



Climax Of Resistance In Hala Alyan's *Salt Houses*

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide an approach towards Hala Alyan's novel *Salt Houses* as a text that converges together the elements of living in Diaspora. However, the novel is a take on struggle between history and fiction, which creates the climax of resistance of the Palestinians living in or out of Palestine. Diaspora has been a long debated subject matter in the twentieth century as well as the twenty first century, major displacements due to war, forced exile of minorities and land confiscation. The peculiarity of a Palestinian family being dispersed into different parts of the world because of the illegal Israeli occupation on their homeland, while Alyan's storytelling captures the reader's mind to emotionally capture the atrocities they go through in their life and also her focus on portraying the family in the limelight to initiate the plight of the Palestinians in order to convey how Palestinians are denied justice

Keywords: displacement, exile, resistance, struggle, justice

1.1 Introduction

The Palestinian refugee crisis is today one of the oldest refugee situations in modern world. The intense violence between Israelis and the Palestinians makes it difficult for various reasons to wrap things up. It's not always easy to get an accurate description of events on the ground, not to speak of the toil in correctly understanding their impact. However, early 2000's events underline the dire need to interrogate the situation of the Palestinian diaspora.

One of the harsh paradoxes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is that the base of the state of Israel, intended to build a safe asylum for the classic Jewish diaspora, allow the actual diasporisation of the Arab Palestinians. The organization of the Jewish diaspora prompted a new wandering identity and the Palestinians became a refugee nation. To the people of Palestine, the birth of Israel is therefore remembered as the catastrophe, *al-nakba*, to engrave the suffering caused by dissemination, exile, isolation and refutation.

Literature plays an influential role in emotionally transliterating political events, allowing people to connect to the individuals and families beyond history. One of the understandable benefits is amplifying unprecedented and undocumented narratives and stories. The problem that accompanies any fictionalizing of a story that is grounded in actual historical and political events is that it can never be representative of the experiences of all Palestinians who lived through those events. As the feasibility of physical return to the once upon a time Palestine becomes more and more distant, the literal return shifts to an additional allegoric articulation of land, identity and home. This is not to rebate place, but the sense of place extends to adopt something beyond geography, and the significance of being a Palestinian also diversifies. As Helena Lindholm Schulz puts in her account of Diaspora identities, "Maybe we don't live in places after all, maybe

we live in lives” (Schulz viii). Palestine is a custom or a way of living wherever one is based, which is not a denial of the importance of place, but a transformation in the context of forced displacement.

New Palestinian Diaspora writing provides readers a quest into what it signifies to be human; not one embedded in rhetoric but in feeling. A literature formulated of understanding aesthetic creations, of consideration of place and self, melodic ruminations and modified narratives.

The novel is based in 1963, on the evening of the wedding of Alia to her beloved fiancé Atef, mother Salma reads the future in the dregs of her daughter, Alia’s coffee cup on the evening of the latter’s wedding, she sees her future uprooted life and her children’s; although she does not tell her about that, but it advances to elapse in the 1967 war.

Salma and Alia belong to a middle-class family of Palestinians who reside in the city of Nablus. But this is not their family’s initial home. Salma was an inhabitant of Jaffa, but they had to escape to Nablus after being scattered in WWII in the 1940’s. While Salma’s oldest daughter who is conservative, orthodox and traditional Widad is living in Kuwait where she lives with her husband.

Widad and Alia’s younger brother is a young single man who is adored by his mother. Whereas Widad is firmly devoted to Islam, Alia is a rebel as she is not fond of her mother’s commitment to their religion and by not wearing hijab. Mustafa’s faith is weak but he discovers solace, respect and a feeling of self in the community of the mosque. Mustafa in the mosque speaks about rebellion and rage, being the victim of occupation by the Israel. Mustafa’s love for Aya a girl from the lower class could have saved him but he’s aware that Salma would be disappointed if he marries a girl beneath his social strata, so instead he martyrs himself to violence. In 1967, during the Six-Day War Mustafa is killed.

In the middle of the war, the rest of the family is scattered. Salma, Alia and Atef flee Palestine and move to Kuwait. Alia and Atef rely on their love and they make a happy home in Kuwait. They have three children Riham being the eldest then Karam and then Souad. When Kuwait is invaded by Saddam Hussein they lose their home yet again and scatter to Boston, Paris, and Beirut, where both adults and the young ones now married start their lives in foreign countries, living apart from one another, with painful problems of recognition, though with few occasions of better luck.

