested in representations in Egyptian literature, it speaks solely of depictions within its scope. In doing so, it concurs with El-Enany's position on the term "the Arab World" being "loose" and "unscientific"; although "the Arab world is made up of Arabic-speaking communities that indeed share a common enough culture to justify the use of such a term, . . . significant distinctions exist, particularly in terms of socio-political and intellectual development" (205). El-Enany states that the depiction of the occident by Arabs and, by extension, Egyptians went through multiple phases,

[1] I use the established English spelling of the authors' names and provide the correct transcription of names and titles, when necessary, throughout the paper.

depending on the response of the literati to colonialism. However, starting from the precolonial period up to the postcolonial, it oscillated between 'enchanted encounters' in which the western other is idealized, and challenging encounters in which the 'Fremdartigkeit' or the alienness of the European is emphasized (Wielandt 313). As further asserted by Rotraud Wielandt in an earlier study of the same thematic, narrative works published since the early 1930s in Egypt accentuated "the superiority of [the Egyptian self] over the European world view" (314).[2] Right after the postcolonial period, the East/West encounters in Egyptian literature favoured the liberated self, however, this view had a short life and was replaced by the 'humbled disillusioned' reflections of the Egyptian self in the aftermath of "the failure of the national cause despite the end of military colonization" (El-Enany 113).

Returning to the specificity of this paper's focus, Wielandt asserts that the Western female subject is a recurring theme with abundant presence in the Egyptian literature. She elaborates that these portrayals deal consistently with "bold creatures with an attractive appearance, who willingly give themselves up to Arabs sexually after they have met each other for a very short time" (490). Wielandt uses the term "leichtfertig", which can be translated in English to promiscuous or frivolous, to describe the cliché of the French woman presented in a blanket judgment by numerous prominent authors to their readers (489). Furthermore, she sustains that:

> These ladies are . . . with few exceptions all blond. Therefore, their hair color matches that by Susi, the prototype of the careless European in Tawfiq al- Hakims *ʿUṣfūr min ash-sharq*. Their eyes are usually blue, less often green. . . . The type of woman thus described has been represented in such large numbers in the narrative work of so many different well-known authors over the last thirty years that the public can very easily get the idea from novels and short stories that every European woman is a potential prostitute. (490-1)

[2] All citations from Wielandt, in this paper, are my own abbreviated translations from the German original text.

Notwithstanding, by the end of the twentieth century and until the publication of *Blue Lorries* in 2008, the treatment of female Western subjects in literature has taken broader dimensions that go beyond the overworked patterns. Western women characters began to be depicted "as equal[s]", breaking free from the obsession with their physical appearance and the expression of their sexualities (El-Enany 87). Examples of such portrayals can be seen in the characters of Marsha in *Taghrīdat al-Baga ʿa* (2006) by Mikkāwī Saʿīd, and Brigitte in *al-ḥubb fī al-manfā* (1995) by Bahāʾ Ṭāhir. However, the portrayal of Madeleine, the subject of this article's investigation, is unique in presenting the character's experience through a non-stereotypical approach from multiple perspectives. Madeleine is portrayed as having a cultural identity that differs from the conventional Western feminine image in postcolonial Egyptian literature. Her story tackles the theme of migration with respect to displacement, emplacement, and alienation of a 'presumed other' while providing a nuanced and humanizing portrayal through allowing space for an in-depth direct speech. Madeleine's characterization does not follow a straight, unbroken line, nor does she represent "a universal spirit [that departs] from some fixed origin" with a story of predetermined begin and end, as argued by Stuart Hall in his exposé on the fluidity of cultural identities (226). Madeleine is depicted, not labelled, as a complex human being with insecurities, strengths, and flaws; other than that, Madeleine's bodily appearance, attire, and sexual ethics are not topics of interest or discussion in the novel.

