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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**DISLOCATION, HYBRIDITY AND ALIENATION IN THE
NOVELS BY TSITSI DANGAREMBGA AND LEILA
ABOULELA**

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Relevance and studying degree of the research issue. The widespread expansion of postcolonial studies, as one of the important directions of modern humanities, since the second half of the 20th century has allowed the formation of new approaches and methodologies in studying the complex dynamics of intercultural relations, identity crisis, and phenomena of alienation and dislocation. Along with the strengthening of the globalization process and multicultural traditions, the intensification of social processes such as emigration, alienation, and assimilation has further increased the relevance of postcolonial discourse.

The novels of Tsitsi Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela are considered to be the main examples of this discourse. Although at first glance there are stylistic and geographical differences between the works of these authors, the common thread connecting the creativity of both writers is the search for cultural identity, the depiction of women's experiences within patriarchal and colonial structures, as well as the embodiment of themes such as hybridity and alienation. T.Dangarembga refers to the colonial history of Zimbabwe and describes the struggle for identity in indigenous African lands, while L.Aboulela sheds light on the issues of exile and cultural alienation through the fate of diaspora women who migrated from Sudan to Europe. The problem of alienation is a multifaceted phenomenon that affects both individual and collective consciousness. While T.Dangarembga's characters are alienated from their national roots and subjected to alien ideologies, L.Aboulela's characters experience social isolation and psychological trauma because they are not accepted in the Western environment. The fact that the Azerbaijani people have also been subjected to alienation policies at various historical stages makes this topic relevant for Azerbaijani literary studies.

Every culture is multifaceted and its components have been in extremely complex and contradictory relations with each other and with other cultures. That is why no culture can be reduced to one

idea or one position in either “domestic” or “foreign” politics¹. During the years of the Soviet Union, the Azerbaijani people were also subjected to cultural and ideological pressures, language and identity restrictions. Jalil Mammadguluzadeh’s play “My Mother’s Book” touches on the issues of national identity, language, religion and cultural alienation, emphasizing the policy of Russification and the problem of distancing from national roots. Bakhtiyar Vahabzadeh addresses the themes of fragmentation, division of borders, alienation and longing for the homeland in his poem “Gulustan”. Gurban Said, on the other hand, reflected the East-West conflict, hybrid identity, cultural alienation and the process of national self-awareness on an artistic level in his novel “Ali and Nino”. This suggests that the identity crises depicted in the works of T.Dangarembga and L.Aboulela resonate with the historical experience of the Azerbaijani people. Thus, the application of postcolonial theories to literature creates conditions for interpreting national problems in an international context and for the formation of alternative theoretical perspectives.

The position of the Republic of Azerbaijan against colonialism and neo-colonialism in the international arena is clearly visible in the speech of President Ilham Aliyev to the UN General Assembly and Security Council in 2023: *“Azerbaijan is deeply concerned about the continuation of colonialism ... Although nearly 70 years have passed since the Bandung Conference, there are some countries that still continue to pursue colonialism. One of such countries and the foremost is France...Over 5 million landmines were planted across Algeria alone... just like Azerbaijan, Algeria is among the top countries in the world suffering the most from mine explosions. Immediately behind France, its close ally Armenia is the following on that list...One of the reasons that bind these two countries so closely is their practice of resorting to mine terrorism. Eighteen thousand skulls of the fighters murdered throughout the colonial wars of the 19th century are kept and displayed at the Paris Museum of*

¹ Quliyev, Q. Multikulturalizmin əsasları. Dərs vəsaiti. / Q.Quliyev, Ü.Rəhimova. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti nəşriyyatı, – 2016. – 276 s.

*Mankind*². This speech once again confirms the existence of a common sense of struggle between Azerbaijan and other post-colonial countries.

It is well known that the concepts of hybridity and dislocation play an important role within postcolonial theory. H.Bhabha's concept of the "third space" suggests that hybrid identities are not only the result of mixed cultural experiences, but also productive contact zones that create opportunities for the emergence of new cultural forms. In his work "The Location of Culture", the critic emphasizes that in recent decades world literature has played an important role in the transmission of national traditions and cultural values to future generations. The main topic of literary discourse has no longer been sovereignty or the universality of humanism, but the cultural upheavals and displacements of subjects and migrants affected by colonial policies. In fact, "extra-regional and intercultural initiatives", which are a result of colonialism and (partly) forced migration, are considered one of the main factors in today's sense of dislocation and "politics of homelessness"³.

In the works of Tsitsi Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela, which we have included in the study, hybridity is manifested through the internal struggles of the characters and their methods of adaptation. As Moore Gilbert noted, postcolonialism in the modern era is not limited to geographical space and is now "everywhere"⁴.

In this context, it is possible to draw a comparison between the alienation of T.Dangarembga's characters in their native African lands and the cultural isolation of L.Aboulela's characters in European metropolises. In both cases, female characters are socially and psychologically isolated as a result of dislocation. In this regard, the study of the topic is relevant not only in the literary field, but also

² Aliyev, I. Letter dated 24 October 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General // – General Assembly Security Council, – 2023. 2-3, – p.1-4.

³ Bhabha, H.K. *The Location of Culture* / H.K.Bhabha. – London and New York: Routledge, – 1994. – p.12.

⁴ Moore-Gilbert, B.J. *Postcolonial Criticism* / B.J.Moore-gilbert, G.Stanton, W.Maley. – London-New York: Routledge, – 2013. – p.5.

in the context of social psychology, cultural studies and gender studies.

Within postcolonial feminism, women's experiences are particularly salient. Theorists such as G.Ch.Spivak, C. Mohanty and K.H.Weems note that women from third world countries have had to struggle against the hegemonic influences of patriarchal, imperial, and Eurocentric feminism at the same time. The internal and social contradictions experienced by female protagonists in the novels of Tsitsi Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela resonate with contemporary feminist theoretical approaches and provide a basis for their analysis from this perspective.

The fact that women from third world countries are simultaneously confronted with colonialism and patriarchal hegemony has further marginalized their experiences. In T.Dangarembga's "Nervous Conditions" the struggle of heroines such as Tambudzai for self-affirmation within both patriarchal family structures and the colonial system reflects the fundamental problems of postcolonial feminism. In L.Aboulela's novel "The Minaret" the stance of the heroines against religious, racial, and gender-based exclusion creates conditions for the formation of new feminist discourses against the backdrop of Islamic culture.

A.Brah's concept of "diaspora space"⁵ is manifested in the context of T.Dangarembga's characters facing the problem of alienation in the local space, and L.Aboulela's characters facing the difficulties of diaspora space as a result of their experience of exile and migration. In both cases, the secondary status of language, culture, and identity limits the characters' opportunities for self-expression.