1.2 About the author and the work

Hala Alyan is a Palestinian-American author, poet and clinical psychologist. She was born in 1986. After having lived in several parts of the Middle East, she accomplished her doctorate in clinical psychology from Rutgers University, where she specialized in trauma and addiction. She now splits her time between personal practice and teaching at New York University. Alyan is the author of three anthologies of poetry, the first of which, ATRIUM, was chosen for the Arab American Book Award. She has been issued in Guernica and other literary magazines, and is the outstanding author of three poetry collections and the novel “Salt Houses.” She resides in New York City.

She was raised in a family of storytellers, and it was the amalgamation of storytelling and the larger historical milieu of Palestinian immigrants that helped to her fascination with writing about diasporic reminiscence and loss. For quite a long time, she wasn’t aware that she was writing a novel, but rather following her instinct, intuition and curiosity about this one family and where their immigration takes them. She has always been captivated by how this world is broken and remade by family. Revealing a narrative of emotional legacy in the context of immigration, about how a single family can be ripped apart and mended against the setting of political uprising. Her work centers about the issues of place, identity, and desire, particularly within the Palestinian diaspora. Alyan exemplifies the anguish of war, persistence of family, and the sense of rootless that can pervade a life in exile.

Her first full-length poetry collection, *ATRIUM*, and other poetry collections include *Four Cities* and *HIJRA*, winner of the 2015 Crab Orchard Series in Poetry.

Salt Houses is a sophisticated novel written in 2017 by the Palestinian-American author Hala Alyan. It deals with an interesting plot with developed characters. It talks about one of the world's most intricate and ongoing problems, specifically, that of the Palestinians undergoing from the loss of most of their country to Israel and seeking, as refugees, to rebuild their lives elsewhere. *Salt Houses* conveys the tale of four generations of a Palestinian family, the Yacoub, who indigenously lived in a villa in Jaffa on the Mediterranean seashore until the 1967 Six-Day War requisite them upcountry to Nablus as refugees. Alyan goes back and forth in the narrative perspective with each chapter, delineating events from the point of view of various generations, always with the motifs of the consequences of displacement and the loss of homeland. The novel's name emphasizes this theme: according to Alyan, she discovered the image of all the contrasting houses that the characters have resided in over the decades, and contemplating of them as houses made of salt that the waves can come and erase.

1.3 Climax of resistance in *Salt Houses*

The most prominent home that is portrayed in *Salt Houses* is the house in Nablus. Sitting in the garden on the eve of Alia's wedding, when Salma predicts about Alia's future life, Salma reflects on their home in Jaffa that they were forced to leave from, and how they made a home in Nablus. She remembers her home in Jaffa, the villa atop a hill, the view of the sea and the orange orchards. In Nablus, she dreams about going back, to "everything as she'd left it" (Alyan 6), yet she is aware that the villa has been demolished and the groves destroyed. Their present house in Nablus remains "the new house...ghosted with its former life, the dinners and celebrations and quarrels it had witnessed" (Alyan 10). When the Yacoub family moves to Nablus from Jaffa they are devastated and mourning the loss of their previous home in Jaffa which was very dear to Salma's husband Hussam and his feelings are conveyed in these lines, "More than once he cried out in the night, "they took my home, they took my lungs. Kill me, kil me." Hussam fiercely believed his illness was tied to occupation of Jaffa, the city with the peach-colored house they'd left behind" (Alyan 3). "It is also important to emphasize that what is actually remembered is often local settings, homes, villages, cities. . .it was sometimes problematic that what refugees were missing was not always Palestine, but their house and neighbourhood in Jaffa, Haifa, Lydda, Ramle" (Schulz 103, 104). Hussam's attachment to his house, his homeland and the surrounding that led him to reminisce with cries. "resistance have differed between outside and inside and have been guided by these two potential ways of relating to the homeland: longing or staying" (Schulz 105). In this matter of fact Schulz tries to bring in the problematic situation of a Palestinian that they have no choice other than leaving Palestine or living in Palestine and resisting the occupation, leaving Palestine means longing for it all your life and staying in Palestine means watching your homeland being stolen by the settlers in front of your eyes and not being able to do anything but resist. "When Hussam asked the boy where he intended to settle down, he answered, "In my homeland, sir. Nothing under this sky will budge me"" (Alyan 4). The boy's reply is the plight of Palestinians to be in their homeland no matter what happens "The expulsion was, rather, something that 'happened', caused by the war and the fighting . . . villages where resistance forces had their bases were dragged into the conflict and that destruction and depopulation were somehow unintended by-products of the events and fighting" (Schulz 29). The main objective of the Israelis was to oppress the Palestinians and stop them from resisting the occupation. "Alia is a child of war. She was barely three when the Israeli army rolled through Jaffa's streets, the tanks smashing the marketplace, the soldiers dragging half-sleeping men from their homes. There would be the birth of a new nation, they declared" (Alyan 5). Alyan in this reflects what the Palestinian children go through on a daily basis with Israeli soldiers intruding their territories and houses, arresting their fathers, sons and husbands. That how they would come and destroy their houses in the middle of the night with their tanks and armed weapons to terrorize the Palestinians. "The kind of life led in Palestine cannot possibly be reconstituted in exile, adding substance to the nostalgia of homeland memories" (Schulz 109). Schulz emphasizes that Palestinians living in exile cannot live the same life they lived in Palestine and it intensifies their nostalgia and longing for their homeland."But Salma was cheered when her daughter mentioned Jaffa. She felt grateful. Salma missed her home with a tenacity that never quite abated" (Alyan 6). Salma's longing for their former house in Jaffa was something that she never got over it, it remained in her mind like something that she could never return to. When Salma