Subversion of the dichotomy 'self and other'

Edward Said defines orientalism as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident'. Thus [,] a very large mass of writers, among whom are . . . novelists . . ., have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions . . . concerning 'the Orient', its people, customs, 'mind', destiny, and so on" (2-3). Against the backdrop of this definition, one finds Ashour offering a subversion or a reversal of this perspective. Here, the subaltern Middle Eastern sets the rules and constructs the world of the story of a Western subject. Ashour's story takes it even further by offering an alternative world where, both, the Western and the Eastern exhibit a human

experience at its finest while blurring the strict binary structure evoked by their presence, i.e., the self and the other. Furthermore, the text neither demonizes nor demoralizes the other, but humanizes it. In that sense, its examination becomes a stimulating experience.

To be precise, this essay aims to examine the experience of migration as it discloses notions of displacement and liminal spaces of dwelling as expressed by Madeleine. The following analysis shows that her encounter with migration produces a state of alienation that, to manifest itself, borrows Homi K. Bhabha's notion of liminality. Bhabha states that liminal spaces occupied by migrant individuals are sites of the "in-between" (321); however, cultures of hybridity are "neither the one thing nor the other" (49). Madeleine's alienation evokes this notion of hybridity, but not in the sense of an oscillation between two cultures, rather between two versions of history and reality, in other words, past and present.

Notwithstanding, the liminal space she occupies cannot be simply embraced by the previously mentioned dichotomy of the past and the present, other factors play an important role too, and contribute to her feelings of loss which will be discussed in detail in this essay. In an unsent letter to her daughter, she exhibits existential anxiety as she attempts to understand where things failed, but she ends her confrontation without a resolution. Madeleine experiences what Bhabha calls "the unbearable ordeal of the collapse of certainty" (214).

About the Author: Radwa Ashour

Radwa Ashour (1946) is an Egyptian writer, critic, and academic. She received her postgraduate education in Cairo and the United States. She was a professor of English literature at Ain Shams University and an activist engaged in the political struggles of her nation. Ashour had ample literary and non-literary production. Among her distinguished works is the famous edited volume *Arab Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide, 1873-1999*, which was first published in Arabic in 2004 and then in English in 2008.

What makes the readings of Ashour specifically interesting is that she is a very conscious writer. This is not only an assumption, but also how she describes herself as a writer; in a testimonial speech, Ashour states, "I am aware of the ideological element in what I write -- it is always present in writing by any author, but I am conscious of its presence" ("My Experience" 175). She adds,

> I am an Arab woman and a Third World citizen, and my heritage in both cases is stifled. I know this truth right down to the marrow of my bones, and I fear it to the extent that I write in self-defense and in defense of countless others with whom I identify or who are like me. I want to write because reality fills me with a sense of alienation. Silence only increases my alienation while confession opens me up so that I may head out toward the others or they may come to me themselves. (170)

Therefore, she writes because she wants to register histories and record voices. This makes undertaking a close reading of her account of a French woman's experience in Egypt a compelling intellectual journey, especially if we take into consideration the subversion of the notion of the subaltern within the binary structure of the silent and speaking, in which Ashour, the middle eastern woman gives voice to a western woman in distress.

Farag/Blue Lorries (2008/2014)

The novel narrates the life of Nada Abdel Qader Selim, from her childhood until she became almost 47 years old. Without a specific time frame, the events reveal a temporal setting starting at the Nasserite regime up to the beginning of the twenty-first century. The reader sees almost all the events from Nada's perspective, which develops with her growth as a character. At first, the girl describes the events in an abstract manner dominated by the nature of her age that lacks insightful depth, and then the narration unfolds with the accumulation of awareness. Her life intertwines with the lives of her close family members such as her parents, her twin brothers, her stepmother, and her close friends.

This discussion, however, is not about Nada; it is about her mother, who was not mentioned by her name, Madeleine, until almost halfway

through the novel. This essay investigates Madeleine's experience of migration against the background of the different locations she occupies. In her discussion of mapping intersectionality, Susan Friedmann approaches hybrid identities while "raising the meanings of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion, and national origin as axes of difference constitut[ing] multiplex of identities and challenge binarist ways of thinking" (*Mappings* 4). She focuses on the "locational [aspect] that pays attention to the specificities of time and place," and invites the exploration of identities through other intersectional positions (5).