In general, the human problems in the novels of Tsitsi Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela are of great scientific importance both in the global and national context. The study of the topic allows for the application of postcolonial theories to Azerbaijani and world literature, the evaluation of the problems of national identity and

⁵ Brah, A. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* / A.Brah. – London-New York: Routledge, – 1996. – p.16.

cultural memory with an alternative theoretical perspective, and the investigation of women's experiences from a new aspect.

Despite the literary-historical, theoretical and methodological relevance that we have mentioned, the topic under study has not been systematically and fundamentally investigated as a literary-aesthetic concept and scientific-theoretical problem. In accordance with the problematics of the study, there are studies by G.Guliyev⁶, S.Karimi⁷, M.Hajiyeva⁸, A.Isgandharova⁹ and other researchers in Azerbaijani literary criticism. Among the English-speaking researchers, we can mention the names of S. Craps¹⁰, R.Kennedy¹¹, S.Maira¹², C.S.Richards¹³; Given the limited research on this topic, we can say that a systematic analysis of the work of Tsitsi

⁶ Quliyev, Q. Multikulturalizmin əsasları. Dərs vəsaiti. / Q.Quliyev, Ü.Rəhimova. – Bakı: Azərbaycan Universiteti nəşriyyatı, – 2016. – 276 s.

⁷ Karimi, S. Postkolonializm elm sahəsinin banisi Edvard Səidin Şərqsünaslıq nəzəriyyəsi və onun Fələstin davasına heyranlığı: [Elektron resurs] / URL: https://www.academia.edu/53045028/Postkolonializm_elm_sah%C9%99sinin_banisi_Edvard_S%C9%99idin_%C5%9E%C9%99rq%C5%9F%C3%BCnasl%C4%B1q_n%C9%99z%C9%99riyy%C9%99si_v%C9%99_onun_F%C9%99l%C9%99stində_davas%C4%B1na_heyranl%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1m

⁸ Hacıyeva, M. Müasir ingilisdilli Pakistan ədəbiyyatında multikulturalizm və milli mənsubiyyət problemi: / filologiya üzrə fəlsəfə doktoru dis. / – Bakı, 2018. – 167 s.

⁹ İsgəndərova, A. İngilisdilli postkolonial bədii mətnlərdə milli kimliyin ifadə vasitələri: / magistr dis. / – Bakı, 2022. – 71 s. [Elektron resurs] / URL: <http://82.194.16.162:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/20.500.14346/2539/Ayg%C3%BCl%20%C4%B0sg%C9%99nd%C9%99rova.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

¹⁰ Craps, S. Buelens, G. Introduction: Postcolonial trauma novels // – Baltimore: Studies in the Novel, Hopkins Press, – 2008. – Vol.40. №1-2, – p.1-12. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29533856>

¹¹ Kennedy, R. “Mortgaged Futures: Trauma, Subjectivity, and The Legacies of Colonialism in Tsitsi Dangarembga’s The Book of Not” // – Texas: Studies in the Novel, Johns Hopkins University Press, – 2008. – Vol.40. №1-2, – p.86-107. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sdn.0.0012>

¹² Maira, S. ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Muslim Citizens: Feminists, Terrorists, and U. S. Orientalisms // – Washington: Feminist Studies, Feminist stud. Inc. – 2009. – Vol.35. №3, – p.631-56. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40608397>

¹³ Richards, C.S. Nationalism and the Development of Identity in Postcolonial Fiction: Zoë Wicomb and Michelle Cliff // – Indiana: Research in African Literatures, Indiana University publishing, – 2005. – Vol.36. №1, – p.20-33. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3821317>

Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela in the context of hybridity, alienation, and dislocation makes the research work relevant.

The object and subject of the research. The object of the research is the work of Tsitsi Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela. Both authors have deeply investigated the effects of patriarchal violence, repressive and hegemonic ideologies of the West in their semi-autobiographical works. In particular, T.Dangarembga's "Nervous Conditions" and "The Book of Not" and L.Aboulela's "The Translator" and "The Minaret" are studied in this context.

The main subject of the dissertation is problems such as hybridity, ambivalence, dislocation, women's liberation, as well as cultural-linguistic alienation. The study of these problems within the West-East contact zones determines the main direction of the research. As a result, postcolonial theories, historical contexts, thematic parallels between the authors' interviews and works were identified as the subject of the research.

The goals and objectives of the research. The main objective of the research is to expand the theoretical and methodological framework of the concepts of postcolonial identity, dislocation, hybridity and alienation and to analyze their artistic manifestation. The aforementioned concepts are examined in the context of women's experience in postcolonial conditions in the work of Tsitsi Dangarembga, and in the works of Leila Aboulela, in the context of female identity formed in the diaspora environment. The problems of cultural identity of both the characters and the authors create conditions for the dynamics of hybridity and acculturation to come to the fore. In this context, the following tasks have been identified to achieve the goal of the research:

- To examine the theoretical changes that occurred in the literary environment between the 20th and 21st centuries, to study the overshadowing of colonial discourse by postcolonial discourse in this process and the shift of the main direction of analysis from Eurocentrism to a subaltern perspective;

- To trace the historical development trajectory of the concept of hybridity, taking into account the dominance of postcolonial

research in the cultural and literary fields, and to analyze its transformation from the colonial period to the modern era;

- To examine L.Aboulela’s novels and T.Dangarembga’s semi-autobiographical works in the relevant context, taking into account the biographical characteristics of the authors and the socio-political circumstances that shaped their work;

- To analyze the characteristics of female protagonists and secondary characters in T.Dangarembga’s “Nervous Conditions” within the framework of feminism and the African women’s movement;

- To emphasize the serious cultural and social consequences of Western colonial policy in T.Dangarembga’s “The Book of Not”;

- To determine the functional role of autobiography as a literary genre in T/Dangarembga’s works;

- To reveal L.Aboulela’s approach to the concepts of homelessness and exile in the context of her description of the experience of forced migration from Sudan to Aberdeen in her work “The Translator”;

- To emphasize the struggle of Muslim immigrant women to form their own power during the period of Western exile policy, taking into account factors such as gender, racism and dislocation in L.Aboulela’s works;

- To trace the various psychological traumas and distortions caused by colonial/colonialist and West-Eastern cultural contacts in the works of T.Dangarembga and L.Aboulela.

Research methods. In order to achieve the goals and objectives of the study, it is necessary to adopt an appropriate multidisciplinary approach and adapt it to the research context. Descriptive, biographical and analytical methods are widely used to formulate the analytical results of the chapters. Also, the work of Zimbabwean and Sudanese writers is studied through a comparative-historical method. The frequent development of key concepts such as dislocation, hybridity, alienation and identity in the dissertation necessitates the application of literary, cultural, psychological and sociological theories.