reads the coffee dregs in a coffee cup to see Alia's future she sees "Arguments coming" (Alyan 9), "Houses that will be lost" (Alyan 9) and "an exterior life, an unsettled life" (Alyan 9). Salma's prediction about her daughter becomes a reality when Alia keeps moving back and forth to Kuwait, Amman, Lebanon with her husband Atef and their children Riham, Karam and Souad. "Even if one left one's village only for a brief time during the war, one was labelled an 'absentee' and one's property was termed 'absentee property', meaning that rights to home and land were lost" (Schulz 73). Schulz goes on further that Palestinians even if they wanted to return to their homeland and their houses wouldn't because Israelis would never let them in again, the doors of their houses shut forever behind them with no choice but to move far away from their homeland. "Widad and Alia and Mustafa, they might have known gunfire and war, but they were protected from it with the armor of wealth. It is what separates them from the refugees in the camps dotting the outskirts of Nablus" (Alyan 11). While the children of Yacoub family were much fortunate to live in a house of their own, the refugees weren't much fortunate because they were expelled from other cities. "They have come over the past two decades from villages, the ones soldiers set fire to or sowed with salt. They came from cities like Haifa and Nazareth. Their villages are lost, the names already eroded, replaced with new, Hebrew ones" (Alyan 33). The villagers' houses were set to fire and sowed with salt which is a ritual of salting the earth and the soil on cities that are conquered to symbolize a curse to stop the cities from re-inhabitation. The salting was to prevent them from growing anything on the land, no food which would lead to leaving the place in search of a new home. "There is no point of arrival, except through returning to the homeland. There is no waiting home except for Palestine, which has been lost and is therefore not quite there any longer. Palestinian-ness is constituted through and in an endless--- but not aimless---journey" (Schulz 90 91). Schulz examines the return of Palestinians to their homeland without being prosecuted for being merely Palestinians, waiting for their return, longing for their homes until then they bear the hardships of being in exile and labeled as refugees which made things worse for them. "The ultimate symbol of the struggle was, however, the *feday*, the guerilla-soldier who embodied the willingness to dedicate his life to the cause and the resistance. Fighting, struggling and resisting were articulated as something 'natural' and essential: it was something you *had* to do. It was not by choice; it was a given, but also a duty" (qtd. In Schulz 125). *Fida* or *feda* is an Arabic term for sacrifice and *feday* implies to someone who makes the sacrifice and becomes a martyr. "We have two choices," he says. "Abandon our cause or pledge to it." He likes how the words roll off his tongue, tries raising his voice. "Or pledge to it!" (Alyan 31). Palestinians are not left with many options from either abandoning the cause and moving on or pledging to it by resisting the occupation and fighting them off. While Mustafa's revolutionary acts in his local mosque to revolt against the illegal Israeli occupation and the coming of war, although his mother Salma and sister Alia told him to stay away from such political matters. "Mustafa's spine tingles at only one word: *Palestine*" (Alyan 31). Atef and Mustafa romanticize the idea of violent resistance but their idea of it comes to an end with the Six-Day War, during which both of them are imprisoned and Mustafa ends up losing his life. "Connections with 'land' become particularly acute in diaspora politics of nationalism and identity. Remembering home and place serves as a means of maintaining community in exile (Schulz 16). "Homeland" in this way remains one of the most powerful unifying symbols for mobile and displaced peoples" (qtd. in Schulz 16). What Schulz is trying to say is even if the Diasporas live in other countries and societies, yet they don't want to become a part of them. They do not merge themselves with the country's culture and lifestyle, yet at the same time- despite the constant longing to return they stay there as a part of the host country. Diasporas act neither as permanent inhabitants nor as a mere outsider. "Yes, everyone was distraught, mourning the houses and cities they'd left behind, the men beneath the soil. Shouldn't they mourn together? Palestine has vanished for them – this knowledge crept up on Alia slowly, a new death every morning: Mustafa gone, Nablus gone –but they can find the ashes in Amman, collect them to build another life" (Alyan 59 60). When Alia moves to Kuwait she feels restless, annoyed by the sudden change from beautiful hilly Nablus to a city with buildings and huge desert of Kuwait's wasteland. While Alia thinks about all the devastated people who were lamenting the loss of their houses and cities, all the people who died in Palestine fighting for their beloved homeland, she thinks about her brother's death and their old house in Nablus and the majority of the Palestine vanishing in front of their eyes. Atef's job as a professor in a Jordanian university propels them to Amman to find the ashes and collect them to build another life means settling down in there and having a family. "To leave the homeland---one's source of security and belonging . . . when one was actually leaving the homeland life was 'ending'. Forced exile means an abrupt disruption between real, meaningful life and a condition of grief and waiting---the liminal condition" (qtd. In Schulz 93) When the