Using intersectionality as a methodology, this analysis examines how the different positions, in other words, nationality, language, geographical location, and familial ties affect Madeleine's encounters with dislocation leading up to the moment of purging or confession, writing the letter. These positions or aspects are identified by specific moments that unfold her experience, her character, and her unique subjectivity as a migrant in Egypt in the aftermath of the 1952 revolution.

Madeleine as a Mother and a Wife

From the outset of the novel, we meet Madeleine through the eyes of her daughter, as a mother of a young girl, whom she constantly guides and instructs, "say thank you to Monsieur, my mother tells me in French", "behave or else we will cancel our visit to your father" (Ashour, *Blue Lorries* 1-2). At the same moment, we know she is a French lady residing with her family in Egypt, and a little later we also know she has political opinions and does "not agree with everything [her] country's government does!" (18), as she exclaims when her daughter accuses her teasingly of favouring French colonization.

Still, through the eyes of her daughter Nada, we are introduced to her other role as the wife of an imprisoned man, a holder of a PhD from the Sorbonne, who got imprisoned because he "disagreed with officers who held a different opinion . . . [and who think that] the system must be run their way" (12), as she explains to her 8 years old daughter asking about the sudden disappearance of her father. Madeleine answers her daughter's perplexities with patience and persistence. When she cannot reason

with her, she picks up the large red book of the atlas to tell her stories of geography and history (3-18). So, we also learn through this and later incidents that Madeleine is educated or at least literate.

Madeleine and Language Barrier

Migration, as it unfolds through Madeleine's character, is associated with feelings of irreconcilable alienation, dislocation, loss and unbelonging. Despite marrying an Egyptian and living in Egypt for many years, Madeleine does not speak nor understand Arabic. So, her daughter was the translator or the "gofer" all her life, who learned to transfer information through a "sieve" that does not contaminate "the waters flowing between" her mother and the family of her father (20-1). As a result, Madeleine never got the true message, as it was; Nada always added her touch by holding back words or whitewashing reproaches. Madeleine acknowledges this years later in her unfinished and unsent letter to her daughter.

Migrants or relocated individuals respond variably to displacement. This "condition of liminality, of being at the threshold, or in-between sociocultural, economic, political, and ideological contradictions [pushes] subjects constantly to negotiate these conflicting ideologies in order to make a life for themselves in the metropolis" (Fongang 139). However, what happens here is different; Madeleine does not attempt to open up or negotiate her alienated position, she rather contemplates it. One of the manifestations of this status is the problem of language; Arabic remains a barrier for her to fully integrate with the socio-cultural sphere. She repeatedly mentions in the famous letter that she did not understand most of the people around her in a helpless manner as if this act of incomprehension was imposed on her.

In a moment marked as a translation problem by her daughter, after the passing of Nada's grandfather, Madeleine behaves in a manner that causes a permanent rift with her in-laws. Below is a narration of this episode through the eyes of Nada in the novel:

> At my grandfather's house the woman wailed. . . . [All of them were] sitting on the floor despite the seats that line the wall. I asked my aunt, who explained to me that such were the rites of mourning in our part of the world, and I passed this information along to my mother when she asked. She said, "But I don't want to sit on

> the floor!" With that, she seated herself on a chair, crossed her legs, and lit a cigarette! (Ashour, *Blue Lorries* 22)

Although she passionately awaits the release of her imprisoned husband, the lack of proper communication with his family, because of the language barrier, pushes her to maintain a position of 'Otherness.' Despite being aware of the family's customary mourning rituals, she refuses to tolerate or respect them. Later, Madeleine feels bored as she does not comprehend the situation, and no one is bothered to explain it to her elaborately. In frustration, she asks for food and accuses her in-laws of being mean, even though she knows the food she requests is not in line with the local customs during a state of mourning. This final act offends her sister-in-law, Nada's aunt, who severs ties with Madeleine until the end of the story.