The main provisions for the defence:

– In postcolonial literature, dislocation and hybridity are not only physical displacement, but also the main factors in the formation of the spiritual and cultural identity of the individual;

– In postcolonial studies, the search for cultural identity is manifested through moral and ethical dilemmas in the experience of female protagonists;

– Feminism, as an integral part of postcolonial discourse, necessitates the analysis of women's individual and collective experiences, as well as gender-cultural interactions;

– In T. Dangarembga's works "Nervous Conditions" and "The Book of Not", the formation of the ethno-cultural identities of the characters takes place within the framework of the postcolonial hybridity paradigm;

– T. Dangarembga reflects the complex structure of subjectivity in the postcolonial colonial experience by showing the conflicts of female protagonists with the cultural environment to which they belong;

– Autobiographical elements in T. Dangarembga's works strengthen the identity formation of the characters and reveal the possibilities of resistance against the hegemonic influences of colonial culture;

– In L. Abouela's works, the concepts of dislocation, exile and home are at the heart of the process of shaping the individuality and power of female immigrants;

– In L. Abouela's works "The Translator" and "The Minaret", the clash of cultures and the complex structure of female identity in postcolonial and diasporic environments are revealed;

– In Leila Aboulela's works, the concept of exile plays a crucial role in the formation of female identity and acts as a key principle of intercultural dialectics.

Scientific innovation in research. The scientific innovation of the study lies in the comprehensive analysis of the concepts of dislocation, hybridity, and alienation in the novels of Tsitsi Dangarembga and Leila Aboulela in the context of postcolonial theory and gender approaches. For the first time, the literary texts of

both writers are comparatively examined through the prism of East-West conflict, diaspora experience, and the intersectional formation of female identity.

By the end of the twentieth century, much ink had been spilled over postcolonial and diaspora studies, as a sequel to the liberation wars that prevailed in the first half of the same century. At the same time, those independence movements were followed by the liberation of yet other subgroups within the newly independent groups. As a result, over time, gender issues have become yet another prominent keyword imposing their presence in literary studies. Nonetheless, not many research papers have sought to theorize a shared ground combining the three variables, i.e., postcolonialism, diaspora, and gender. In this regard, the thesis uniquely links a rarely compared contact zone, the colonial and diasporic, birthing a common ground between the two novelists' fictional realms.

Zeroing in on Tsitsi Dangarembga's and Leila Aboulela's literary works, the cultural contact, or rather cultural clash, between the East and West is being remapped through a new geopolitical angle. Unlike the oft-studied novels by male authors, who focus on the public sphere, which is embodied in a narration of major historical events and wars, T.Dangarembga's semi-autobiographies and L.Aboulela's novels screen neglected cultural and social minutiae.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The theoretical significance of this research study lays in its inclusiveness of a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, expanding from the dusk of the twentieth century till the dawn of the twenty-first. Multidisciplinary approaches have elevated the dissertation from the obsolete singular perspectives in addressing the dilemma of postcolonial women. Adopting (post-)colonialism, diaspora studies, feminism, and womanism as a literary theoretical combination presents an integral methodological tool and mirrors the complexity of the hierarchical and systematic power mechanisms manipulating the lives of women from third and second-world countries. Accordingly, it grants premises to decode and decipher the multi-

layered-ness of their struggle, which hindered their ability to materialize durable and genuine solutions.

Correspondingly, numerous historical and analytical passages and excerpts from the thesis serve as an abridged and ready-made educational material for teachers and students alike. It represents a secondary source for university students to navigate into the African context, womanism, and feminism. It mainly helps them to be acquainted with British-related and foreign countries' literature. In addition, students benefit from the summaries of four novels and the autobiographies of both African authors. Particularly, the dissertation bridges the knowledge gaps and paves the way for future master's and doctoral students, who are in pursuit of postcolonial and diaspora studies, through combining various literary disciplines in a singular comprehensive research. As a theoretical groundwork, it rather aims to ease Azerbaijani activists' solidarity with the rest of the world on present issues such as third world feminism and womanism.

Approbation and application. The topic of the dissertation was granted approval at the meeting №11 of the Azerbaijan Republic Council on Coordination of Scientific Research on June 19, 2023. Articles on the findings and results of the research have been published in various scientific journals and presentations have been made at conferences.

The name of the organization where the dissertation work was performed. The dissertation work was performed at the Department of World Literature and Theories at the Faculty of Philology of Azerbaijan University of Languages.

The total volume of the dissertation with a sign indicating the volume of the structural sections of the dissertation separately. The structural building blocks of this dissertation essentially include, first, an introduction, secondly, three interrelated chapters, where each of those chapters is constructed of yet another three sub-titles, i.e., three paragraphs, thirdly, a conclusion, and last, a list of used literature. The introduction consists of 9 pages, which are equal to 16850 signs. The first chapter consists of 42 theoretical pages, which are estimated to contain 82346 signs. The second chapter is written in 41 pages, which are 78222 signs. The third and

last chapter is around 41 pages, i.e. 78524 signs. Finally, the conclusion takes around 3 pages, which is equal to 5468 signs. Generally, the total volume of the dissertation consists 261410 signs, excluding the list of used literature.

THE BASIC CONTENT OF THE WORK

The **Introduction** part schemes and designates the framework of the dissertation, through shedding light on the structural building blocks, such as the relevance and studying degree of the research issue, the object and subject, the goals and objectives, research methods, the main provisions for the defence, scientific innovation, theoretical and practical significance, approval and application, the name of the organization where the dissertation work was performed, and the total volume of the dissertation and its subparts.

The first chapter, entitled “**Postcolonial discourse: theoretical basis**” consists of three paragraphs. The first paragraph is entitled “*Origins of post-colonial discourse*”. First, the focus is lent to understanding the motives and consequences of the precedent movement to postcolonialism, which is imperialism and the colonial discourse. The first chapter follows the routes of imperialism and its development. Thanks to the introduction of “ocean-going caravels” by Asian countries,¹⁴ Europeans found a way to create faraway colonies that are not weaned away from the motherland due to distance. Sea navigation helped in reaching new regions and keeping in contact with the old ones.

Coinciding with the burgeoning of the industrial revolutions, it became an increasing urgency to find and dominate new territories to advertise and sell the mass-produced goods, and simultaneously to secure both affordable natural resources, which were locally scarce and expensive, and a cheap labor force. Colonialism granted a submissive, frugal workforce through importing slaves into the metropolis or creating plantations elsewhere outside of Europe. The

¹⁴ Young, R. Postcolonialism: a historical introduction / R.Young. – Massachusetts-Oxford-Victoria: Blackwell, 2001. – p.16.

more revenues and perks those imperial routes yielded, the more they spread and expanded across the globe.

By the end of the 19th century, the Berlin conference overtly debated the “[s]cramble for Africa”. Africa, in particular, was divided into cake-like slices by the European colonizers, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, and Spain¹⁵. Many European settlers in the African, Asian, Australian, and North/South American continents flagged benign intentions at first, whilst stepping into the new territories. Similar to the modern-day immigrant, they advertised their friendly aspirations for abundant job opportunities and peaceful co-existence.