Yacoub family moves from Jaffa to Nablus they are devastated by the things taking place in their life, the sudden changes and the trauma of leaving their home behind, they leave and depart from their life of happiness and transit towards the unknown future that is uncertain and unpredictable. “Cluttered space where emotional debris went—Mustafa, those first months in Kuwait, Nablus. Palestine tossed in there like an illegible receipt, keys that no longer opened any door” (Alyan 145). When Alia and Atef moved to Kuwait their life came to a standstill with things falling apart between them because of Atef’s decision to accompany Mustafa and ultimately leading to the death of Mustafa, those beautiful moments of peace and tranquility in their house in Nablus, and all the good memories from Palestine broke Alia’s heart in million shattered pieces, things that really mattered and were important seemed to be trivial. “So she spoke of it less and less, everything they’d left behind, her dreams of walking into her childhood bedroom, the way her entire body drummed when she thought of the place that was, suddenly, not hers anymore. She folded it away” (Alyan 145). All the things were overwhelming for Alia she was terribly nostalgic about her childhood bedroom and the way her body gave her the chills when she imagined that what she was thinking about did not even exist anymore, she preferred keeping quiet about such things because “It became a tacit rule between her and Atef: *If it hurts, leave it*” (Alyan 145). Alia doesn’t talk about things that hurt Atef, and Atef doesn’t speak about things that hurt Alia, things like memories of their wedding, sitting in their Nablus house garden, memories of Mustafa and things that hurt them to an extent that it was better not to talk about it all. “In Palestinian exile, home is where you are not and where you cannot be. Home is somewhere else, from where you once came or where you originated, but where it is impossible to reach” (Schulz 93). Here Schulz brings in the most important aspect of Palestinians living in exile, for them home is unattainable, a destination you can never reach, it is a place you can only dream of while surviving the reality in refugee camps or in foreign countries deemed as invaluable and felt unwelcomed. “A memory floats to her, unasked, of her mother’s kitchen in Nablus: sunlight streaming through the windows, tangling in the coriander and mint plants on the windowsill. The image hurts, and she shakes her head to clear it” (Alyan 150). When Alia thinks about her mother’s kitchen in Nablus she remembers the minute subtle details like how the sunlight would gleam through the windows and on the coriander and mint plants, for her these are the only things that hold on to her memories even when their house is lost forever. According to Mahmoud Darwish “Between memory and a suitcase, there is no other solution but struggle” (qtd. In Schulz 117). Despite their defenselessness, Palestinians express themselves as the ones who resist and struggle, those who will by no means give up. In the concept of struggle, there is a great deal of pride and self-commended strength that they’ve acquired from the years of being oppressed. “*Missing, assumed dead*: Souad remembers the phrase from history class, the line that emerges during any catastrophe. She says, again, a quick prayer for her family, her friends, her aunt Widad, Budur, all those still alive” (Alyan 172). When Souad is watching the news and she hears about the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein she thinks about the awful atrocities taking place there, people missing, some of the assumed dead which reminds her of the history class in school that such type of headlines are a norm during the catastrophe, she prays for her family, friends and aunt Widad, her best friend Budur and all those who are still alive. “Life in exile is not necessarily always a transit. It is conceivable to find comfort and security in other places in the world” (Alyan 187). Living in exile doesn’t always mean that you go there for the benefits or their lavish lifestyle sometimes your comfort and security is more important than anything in this world. “Beirut called to her. She wanted somewhere new. She wanted to go home, she told Zain and Manar, though Manar just stared at her and said flatly, *What home*” (Alyan 207). Souad’s longing for a sense of familiarity made her homesick she didn’t like it in Paris, the western influence on her children and the foreign culture affecting her in multiple ways, for Souad “*Home as in somewhere familiar, somewhere people look like us, talk like us, where you guys can learn Arabic and be near your grandparents and never come home asking what raghead means*” (Alyan 207) Souad’s idea of home is relatable on all levels because we long to be connected to our roots to feel we’re appreciated, welcomed and safe where people are just like us where there is nothing called racism, where you learn your mother-tongue and be under the shade of your grandparents to understand their life struggles, and to never come asking what raghead means which is used as an offensive term for a Muslim or a Sikh person wearing a headscarf or a turban in Western countries because of the Islamophobia, xenophobia and anti-immigrants sentiments. “In Lebanon, Palestinians have been regarded as ‘human garbage’, indeed as ‘matters out of place’, and as unwanted” (qtd. In Schulz 3). It is no doubt that the Arab countries were not willing to give refuge to the Palestinians out of the fear of Palestinians becoming the majority in their countries. “Endured the long wait in airport control, which concluded with the security officer saying, as soon as Souad

