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بالرسالة صفحات
لم ترد بالأصل

Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Arts
Cairo University

**Place in Post-colonial Theory and Practice
in Three Representative Novels**

**M.A. Thesis
Supervised by
Dr. Hoda Elsadda**

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الاجازة

أجازت لجنة المناقشة هذه الرسالة للحصول على درجة الماجستير في الدراسات الإنسانية
بتقدير + بمرتبة ممتاز مع توصية
بالتقديم على شهادة الدكتوراه في الجاهات .
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Introduction

Place today ranges from experiencing diasporic and exilic conditions to crossing mental and terrestrial borders through writing and travelling, from situating self on a multitude of levels in an ever-shifting reality to making sense of a world without stable, but fluid, vantage points. This post-modern condition enables a position from which all experience can be viewed as uncentered and pluralistic in a culturally hybrid and syncretic world. In the post-colonial situation, this takes the form of a dialectic between constructing separate and multiple worlds, and between replacing temporal linearity with spatial plurality to activate political and revisionary acts of disrupting. Post-colonial criticism and literature have both been greatly concerned with the dialectic of place and displacement. The ideas of home, land, territory, maps, borders, nations, have preoccupied post-colonial expatriate writers and thinkers for the very reason of their existence as exiles or "border intellectuals" in the metropolitan centers in the second half of the twentieth-century. This theme of geographical displacement with its concomitant themes of linguistic, cultural and ontological dislocations is central in the so-called "other" literatures in English. To articulate it, post-colonial intellectuals have devised a discourse challenging the worldview that polarizes center and periphery, deconstructing, in the process, Europe's hegemonic categories of First World-Third World, center-margin, core-periphery, etc., in search of a meaning for home/land and for a definition of place for those living on the margins of power and

history. It is this counter-discourse on place that this study hopes to explore as handled by five current expatriated post-colonial writers and thinkers namely Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, V.S. Naipaul, Nuruddin Farah and Amitav Ghosh.

This study will be dealing with their use of space as an empowering concept to agitate new forms of meaning by disturbing accepted ones, penetrating thus into more liberating areas where notions like difference, hybridity, the border experience and others become more tolerated and less confining and ultimately a rich source of powerful alternative visions and imaginings. These writers' outlook which broadens time into space has permitted new modes of writing and new and empowering metaphors and mappings of belongingness for approaching reality. Place, as articulated by these post-colonial writers, also illuminates notions like simultaneity, synchronicity even dispersion and interruptions that have, in modern times, become more viable than chronology and ordered sequence as modes of perception to signify a reality never so immediate, mobile and travelling between countries, disciplines, ideas and views, exiles and homes, generated mainly by these intellectuals' fluid movement in-between the boundaries of nations. This study, divided in two parts, one on Said and Bhabha's critical concepts, and the second on three creative post-colonial writers who handle place in different forms, will attempt a coverage of an overall picture (from post-colonial criticism and literature) of all five writers dealing with space as a politically enabling concept, each in his own way, to ultimately reveal some major lines of similarity illuminating this politically empowering notion. The use of space and geography in their work at the conceptual and interdisciplinary levels will be

presented as blurring the boundaries between intellectual inquiry and imaginative writing, a mode of exposition that will also characterize the following study in its method of approach since geography is not dealt with as discipline but as discourse. All five writers will also be dealt with as post-colonial intellectuals whose strategic positioning between nations and histories renders them unique in their address to power or, as Said calls it, in their speaking the truth to power dauntlessly. Said's Representations of the Intellectual will be very instructive in this respect. It is these intellectuals' use of space as a territory between two or more places (or views) to be accurately charted and overcome that enables them to handle the cultural question differently from binaristic approaches and in new, more liberating modes.

Since their discourse is "concerned with the world as it exists during and after the period of European imperial domination" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2), these writers concentrate on space in the political sense, constructing it as a major political issue because colonialism was itself political, colonizing an act of geographical violence, or as Deleuze and Guattari called it in their Anti-Oedipus, colonialism is a despotic territorial writing machine (not only about guns, tanks and bombs but also about ideas). In Culture and Imperialism, Edward Said defined imperialism in Gramscian geo-territorial terminology: it "means of thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others" (5). In his book, Said explored the "geographical sense" of imperialism and its culture. He argued that: "imperialism and the culture associated with it affirm both the primacy of geography and an ideology about control and territory" (93). It is this aspect of Said's work that this study will take as its central point of departure, ultimately illuminating some of the