In a short time, colonial settlers became the empire’s right hand, reinforcing suppressive regulations. Overnight, native people found themselves second-class citizens in their own lands, who were supposed to display obedience and conformity. The systematic oppression applied by the colonizer is tightly knit and micromanaged. The natives can only co-exist with the European colonizers either as resistance fighters or a helpless slaves, where either way they become a target of subversive and fatal mechanisms. Institutions imported and established by the settlers render the native language, culture, and ideology obsolete. The native community found itself heading towards a foreseen doom, by the expansionist foreign members.

By the 18th and 19th centuries, colonial discourse reigned supreme over political, cultural, and literary domains. The compound concept has been deciphered and abridged by the French philosopher, literary critic, and historian Michel Foucault. Worthy of consideration, he steered away from the limiting structuralist standpoint, whilst approaching the concept of “discourse”. He introduced it within the power/knowledge context. Foucault notes that the political, economic, and social position of the discourse’s utterer, within the power dynamics manipulating the world, determines the impact and the authority of the uttered discourse.

¹⁵ Young, R. Postcolonialism: a historical introduction / R.Young. – Massachusetts-Oxford-Victoria: Blackwell, 2001. – p.31.

Accordingly, discourse and knowledge can impersonate the authority of the truth even if they are not true¹⁶.

Adding “colonial” to the concept of “discourse” narrows down to a type of statements and mainstream that advocated colonialism as a moral and civilizing mission that had saved the savage natives from their retardation and inferiority. It had erroneously publicized semi-scientific suppositions of genetic White-race superiority and amplified biased findings that hypothesized the degeneration of people of color. It has also spread fear of interracial marriage and intermixing, targeting it as a process that defiles and weakens the superior White hereditary characteristics, leading finally to the demise of the White race and the birth of malfunctioning offspring¹⁷. As the title suggests, this paragraph traces the historical development of both postcolonial studies and postcolonial discourse. It contextualizes the political, social, and economic environment that gave birth to this cultural current.

Being evolved in a nebulous era of in-between-ness and transmission, postcolonialism grew as a nebulous and paradoxical concept¹⁸. Answering the when and where has become a genuinely challenging pursuit. Historically, the prefix ‘post’ indicated the end of colonialism¹⁹. However, the latter has not really been completely eradicated, as it has camouflaged itself in new forms such as imperialism and neo-colonialism²⁰. Geographically, most people

¹⁶ Hall, S. *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* / S.Hall. – London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi: Sage Publications; The Open University, – 1997. – p.44, 49

¹⁷ Procter, J. *The Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies (Culturalist Formulations)* / J.Procter. ed. J.McLeod. – London-New York: Routledge, – 2007. – p.176.

¹⁸ Rukundwa, L.S. *The Formation of Postcolonial Theory* / L.S.Rukundwa, A.G. van Aarde. // South Africa: African Online Scientific Information Systems (Pty) Ltd. HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies, OpenJournals Publishing AOSIS (Pty) Ltd – 2007. – Vol.63. №3, – p. 1172. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v63i3.237>.

¹⁹ Moore-Gilbert, B.J. *Postcolonial Criticism* / B.J.Moore-gilbert, G.Stanton, W.Maley. – London-New York: Routledge, – 2013. – p.2.

²⁰ Rukundwa, L.S. *The Formation of Postcolonial Theory* / L.S.Rukundwa, A.G. van Aarde. // South Africa: African Online Scientific Information Systems (Pty) Ltd. HTS

have been victims of invasions, intrusions, and displacement. Even colonizers' homeland sheltered postcolonial communities, such as immigrants or African Americans in the USA, for instance²¹. Henceforth, it was not a simple or straightforward task to answer the when and where. In addition, the movement targets imperialism and colonialism, yet it has been developed by European critics within the corridors of European universities²².

Notwithstanding the confusion, it undeniable is that postcolonialism has become a unifying ground, catering a theoretical framework for formerly colonized societies and diaspora communities. Postcolonial discourse, in its simplistic form, has been developed as a counter-claim to the hegemonic colonial and Eurocentric discourses. Theoretically, it has been an amalgamation of studies by critics such as Michel Foucault, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha. Discourse refers to a system of utterances and expressions that carry, shape, and transfer knowledge²³. Postcolonial discourse indicates a kind of discourse that works to refute and dismantle the oppressive dynamics of colonial and Eurocentric ideologies.

By the end of the twentieth century, the doctrines of postcolonial discourse had been adopted and abridged in the narratives of African literature. Indeed, colonized African authors had besieged literature as yet another battleground. African novelists have since then drifted away from European literary frames and cannons and embarked on the pursuit of creating literary models that cater to and accord the properties of their native culture. Subsequently, issues of displacement, cultural alienation, and language loss became concurrent themes. Such a mode of themes has funneled the literary mainstream into the subjectivity and identity of

Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies, OpenJournals Publishing AOSIS (Pty) Ltd – 2007. – Vol.63. №3, – p.1171-1194. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v63i3.237>

²¹ Loomba, A. Colonialism/Postcolonialism / A.Loomba. – London-New York: Routledge, – 1998. – p.8.

²² Young, R. Postcolonialism: a historical introduction / R.Young. – Massachusetts-Oxford-Victoria: Blackwell, 2001. – p.60-61.

²³ Ashcroft, B. Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts / B.Ashcroft, G.Griffiths, H.Tiffin. – London-New York: Routledge, – 2013. – p.50-51.

colonized societies and the psychological and cultural struggles that are haunting them. Indeed, many studies have hence been focused on issues of identity and agency.

Subsequent to such theoretical groundwork on postcolonialism and African literature, the second paragraph, under the title of “*The Search for Cultural Identity in Postcolonial and Diasporic Studies: Moral and Ethical Problems*”, carries on and further enlarges upon issues of cultural identity construction.

Homi Bhabha’s studies on colonial and diaspora communities proved that cultures have never been separate or completely pure. They are heterogeneous and mainly hybrid to varying extents. Such insights entail that the cultural identity of postcolonial subjects protrudes as fluid and relational²⁴. Hybridity has turned nationalists’ pursuits to reclaim pre-colonial identity frames futile. Colonial subjects, who had been reshaped by mechanisms of mimicry and ambivalence, have become, along the process, too hybridized to fit into their former pre-colonial status. The relationship between the dominant and dominated begets the latter's cultural influence by the former. Under the context of hybridity, it becomes known that the colonizer is affected by the colonized subject just as much as the latter is²⁵.

Just as hybridity highlighted the resemblance between the experiences of colonized people and immigrants, much attention has been paid to their shared psychological struggles, such as double consciousness, self-abnegation, and self-estrangement. People of color and immigrants live with the constant and double awareness of the White men's perception of them. They co-exist with the knowledge of the stereotypes the Europeans have attributed to them, as inferior, barbaric, and uncivilized. Accordingly, they are confused and consumed by the attempts to prove the opposite. Instead of experiencing themselves from within and exploring their individuality and peculiarities, they become decentered by pursuing

²⁴ Loomba, A. Colonialism/Postcolonialism / A.Loomba. – London-New York: Routledge, – 1998. – p.89.