spoke Arabic, “You’re not Lebanese,” as plainly as though he were stating the sun was hot” (Alyan 207). When Souad arrives in Lebanon she is appalled by the xenophobic comment of the security officer that she is not Lebanese just because her Arabic accent is different from the Lebanese Arabic accent. This shows that how unwelcomed Palestinians are made to feel like foreigners that they don’t belong in their country. “The occupation has created generations of Palestinians who are strangers to Palestine, generations who are familiar with every alleyway of their places of exile, but who are ignorant of their homeland” (qtd. In Schulz 182). The occupation has forced Palestine to cease to exist for the future generations because they might never get the chance to see it again, to return to the land where their grandparents used to bake breads in clay oven and dip in olive oil or see the beauty of Palestine. The occupation has distorted Palestine with only an image and thoughts of Palestine. “Souad became brown. People’s eyes glazed over when she tried to explain that, yes, she’d lived in Kuwait, but no, she wasn’t Kuwaiti, and no, she had never been to Palestine, but yes, she was Palestinian” (Alyan 209 210). When Souad as living in Boston, USA it was difficult for her to make people understand where she actually was from, how could she explain them that Palestine had vanished? The only place it existed in was in her family’s mind and memories. Souad knew that her family lived in Palestine and she was a Palestinian but it was hard for her to put those horrific nightmares she and her family have been through in words. As Edward Said says “All of us seemed to have given up on Palestine as a place, never to be returned to, barely mentioned, missed silently and pathetically” (qtd. In Schulz 193) Edward Said’s words makes us realize that there was no going back, it was barely mentioned because it was tragic the houses, and the homeland bidding farewell to them, although they never stopped missing it but in silence without uttering a word. “It is the third time, she realizes, that she’s buying furniture for a house, the third time she’s piecing together scattered, unnecessary objects, trying to build a life around them” (Alyan 218). When Souad moves to Lebanon she goes for shopping to buy furniture and other things for her house, she realizes that how many times she has done the same thing like when she moved to Paris with her boyfriend Ellie and then again moved to Boston with her two children Manar and Zain and now in Lebanon, this is how life is when you are displaced and have no homeland to call of your own, hopeless, and can only ponder the absurdity of life. “Despite the weight bestowed upon the family, the family as an institution is also undergoing changes as a result of the diaspora, social fragmentation and wars” (qtd. In Schulz 174). The affect of the diaspora, fragmentation and wars that had on family was something that disrupted the institution of the family, how families were broken apart and separated for example in Salt Houses we see Riham is living in Amman with her husband and her son while Souad has already lived in three different continents Europe, America and then Middle East, these are the elements that make it a Diaspora novel. “She has heard her parents talk about Israel and Palestine, wars and land and people dying” (Alyan 228). Linah is Budur and Karam’s daughter she lives with her cousins and aunt Souad and aunt Riham, she hears her parents talk about the conflict between Israel and Palestine, the wars between the countries in Middle East, the unstable conditions in the countries. Linah’s confusion as a child being in war is startling because her fears are something that can be felt in our minds. “There’s a war,” she told them. “People are fighting, bad things are happening. People are dying. We can’t do anything but wait. And pray” (Alyan 229). When aunt Riham talks to the children she talks about what’s going on in the present unlike the other adults who tell them to play or watch TV, she tells them precisely about what is happening and tells them that they can’t do anything but pray, her faith in Allah is stronger than others in the household. “O Allah,” she said, at the very end. “Please keep these darlings safe” (Alyan 229). Riham’s words are like mirage in the middle of a dessert, her comforting words and prayers for the children is a symbol that she cares about them and their future. “When I talk to my children, the homeland is not a house and it is not trees, the homeland is also a mental thing, and mentally I always feel that I am in Palestine”(qtd. In Schulz 186). For the Palestinians home is not merely a physical object that they associate with, but it is something that they associate with more than living in a place but also constantly thinking about it to feel at home. “Atef shakes with the desire to rewrite everything that happened. For years, that was his fiction. *Here is Palestine*, he would think. *Here are the streets we’d walk in Nablus, the neighborhood we grew up in. here is everything we loved*” (Alyan 271). Atef’s memories hit him with a strong urge to rewrite what he had written all these years, it was the guilt of provoking Mustafa to stay and resist, he wants to write about the good times they spent in Palestine, the streets of Nablus, the neighborhood where they grew up and everything they loved wholeheartedly. “Despite an often nostalgic look towards a bounded ‘home’, diasporas lead lives not confined to a ‘home’. There is thus an intense and acute difference between the lived, transnational, unbounded and out-of-space experience of diaspora and the memory of a nationalized, rooted, placed and essentialist past and