Madeleine and Failing Marriage

Madeleine's relationship with her husband faces difficulties after his release from prison. The disputes they had, which might appear to be cultural differences or intolerance, could occur between partners of the same culture. I argue that the absence of their "shared feeling of alienation that brought [them] together - initially" damaged their common sense of belonging (153). The detachment is manifested in a moment when Madeleine fails to understand her husband's grief at the death of the Egyptian president, Abdel Nasser, who was the reason for his imprisonment. Her husband accuses her of blindness and does not explain his emotional turmoil. He is experiencing a nationalist disillusionment with the political scene of Egypt in the sixties, which places him in a new position of alienation that he occupies alone unwilling to share it with his wife. This leads to a disturbance of the shared marginal space that the married couple used to inhabit together, forcing Madeleine into a solo-position of alienation within a culture that actually pushes her not to belong, as will be discussed further in this paper.

Her feelings of displacement are augmented with the failure of her marriage. She lost the Sartrean sense of existential importance, of belonging that was fortified with her love in marriage. The affection she shared with her husband was the only thing that gave her a sense of belonging to her position in Egypt. Therefore, when that love disappeared, she had no

choice but to leave Egypt and Nada, who chose to stay with her father, and return to her roots.

After leaving for France, Madeleine tries to maintain contact with her daughter through various letters, but Nada is too young to understand or pay attention. Until one final unsent and unfinished letter, which Nada discovers only after the death of Madeleine as if to highlight the irreconcilable state of alienation. The letter expands over one full chapter in the novel titled "The Unfinished Letter" and provides a shift of perspective as we finally hear the mother in her own voice. In direct speech, Madeleine introduces herself by name and explains how the positions she occupies, her nationality, language, her geographical location - whether in Egypt or France - function in her migrant experience. She takes us back to her past, before her marriage and her moving to Egypt.

According to the letters, Madeleine was the daughter of a modest Fishermen family living in a small village far away from the city. She led a simple life. However, upon her arrival in Egypt, this change of location combined with other aspects such as being a French national and speaking only French, imposed on her a certain position in the society that she felt obliged to occupy, despite her failure to identify with it. She suddenly became "Madame Selim, the wife of the university professor" and the French language teacher in a school for children of upper-class citizens (153). She refers to the imposed elevated position as an elite fur that, incongruent with her personality, felt like a strange 'coat of thorns'. While other French women enjoyed the status this expensive coat bestowed upon them, she suffered from estrangement because of it.

Madeleine and Displacement

Categorised by the average Egyptian based on her nationality and language, Madeleine was faced with the colonised's perspective of the Egyptian bourgeois and upper class that favoured foreign over local. In *Black Skin, White Mask* (1967), Fanon defines the colonised people as those "in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality" (Loomba 43). Let us not forget the spatial and temporal context of Cairo of the mid-twentieth century, at which the novel's events start. There was a strong sense of fascination and assimilation with anything foreign adopted by a vast majority of the

population as residues of long-term colonisers' strategies to demonize the local and fantasize the colonial. The foreigner's complex still exists. This might sound strange due to the aforementioned anti-west rhetoric adopted by the literati of Egypt. However, it is important to specify that "anti-West or anti-Western is something completely different from anti-Westernism. 'Anti-West' is a term operative in the political arena alone and is applied from an intellectual position that is paradoxically Westernist. Antagonism to [western] policy in the Middle East is just that; it is not antagonism to what the West stands for as a civilization" (El-Enany 206).

To clarify, Madeleine's specific circumstances, including her background and relocation, greatly influenced her experience. She moved from the marginal status of an ordinary citizen in Paris to the centre of Cairene attention and authority. Her foreign nationality and language made people view her differently, which she struggled to comprehend, as she had not encountered this treatment before. "Even now I do not completely understand how people saw me or the ways in which they dealt with me. I found myself all at once in an unfamiliar situation. I wasn't Madeleine, the village girl, a typist who lived in Paris among the marginalized . . . Suddenly I was possessed of a kind of authority . . . it was like a cloak that had been thrown over my body" (Ashour, *Blue Lorries* 153).