²⁵ Ashcroft, B. Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts / B.Ashcroft, G.Griffiths, H.Tiffin. – London-New York: Routledge, – 2013. – p.13.

external impetuses of self-validation, leading to their self-estrangement and abnegation.

In addition to the colonial and diaspora subjects, the third paragraph, entitled *“Theoretical Studies of Feminism as Part of Post-colonial Discourse”*, stretches to include gender as a vital variable in discussing those postcolonial struggles. Indeed, liberation waves coincided and energized the emancipation of women as well. As a result, ideological movements of postcolonial and Black feminism and Africana womanism gained much attention, as alternatives to the erstwhile singular Eurocentric framework.

Narratives voicing the female perspective of history and postcolonial experiences infiltrated the literary arena by the end of the twentieth century. Through such narratives, it became apparent that after independence, women became prime targets of oppressive nationalist agendas. Preserving native cultures became a pretense to manipulate and relegate women into the private sphere and exclude them from the public one²⁶. At the same time, postcolonial women’s genuine needs were masked by white feminists who claimed their concern towards third-world countries’ women, yet failed to challenge the Eurocentrism of their ideologies²⁷.

However, the prevalence of female immigrants’ writing helped the postcolonial academia in general in unveiling the controlling dynamics of both agendas of nationalists and Eurocentric feminists as well. The freedom they have enjoyed after escaping their homeland eased their perception of the manipulation exerted by nationalist patriarchal systems. Henceforth, diaspora studies is a complementary and profound field that offers postcolonial subjects, especially women, new political perspectives and theoretical insights.

Such a complementary relationship in decoding and abridging the position of postcolonial women is noted through reading and

²⁶ Kandiyoti, D. Identity and Its Discontents: Women and the Nation. Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory / D.Kandiyoti. ed. P.Williams, L.Chrisman. – London and New York: Routledge, – 1994. – p.376-391.

²⁷ Young, R. Postcolonialism: A very short introduction / R.Young. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, – 2003. – p.107. <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780192801821.001.0001>

analyzing Tsitsi Dangarembga's works and Leila Aboulela's novels. Whilst the Zimbabwean author focuses on the encounter between the colonizer and colonized, where the native land is the setting for her semi-autobiographies, the Sudanese novelist inhabits exile as a contact zone and realm of in-between-ness. In spite of the differences, both authors navigate into issues of female identity construction and along the way highlight the effect of the Western other's intrusion in hindering and disarranging such process. Dislocation, hybridity, and alienation become shared motifs in the writing of both.

Moving away from the theoretical framework, the second chapter, under the title "**The Problem of Self-Identification of the Heroine and Paradigm of Hybridity in the Prose of Tsitsi Dangarembga**", is subdivided into three paragraphs and lays the grounds for practical analysis. Conspicuously, it investigates the problematics of identity construction, patriarchal and colonial oppression, and cultural struggles in Dangarembga's writing. As a result, the first paragraph of this chapter, entitled "*The female Identity and African Womanism in "Nervous Conditions"*", delves into the portrayal of female identity and feminist resistance movements adopted in Dangarembga's first semi-autobiography.

In "Nervous Conditions", Dangarembga rather reflects upon her experience as a Black woman who spent part of her childhood in the UK and the rest in formerly colonized Rhodesia. Through the protagonist, Tambuzdai, she unleashes the repression that engulfed her. She explores numerous patriarchal mechanisms that disfigured the personhood of Black women. First, she points to the typically traditional gender roles that exercised much authority over their lives and served as a disciplinary tool in the hands of patriarchal society, excluding and hampering women's presence in certain social and political spaces. Dangarembga explains the way young black women grew up hating their femaleness and womanhood, as becoming a woman comes only with burdensome obligations and restraints. The black woman becomes self-alienated as she abnegates her gender identity²⁸.

²⁸ Dangarembga, T. *Black and Female: Essays* / T.Dangarembga. – Minnesota: Graywolf Press, – 2022. – p.33-35.

Searching for an escape from such a vicious circle, Black women who are usually graduates of European missionary schools fell into the trap of embracing Western feminism blindly. Due to such a dynamic, Black women's resistance movements are incited by external agency. Unbeknownst to them, they serve imperial rigid agendas. Dangarembga accentuates the need to prioritize internal agency by focusing on locality and situationality²⁹. Black women activists are induced to adapt their agendas according to their environment's exigencies. Through the lines, Dangarembga's advocacy of Africana womanism over Black feminism becomes apparent. Accordingly, Dangarembga cherishes the collective and caters to the individualistic. She is not hoodwinked into engaging in the futile debate that labels Black men as their enemies. She strives to work hand in hand with African men to free themselves from European imperialist and capitalist systems, and African patriarchal nationalist dictatorial regimes as well.

The subsequent paragraph, as its title *“The Principle of Constructing the Ethno-cultural identity of the Heroines in “The Book of Not”* indicates, tries to prefigure the tenets upon which Ethno-cultural identity is built in Tsitsi Dangarembga's sequel autobiography, “The Book of Not”. To explore issues of racism, cultural estrangement, and war of liberation, Dangarembga insinuates two principal events: first, the protagonist's movement to a White majority high school, and secondly, the inception of the independence war by the Rhodesian people against European colonial settlers. The book clarifies how the African subject is confused and plagued by psychological neurosis due to the imposed segregation laws, separating the supreme White from the inferior Black.

Every semi-autobiography is a sheer retelling and re-visualizing of a once-lived reality. Incidents of discrimination, Tambuzdai has encountered serve as a reminder of Dangarembga's early childhood in the UK. In her collection of essays, “Black and Female”, Dangarembga recounts her attempts at self-harm due to her

²⁹ Dangarembga, T. *Black and Female: Essays* / T.Dangarembga. – Minnesota: Graywolf Press, – 2022. – p.82.

British classmates' racism. She states that at around five or six years old, she once tried to cut her skin with glass shards, as her innocent young self thought she had a skin color that everyone around her was color-blind to. Dangarembga explains how her young self tried to undress such a cloak of invisibility and fill such a void, searching for identity markers that would define her.

Hearing British people outside pointing at her as “piccaninny”,³⁰ her negligent pre-school self thought it was a compliment and peculiarity that distinguished her from the rest. Dangarembga's childhood exemplifies the way the Black child, within the colonial setting, could only identify with either non-being or distorted self-images. Similar to Tambuzdai, Dangarembga internalized the exterior hate targeted towards her and blamed her self-identity, as a Black female, as the main complicit of her wretchedness and exclusion from her surrounding environment. Dangarembga follows the way the empire established institutions that raised her White classmates on the premises of self-glorification and the Black child on self-hate and belittling.