identity” (Schulz 11). Palestinians living away from their homeland don’t live lives just like ordinary peoples but their lives are not confined to a specific place or a permanent home, living in their own world that is clouded by the memories of the former homeland they’ve left behind but holding on to their identity and roots even with constant inevitable changes. “Your grandmother used to live in a house with a garden. In Palestine. With her brother” Atef feels his breath catch. “I used to go there a lot” (Alyan 273). Atef tells his grandchildren about his past life, about Alia’s house which had a beautiful garden in Palestine with Alia’s brother Mustafa, Atef feels nostalgia arising because of these memories, he is stuck in the past but cannot let it go in order to feel what he felt in those moments.

1.4 Conclusion

The establishment of Diasporic identity in Palestinians is found throughout the early 1960’s to the present period with the formation of the state of Israel leading to the transnational immigration of Palestinians. The major cause of this immigration is the illegal Israeli occupation done on the homeland of the Palestinians. The importance in the study of the Palestinians gave rise to a new notion of diaspora called the Palestinian Diaspora which was then sidelined because of Israel as an emerging powerful state. Alyan introduces the readers with concepts of homeland, suffering and sequence of events. It is obvious that it excruciating to be forcefully evicted from your own homeland, displaced from one’s own home. Alyan’s use of subtle things like the Yacoub family’s homes in Jaffa then Nablus and in Amman display the fact that Palestinians are homeless, they don’t have their own homeland, a homeland where they can live in peace without being tortured by the Israeli settlers who have been occupying their lands since 1940’s. For every human being home is a place where emotions are recollected in tranquility, Palestinians struggles like being threatened to leave their homes in order to live a simple life and the pain carried on throughout generations until one is willing to heal the pain is done by Manar when she visits Israel and goes to Nablus only to find the place hauntingly standing there without any resemblance she had thought about in her mind. The characters in *Salt Houses* are warmhearted and construct replacement of their lost homes by confiding, being in contact with one another, Atef’s habit of writing his diary, distressing memories of being in the midst of war, occupation and the statelessness and in search of a home that doesn’t even exists.

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