The repercussions of the inferiority complex of the colonised are not always in favour of the foreigner. It privileges Madeleine in the society but imposes a certain identity on her to which she does not belong, so it ends up excluding her. It is because of the factor of her nationality; occupying the position of the foreigner, she is excluded. Her work at the school does not guarantee her inclusion in the society. Combined with her ignorance of the native language in Egypt, she remains an outsider, a stranger and foreign to Egyptians. Having explained that, I can briefly return to the dynamics of Madeleine's choice not to learn the language. This society, welcoming foreigners and accepting them as they are or accommodating them, has not motivated her to exert any efforts to find a common ground for effective communication and obstructed her movement outside the peripheries of liminality. It facilitated preserving the foreigner position with a heightened sense of exclusion. In her letter in the novel, she emphasizes the fact that she did not understand the people around her in a helpless manner, "I don't know Arabic. I lived for years in Egypt, and I

was unable to speak the Arabic language, much less master it," as if this status of incomprehension was imposed on her (152).

Madeleine's choice against learning Arabic could be explained by invoking Friedman's take on bilingualism and multilingualism as "key markers of transit; of the refusal to assimilate completely; and of the insistence on retention of the past" ("Migration, Diasporas" 280). Although Madeleine is monolingual, her passive rejection of acquiring this new language as a tool of communication reflects her incapacity or reluctance to reproduce a version of the self that is capable of coping with changes occurring in her life, as discussed further in this paper.

Returning to tracing her path to alienation, Madeleine discovers that, upon the failure of her marriage, she has not only lost her place in her family life in Egypt but also in her homeland. She went back to France with hopes to restart or at least resume her life. However, she finds herself living as an alienated and displaced person there, too. Madeleine embodies the paradoxical position that many migrants occupied and still occupy; a struggle with not belonging and displacement.

During her long absence, Yvoire – the village where she was born and spent her childhood and adolescence – had changed into a completely different locality. It was now a beautiful tourist attraction, but devoid of privacy; of the unique characteristics and details that once made it a place belonging to specific individuals. It had become just another random public place, visited by hundreds of people. Madeleine describes the change that occurred to the place with the metaphor "eaten by the wolf" (Ashour, *Blue Lorries* 155).

Bridging Spaces

The reference to "eaten by the wolf" is quite revealing within the Arab-Islamic context. Reading it immediately evokes the verses from the Qur'an that tell the story of the Prophet Yūsuf whose brothers deceived their father, Prophet Yaʿqūb, to his unfortunate death. This expression was used in a number of verses consecutively. Prophet Yaʿqūb used it in the present form to refer to his fear of losing his son, and the brothers used it in the past tense to signify the permanent loss and death of their brother who "was eaten by the wolf" (*The Qur'an* 12.13-17). Here, it is

worth mentioning that the story of Yūsuf or Joseph appears also in the Bible; however, it bears varied versions. On the other hand, Yūsuf's story has a uniform account in the Qur'an. Madeleine used this metaphor to describe the permanent loss of her parent's house, where she once belonged. In her own words, she maintains that her lived experience was "painful beyond imagining" (Ashour, *Blue Lorries* 154). The place has changed utterly, was eaten by the wolf; and taken away by an external force. Therefore, her madness at her daughter who visited her hometown as another tourist is justified because her daughter did not understand her pain of losing something that "is specific to her, in which her own story resides and which [used to] house her five senses" (156).

Regardless of the significance of this Qur'anic reference, it sounds bizarre when a French-speaking woman such as Madeleine utters it. Thus, it remains uncertain if Madeleine's usage of this metaphor, in her unique hybrid identity, signifies an implicit degree of openness towards religious identity in Egypt, which allows her to reproduce such a reference, or reflects an understanding or an awareness of the culture while maintaining a distance.

Alienation on many levels

In *Blue Lorries*, Madeleine says decisively and conclusively in the letter, "I left only to discover afterward that the world whether here or there no longer existed for me" (Ashour 153-4). She exclaims indisputably, "I knew for certain then that my alienation was total whether in Yvoire, in Paris or in Cairo" (156-7). This feeling of marginalization at her place of birth, which she dearly sees as home, however, does not start with her return from Cairo upon her divorce. It started earlier, with the semi-coercive migration she undertook from village to city given the economic reasons. Influenced by her upbringing in the non-industrialized village, she fails to function at the spiritual level in the new industrialized version of her rural world.