Dangarembga resents the whole educational system that assisted her. The British missionary schools that embraced her protagonist, Tambuzdai, and the scholarships that were offered to her parents by the British Empire are, in fact, not acts of generosity, but in reality, the colonizer was solely “*delivering a new generation of bodies useful to empire*”³¹. Years spent within European institutions detach the native offspring from their reality.

The missionary educational system manufactured African individuals who were educated yet negligent of their country people's suffering, conscious yet unmindful of the empire's sinister agenda. In the “Book of Not”, she adds that, notwithstanding the onerous journey Tambuzdai went through to obtain her diploma, still, such a diploma did not spare her from earning a wage not so different from that which is earned by uneducated beggars who sell White

³⁰ Dangarembga, T. *Black and Female: Essays* / T.Dangarembga. – Minnesota: Graywolf Press, – 2022. – p. 27.

³¹ Dangarembga, T. *Black and Female: Essays* / T.Dangarembga. – Minnesota: Graywolf Press, – 2022. – p.20.

people optimistic prophecies³². In retrospect, the author does not shy away from confessing that her journey in the missionary school and her experience at Cambridge University were a sheer “*waste and destruction of potential personhood*”. She adds that upon her graduation, “[her] own personhood having been stillborn, ... [she] could not project it on to paper”³³.

Through “The Book of Not”, Dangarembga implicitly explains the way sanctuary spaces snare Black people into endless inner struggles and perpetual paradoxical inclinations for submission and resistance at the same time. Indeed, segregation dehumanizes them and strengthens oppressive mechanisms of surveillance and supervision. The Black body is shackled by the constant fear of being monitored by the White gaze and becomes, as a result, self-disciplined. Through a similar context, the colonizers' insistence on the discourse of fixity leads to the emergence of an inferiority complex in the colonized subject's self-perception. The protagonist is trapped in an unchangeable set of derogatory descriptors, hampering any attempt at self-assertion. Biased quasi-scientific suppositions and tendentious assumptions, such as Darwinism³⁴, chromatism, and primitivism rendered it impossible for the Black women to establish any selfhood or individuality.

Such cultural and social purposes have been attained in Dangarembga's works through adopting semi-autobiography as a political genre. Henceforth, the third paragraph under the title “*Autobiographies in Representing Woman as Postcolonial Heroines in “Nervous Conditions” and “The Book of Not”*” investigates the way Dangarembga has succeeded in refining a European literary genre to serve her postcolonial political ends. Autobiography, which traditionally served to narrate the achievements and heroism of grand historical figures, who are

³² Dangarembga, T. *The Book of Not* / T.Dangarembga. – UK: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Ltd, – 2006. – p.198.
<https://archive.org/details/bookofnotnovel0000dang>.

³³ Dangarembga, T. *Black and Female: Essays* / T.Dangarembga. – Minnesota: Graywolf Press, – 2022. – p. 35.

³⁴ Ashcroft, B. *Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts* / B.Ashcroft, G.Griffiths, H.Tiffin. – London-New York: Routledge, – 2013. – p.21.

mostly powerful White men, is adjusted to recount the story of a helpless young Black woman. The genre has been adeptly decontextualized from its patriarchal European traits and recontextualized into the postcolonial African properties.

African authors resort to autobiographies, which are usually written through employing the “I” pronoun, to declare their individuality. They are no longer being written about by the White European who succeeded in othering and marginalizing them. Such a genre allows Dangarembga to reclaim her authority and address the readers with no barrier or medium between them. In addition, as Mouzet clarifies, the genre became a mode for “cultural survival”³⁵. In attempts to safeguard the Shona cultural heritage, T.Dangarembga saturates her semi-autobiographies with cultural traditions and norms that are on the verge of obsolescence due to European hegemonic ideologies.

The uniqueness of Dangarembga’s semi-autobiographical literary style is encoded in the interplay of parameters such as the individual and collective, and the psychological and cultural. Her use of the “I” is somewhat indicative of the “we”. At the same time, psychological and cultural struggles are portrayed to mirror the whole society's psychic troubles. Dangarembga’s semi-autobiographies are rather postcolonial trauma writing. Dangarembga invests in the brutality and aftermath of trauma of witnessing. She, in effect, encourages African women who have suppressed such happenstances into resorting to autobiography as a medium to navigate back into such past events and loosen the hold of such burdening traumatic loads. Dangarembga uses Tambuzdai as a shield to be able to confront and set her stressful past free.

The third chapter, under the title “**Conflict of Cultures in The Prose of Leila Aboulela**”, is constituted of three paragraphs as well. It moves from Dangarembga’s semi-autobiographies to the Sudanese author’s novels, in other words, from colonial contact zones to diasporic spaces, investigating issues of dislocation and alienation.

³⁵ Mouzet, A. *The Postcolonial Autobiography: Force Majeure?*. Autobiography as a Writing Strategy in Postcolonial Literature / A.Mouzet. ed. B.Lebdai. – Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, – 2015. – p.161-178.

Correspondingly, the first paragraph, entitled “*Displacement, Exile and Home in “The Translator” by Leila Aboulela*”, discusses Aboulela’s treatment of the binary opposite of home and exile in her first novel, “The Translator”. Aboulela narrates the story of a Sudanese Muslim woman living in the UK alone after the death of her husband, following her pursuit to find homely feelings again.

In “The Translator”, the concept of homeliness is built upon Blunt & Dowling’s idea of “transnational homes”, which stands for the intersection between “mobile” and stable homes and its formative power over the dwellers’ identities on one hand, and by their endeavors and efforts of “home-making” on the other hand³⁶. Consequently, ethnicity, geographical, and cultural origins are no longer the basis upon which the conception of home is founded. Transnational homes bring about experiences that are transcending the traditional limits of geographical fixity in approaching the binary of home/exile and identity making.

As the protagonist Sammar moves between Scotland and Sudan back and forth, over time with different social status, i.e., first as a married woman and then as a widow, Aboulela invests in the gender challenges facing female Muslim immigrants in exile and the homeland. The homeland, which had been a cherished dream to the immigrant protagonist, fails to confer her with a homely sense after she becomes a widow. It seems as if Sudan could only be a home for a married woman who is fulfilling traditionally and patriarchally agreed-upon gender roles.

At the same time, the British exile falls short of accommodating her within its social stitches due to the widespread racism, rising fascism, and inflicted Islamophobia. The protagonist faces the necessity of making a distinction between Avtar Brah’s conceptions of “*a desire for home*” and “*homing desire*”,³⁷ during

³⁶ Blunt, A. Home / A.Blunt, R.Dowling. London-New York: Routledge, – 2006. – p.196-199.

³⁷ Buitelaar, M. Muslim diaspora in the West: negotiating gender, home and belonging (Making Homes in Turbulent Times: Moroccan-Dutch Muslims Contesting Dominant Discourses of Belonging) / M.Buitelaar, F.Stock. ed. H.Moghissi & H.Ghorashi. – Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, – 2010. – p. 164.

which “spatiality” loses its upper hand in defining and constructing the sense of homeliness. Aboulela introduces place not as a rigid or passive component, but rather as a subjective “*human product*”³⁸. Once a/an home/exile is not necessarily always a/an home/exile. A place is delineated and realized by the experiences, memories, and social politics it offers to its inhabitants³⁹.

The second paragraph, “*Exotic and Demonic Other: Africaness, Blackness, Arabness and Islamness in “Minaret”*”, explores Aboulela’s codification of issues of otherization in diaspora spaces, through shedding light on the historical, cultural, and social factors leading to such a phenomenon. As she moves to another novel, Aboulela portrays a different form of displacement, which is, unlike “The Translator”, politically invoked⁴⁰. She further shows the way images of Islam as a vicious rival in the past are revived by the Western mainstream and social media to serve contemporary political agendas and strategies. In line with such a truth, the protagonist falls prey to such discourses of representation, dimming her humanity. “Minaret” displays the way an immigrant’s identity markers, such as skin color, ethnic origins, language, and religious practices, become markers of exclusion and social rejection, pushing them towards the periphery.

Immigrant women are perceived through distorted lenses. They become prime targets of either invisibility or hyper-visibility, enduring racist attacks and social aggression silently. Their veil, for instance, whilst it attracts hate, it deters any sense of empathy towards the wearers. Discourse of representation leaves their

³⁸ Codebò, M. *Novels of Displacement: Fiction in the Age of Global Capital* / M.Codebò. – Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, – 2020. – p. 91

³⁹ Giri, A.K. *Writing in Times of Displacement the Existential and Other Discourses (Interrogating, Confronting and Reconstituting Displacement and a New Politics, Poetics and Spirituality of Dwelling: The Ethics, Aesthetics and Responsibility of Home and the World)* / A.K.Giri. ed. M.T.Mbuh, M.Chakravorty, J.Clammer. – London-New York: Routledge, Oxon, – 2023, – p. 197.

⁴⁰ Behera, A. *Writing in Times of Displacement the Existential and Other Discourses (Discourses of Displacement: “Development,” Resource Conflict and Political Opportunism in Odisha)* / A.Behera. ed. M.T.Mbuh, M.Chakravorty, J.Clammer. – London-New York: Routledge, Oxon, – 2023. – p. 259.

personhood hollow and personifies them in accordance with spiteful and demeaning projections. “Minaret” targets yet another issue, picturing the very diaspora space which is marginalized by Europeans, as internally subdivided and hierarchically ordered. Herein, financial abundance and lighter skin shades are fetishized and turned into boundary markers, further alienating the protagonist doubly and triply.

In spite of the challenges and sense of surrender that handcuff Muslim women immigrants, the third paragraph under the title “*The Dialecticism of Exilic Consciousness and Agency in Leila Aboulela’s Works*” roots for the escape routes that those women undergo to base their agency. In fact, the sense of homeliness is closely linked with the protagonist's success in regaining their social agency. Protagonists regress the balance in their life through self-centeredness and recovering their awareness with the present moment, as their self-perception is no longer distorted by the others’ claims. Having gender as a vital variable, social relationships and mutual communication with their surrounding community are accentuated as constructively indispensable factors in balancing and grounding women’s identity. Building relationships with tolerate people in exile rather delineates the emergence of a small, safe community that deters any sense of dislocation or exclusion.

Being aware of the position of Muslim women in European literary grounds as a “semiotic subject”⁴¹ Tailored in line with the Western market of supply and demand, Aboulela approaches issues of agency through evading any engagement with the binary opposite of good and bad Muslims. To not fall into the trap of native informants, protagonists are neither engrossed in demonstrating their innocence nor are they exhibiting signs of rebellious attitudes for the sake of it. Most importantly, Islamic practices are not accompanied by justifications or vindications. She grants women with different and alternative forms of self-actualization apart from the limited traditional orientations between career and family. Aboulela dares to

⁴¹ Moore, L. Arab, Muslim, Woman: Voice and vision in postcolonial literature and film / L. Moore. – London; New York: Routledge, – 2008. – p.1.

embark on routes of religious spirituality in a place and time that is ruled by secularism.

As a **conclusion** of the dissertation, the following conclusions were obtained:

– In postcolonial literature, dislocation and hybridity are understood not only as physical spatial changes, but also play a leading role in the formation of the spiritual, psychological and cultural identity of the individual. The dislocation experienced by female protagonists shapes their ability to understand themselves, adapt to the social and cultural environment, and demonstrate individual power and influence. The concept of hybridity explains the development of a multi-layered identity of the individual under the influence of both local and globalized cultures. In this regard, the concepts of postcolonial dislocation and hybridity act as an important theoretical tool for understanding not only geographical spatial changes, but also the transformation of female subjectivity.

– In postcolonial studies, the search for cultural identity is manifested through moral and ethical dilemmas in the experience of female protagonists. These dilemmas are not only related to the personal choices of the individual, but also reflect their interaction with the social and cultural environment. The moral and ethical dilemmas experienced by female protagonists serve as a key indicator for understanding the influence of postcolonial cultures and the impact of gender-cultural norms on female subjectivity. This approach presents the search for cultural identity not only as part of individual development, but also as an interpretive framework that shows the complexity of female subjectivity in postcolonial conditions.

– Feminism, as an integral part of postcolonial discourse, allows for the analysis of women's individual and collective experiences and encourages a deep exploration of women's interaction with hegemonic cultural influences, the influence of gender-cultural norms. This approach clearly explains the complexity of female subjectivity, individual and collective identity processes, as well as the role of women in the cultural and social environment. The integration of feminism with postcolonial discourse allows for a

more complete and multidisciplinary understanding of women's experiences.

– In T.Dangarembga's works "Nervous Conditions" and "The Book of Not", the formation of the ethno-cultural identities of the characters takes place within the framework of the postcolonial hybridity paradigm. Female heroes both try to preserve traditional cultural values and are forced to adapt to the changing social and globalized environment. This interaction makes their identity transformation multilayered and dynamic. The phenomenon of hybridity acts as a leading category explaining how female subjectivity develops in postcolonial conditions and demonstrates the balance between individual and collective experiences.

– T.Dangarembga clearly demonstrates the multilayered structure of subjectivity in the postcolonial colonial experience by showing the conflicts of female protagonists with the cultural environment to which they belong. These conflicts are not limited only to external social pressures, but also encompass the internal moral and emotional reactions of the individual. Thus, T. Dangarembga shows the multilayered, dialectical and agency-oriented structure of postcolonial subjectivity, providing an analytical framework that connects individual and social identity processes.

– T.Dangarembga's autobiographical elements in the works play a critical role in the subjective and cultural identity processes of female protagonists. They both strengthen the realization of individual experiences and demonstrate mechanisms of resistance against hegemonic cultural influences. Autobiographical nuances provide a deeper and more analytical explanation of the interaction of female protagonists with their social and cultural environment and provide an important methodological tool for postcolonial-feminist research.