This could be explained on two levels. The first, borrowing Stuart Hall's discourse on Africa as the home lost forever, one can say for Madeleine, as Edward Said explains about spaces acquiring emotional sense, Yvoire was an "imaginative geography and history" which "helped [her mind] to intensify its own sense of itself" (55). Madeleine's village experience was

embracing her "five senses", as she says in the novel (Ashour, *Blue Lorries* 156). Thus, when the village changes into a version of the city with tourists, buses, and different tongues, it loses its healing effect and leads her to a further state of fragmentation and alienation because she realizes that she "can't literally go home again" (Hall 232). The village, too, becomes a liminal space, to which she both belongs and does not belong, which is both her home and not her home anymore. It arouses lots of pain on visiting it; nevertheless, she never ceases desiring to return to it. The second issue is her inability to grasp the idea that the cultural identity she was looking for, by revisiting her village, in order to regain her sense of belonging, "is not a fixed origin and it is not a site to which [one] can make some final and absolute return" (226).

Hall maintains in his discourse on the experience of the diaspora that this experience "is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference" (235). Building upon that, if we consider Madeleine disclosing a diasporic experience, we can deduce that the failure happened when she did not succeed in acknowledging the need for this constant production and reproduction, which is a prerequisite for continuity. This resulted in the final non-escapable feeling of alienation in her own home country, France.

On another level, it is worth mentioning that Madeleine's feelings of displacement originated not in being othered within the world of the novel, but in being othered within her own world, in her experience. To explain further, this feeling of alienation is shared with other characters in the novel, such as with her own daughter, Nada, and her generation's experience of disillusionment depicted in the story of the dove that appears towards the end of the novel. The dove is born in a prison in Morocco and is looked after by the prisoners, who consider his survival their responsibility. The dove, despite being imprisoned as a fledgling, regards the prison as his home and keeps on returning to it even after he gains the skills to break free and fly away. The prisoners rejoice at his ability to attain his freedom and are delighted at his returning visits.

The dove echoes "the price that her generation paid in disrupted lives and lost potential for even the mildest protest at world events, protest that their government could not abide, even though it, like them, was a passive witness to the events, largely powerless to affect their outcomes" (Romaine and Wilmsen 191). Other characters demonstrating this sense of alienation are Arwa Saleh, an acquaintance of Nada who chooses not to fight and commits suicide; Siham Sabry, Nada's best friend in college of whom she recollects memories of a true warrior, who disappears from her circles intentionally and maybe she ended up killing herself; Hazim, Nada's best friend who dies suddenly of heart failure. Owing to their experience of disillusionment, they all eschew marriage and the traditional institution of the family. Therefore, in comparison to other characters, Madeleine is neither demoralized nor favoured which appears "to be the prevailing mood in representations of the West in Arabic literature today"; she is rather part of a prevailing mood of alienation and disillusionment at worldly matters within this novel (El-Enany 186).

Conclusion

In her experience, as a French lady within an Egyptian Arabic narrative, Madeleine presents a colourful, vivid and dynamic image with anchored origins. Her feeling of alienation that spreads over multiple layers and places provides a reversal to the notion of the Orient being the object of inspection. The complexity of her depiction transcends the "binary structures" of self and other, us and them, belonging and non-belonging (Hall 228). The novel presents her story of displacement in a sincere and lucid description; it also presents Madeleine's feelings in her own words; it does not label her within a certain category or group, thus attesting to its commitment to a humanizing encounter.

The letter where she candidly shares her thoughts on losing and trying to uncover the cause of her disappointment serves as a window into her innermost thoughts and consciousness. The different positions she occupies due to her nationality, mother tongue, geographical location, and position within the family (as a daughter, mother, and wife) intertwine to produce a unique experience of dislocation. Madeleine introduces the site of a new liminal space that does not include conflicting or negotiating identities. Her missing sense of belonging does not stem from a self-split

between two cultures and grounds, but rather a self that is alienated because of losing what was once a solid ground on which she existed.

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