– In L.Aboulela's works, the concepts of dislocation, exile, and home are at the heart of the process of shaping the individuality and power of female immigrants. Dislocation encompasses not only the change of physical space, but also the psychological, social, and cultural adaptation of women. The concepts of home and exile play a

central role in the process of developing women's individual power and agency, constituting the main mechanism of their identity transformation in postcolonial and diasporic conditions.

– In L.Aboulela's works "The Translator" and "The Minaret," the clash of cultures reveals the complex structure of female identity. These cultural clashes reflect the complexity of female subjectivity and act as a key factor in identity transformation in the postcolonial environment. The identity formation of female protagonists occurs as a result of the dialectical interaction of both individual and social and cultural factors.

– The concept of exile plays a crucial role in the formation of female identity in the works of L.Aboulela and acts as a key principle of intercultural dialectics. Exile guides the process of personal and cultural identity of female heroes, creates conditions for demonstrating their capabilities and provides a key interpretive tool for analyzing the transformation of female identity in the postcolonial-diasporic context.

In conclusion, we can say that female subjectivity in postcolonial literature is formed under the influence of dislocation, exile, hybridity and cultural clashes. The works of T.Dangarembga and L.Aboulela show that the identity transformation of female protagonists is not only a matter of individual choices, but is also closely related to social, cultural and historical contexts. Autobiographical elements, ethical dilemmas and interaction with the cultural environment reveal the complex and multilayered structure of female subjectivity. Feminism, as an integral part of postcolonial discourse, further enriches the analysis of women's experiences, illuminates the possibilities of agency and cultural resistance. Thus, in the works of T.Dangarembga and L.Aboulela, postcolonial discourse and diasporic experiences clearly demonstrate the multifaceted and dynamic nature of the formation of female identity, describe the dialectical relationship of individual and collective identity processes and provide a broad theoretical and methodological basis for the analytical analysis of female subjectivity.

The main content of the study is reflected in the following publications and conference materials of the applicant:

1. Hybridity in Tsitsi Dangarembga's nervous conditions // International Scientific Symposium "The triumphant leader of the victorious people: Ilham Aliyev" dedicated to the 44-Day Patriotic War and the Victory in Karabakh. – Stockholm/Sweden: – 25 November, – 2023, – p.119-122.
2. Reversing the Gaze in Aboulela's the translator // People's Democratic Republic of Algeria Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research August 20th, 1955 University of Skikda Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages Department of Foreign Languages. Organize an International Conference on Arab Anglophone Literatures In Diaspora: Past, Present and Future Prospects. – 19-20 December, – 2023, – p.42.
3. Sense of (un)belonging in Aboulela's and Dangarembga's writing // – Bakı: ADU-nun Elmi Xəbərləri (humanitar və ictimai elmlər). – 2024. №2, – p.23-27.
4. In-between filiation and affiliation: alienation in Dangarembga's writing // Azərbaycan Universiteti, Gənc tədqiqatçıların VII Respublika elmi konfransı. – Bakı: – 15 mart, – 2024, – p.185-187.
5. In-between multiculturalism and conviviality: Alienation in Aboulela's writing // Azərbaycan Dillər Universiteti, Ümummillî lider Heydər Əliyevin anadan olmasının 101-ci ildönümünə həsr olunmuş "Heydər Əliyev: multikulturalizm və tolerantlıq ideologiyası" VII Beynəlxalq elmi konfransın materialları. – Bakı: Mütərcim, – 7 may, – 2024, – p.100-102.
6. Hybrid spaces of identity negotiation in Aboulela's "The Translator" and "Minaret" // – Lənkəran: Lənkəran Dövlət Universiteti, Elmi xəbərlər Humanitar elmlər seriyası, – 2024. №1, – p.52-59.
7. Displacing spaces of otherization and transition in Leila Aboulela's writing // – Bakı: "Məhəmməd Əmin Rəsulzadə-140". İpək yolu, Azərbaycan Universitetinin elmi jurnalı, – 2024. №2, – p.139-144.

8. Alienation in Dangarembga's semi-autobiographies // – Bakı: İpək yolu, Azərbaycan Universitetinin elmi jurnalı, – 2024. №3, – p.155-161.
9. Place identity in Aboulela's and Dangarembga's literary works // Azərbaycan Dövlət Pedaqoji Universitetinin Quba filialı, Abbasqulu ağa Bakıxanovun anadan olmasının 230 illik yubileyinə həsr olunmuş “Qloballaşma şəraitində yeni nəsil universitetlərdə müəllim hazırlığının əsas hədəfləri” Respublika Elmi Konfransının Materialları. – Quba/Azərbaycan: – 20 dekabr, – 2024, – p.93-98.
10. Otherization and identity distortion in Dangarembga's writing // Shanlax International Journal of English (A Peer-Reviewed-Scholarly Indexed Quarterly Journal). – Tamil Nadu, India: – June, – 2024. Vol.12, No.3, – p.1-6.
11. (En/De) coding Traumatic Narratives in Tsitsi Dangarembga's and Leila Aboulela's Autofiction // XIM University, School of Liberal Arts, Department of English. Organize an international conference on “Reimagining Existence: Emerging Perspectives in World Literature and Language”. – India: Bloomsbury Publishing, – 10-11 March, – 2025, – p.73-81.
12. (Neo)patriarchy in between Homeland and Exile in Aboulela's Novels// Azərbaycan Universiteti, Gənc tədqiqatçıların VIII respublika elmi konfransı. – Bakı/Azerbaijan: – 14 mart, – 2025, – p.180-183.
13. (Post)colonial Discourse: A Close Reading of Tsitsi Dangarembga's Semi-autobiographies // Нижегородский государственный педагогический университет имени Козьмы Минина (Мининский университет). Международная научно-практическая конференция «Научная дискуссия: вопросы филологии и методики преподавания иностранных языков». – Нижний Новгород: – 3-4 апрель, – 2025, вып.9, – с.133-136.
14. In between Self Actualization and Abnegation in Tsitsi Dangarembga's Writing // Miras University, International Scientific and Practical Conference “Science of Higher Education

2025”. – Shymkent/Kazakhstan: – 15-16 April, – 2025, – p.584-588.

15. Acts of Religion as an Agency Construct in Leila Aboulela’s *The Translator* // – Abidjan, Ivory Coast: University of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, (CRAC-INSAAC), *Revue Akofena* (Scientific Journal of Language Sciences, Letters, Languages & Communication), – 2025. Vol.2, №.16, – p.151-160.
16. Poetics of Homeliness in Leila Aboulela’s *The Translator* // – Erzurum, Turkey: Ataturk University, *Melius: Journal of Narrative and Language Studies*, – 2025. №.4, – p.1-8.

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