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***NOMADIC PLACES***  
**CULTURES AND LITERATURES IN MOVEMENT**  
**‘HYBRID-PERFORMATIVE-DIASPORAS’**  
**IN ‘IBERO-AMERICAN-MAGHREBIAN-MOROCCAN’**  
**LITERATURE AND CULTURE:**  
**THE CASE OF NAJAT EL HACHMI \***

Thus culture and displacement become one, permanently transforming the sense of  
*heimlich* into that of *unheimlich*. It is this *unheimlich* that becomes the new  
‘home.’

The human ‘home’ has become nomadic, and ‘home’ is always the present,  
the instant in which we inhabit that very moment.  
It is not that the subject producing the literature is displaced,  
but rather the stories, narrated, inhabit displacement.  
(Fernando de Toro 2003: 87, 92)

The border became my home, my base of operation, and my laboratory  
for social and artistic experimentation [...].  
But the border was not a straight line; it was more like a Möbius strip.  
[...]

We proclaimed the border region a laboratory for social and aesthetic experimen-  
tation.  
(Guillermo Gómez Peña 1996: 63; 86; 88)

Sóc un esgraó intermedi, formo part del que jo anomenaria generació de frontera,  
altrament mal dita ‘segona generació.’ (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 13)

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\* This essay has its origin in a conference held by Dieter Ingenschay on October 29, 2010 as part of the First Annual Conference of the Centre for Area Studies entitled, *Cultural Encounters – Commodity Chains – Labor Migration: World Regions and with the section Transnationalities – Transidentities – Hybridities – Diasporization* (text published in Ingenschay 2011). It also originated in part with my project that began in 2009 in cooperation with several German, European, Maghrebian, and Israeli universities, and into which I inserted this research field as one of the main points of focus.

A primary goal of this article is to reinforce a new field of research in the international diaspora discussion: the ‘Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan’ Diaspora.<sup>1</sup> This concept should be understood as an enunciation concept and in consequence as a cultural virtual space where Maghrebian communities write independently whether they migrate to the Iberian Peninsula or Latin America and whether they live in the Maghreb, on the Iberian Peninsula or in Latin America; rather they build a cultural Diaspora of the “two banks” (“*dos orillas*”). Consequently, it also encompasses Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan’ work and cultural products, be they literary, medial, or pictorial, essays or theory; this means, any work written primarily by an Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan and/or works that focus on the Maghreb or Ibero-America. Further included are their people and their traditions, religion and culture and its implications between them. This definition considers also the topic of daily life in the diaspora, as well as the nostalgia, hopes, and desires of its members.<sup>2</sup>

To summarize, all kinds of literature written in Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Catalan or any other language located in Iberian Peninsula and that have their origin in movement and displacement, as ‘nomadic-located-literature’ or ‘displaced-home-literature’ belong to the category of Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan diaspora, identity and culture. That we here only focus on the literature written in Spanish or Catalan has simply to do with language competence.

The second goal of my essay, not less important as the first, is to explore these works in the context of what I have called since 2009 hybrid-performative-diaspora and ‘hybrid-performative-identity’ or ‘transidentity’ constructions.

Considering these two goals, I will begin with a first part dedicated to the description of hybrid-performative-diaspora and hybrid-performative-identity constructions. The second part will consist of a survey of the current state of research and literature. In the third part, I will analyze the Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan novel *L’últim patriarca* by Najat El Hachmi and her essay *Jo també sóc catalana*.

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1 Under the complex and controversial term ‘Ibero-America’ we want simply understand a geo-graphical concept, that includes both, the Latin American continent and the Iberian Peninsula with Spain and Portugal and their different languages.

2 This concept could be complemented with literature not written by Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan writers, but dealing with one of the aforementioned themes, particularly the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea (“oleadas de pateras”) and the living conditions of Maghrebian migrants in Iberian Peninsula.

## 1. 'Hybrid-Performative-Diaspora' and 'Hybrid-Performative-Identity' constructions

### 1.1 'Hybrid-Performative-Diaspora'

In the construction of identity, emotion is a central aspect and concept to which I assign not only a psychological and affective status, but also a *cognitive status*. I consider it to be a *knowledge structure*. In this context, we implement, supplement, and expand the term 'integration' in the sense of a *reciprocal social dynamic* based on the fundamental notions of *recognition, hospitality, belonging* and *emotion* in a space of *shared responsibility* that constitutes the foundation of the construction of hybrid-performative-identities or transidentities.

I begin with the fact that individuals in post-modern and global migration movements (particularly in megacities) are no longer primarily determined by ethnic, cultural and religious origins, by colonization, decolonization, or by the project of return, but much more and primarily by the *specific situation and constellation that the migrants find in the country of arrival*. We denominate this as the '*situation-imperative*' or '*situation-dispositive*' (see below). These terms seek to avoid the misunderstanding and logical mistake of a life in a *non space*, which often is confused with nomadism or, hybridity. On the contrary: both terms demand fixed points of relation because nomadism as well as hybridity are relational terms and only as such could we classify a phenomenon as nomadic or hybrid. The fact that we have individuals living in a place that does not correspond to their original regions of birth, as well as people speaking different languages, sharing different identities and cultural and religious traditions neither eliminates the 'cultural difference' nor the location of culture, as Bhabha (1994) illustrates explicitly in the title of his book and in his theory of hybridity. Hybridity and nomadism are always located somewhere, but are also located in a specific individual culture, and that corresponds to the formula of "from where to speak" as argued by Edward W. Said (1978/2000) and Fernando de Toro (1995). The latter has insisted and underlined this aspect again and again: we speak always from somewhere and that is *our place, our home*; in the context of a hybrid-performative diasporic situation, this pluricultural voice and body is the new home, as Fernando de Toro (2003: 87) expresses, an *unhomely home*. The voice is always located in a place, in a body, in the desire of someone, crossed by diversity and hybridity. All that builds the *new place, the nomadic pluricultural and individual place*, makes this new home a place of enunciation that is always performative and transversal. When Fernando de Toro (2003: 87, 92) speaks of the displacement of literature and culture, he does not confuse what

scholars usually mix up: “It is not that the subject producing the literature is displaced, but rather the stories, narrated, inhabit displacement” (ibid.: 92). This is something completely different; he is not eliminating the category ‘home’ or ‘identity.’ We always have a home and an identity. The difference today is the particular way in which we construct our home or new diaspora and our new and multireferential identity. What we have, and what Fernando de Toro is arguing, is a *nomadic home*, in line with the argumentation of Guillermo Gómez Peña (1996). For him, culture is ‘border’ or ‘borderland culture’ and is equivalent to a new notion of ‘home’ as an open topography that is built by proliferating lines: “Home is always somewhere else. Home is both ‘here’ and ‘there’ or somewhere in between. Sometimes it’s nowhere” (1996: 5). In his argument, ‘somewhere’ or ‘nowhere’ or ‘somewhere in between’, formulate the oscillation of identities between and through different cultures. ‘Home’ gets here the same status as ‘unhomely’ (as Homi Bhabha defines it 1994) and turns into a source for building a ‘third space’ (see Homi Bhabha ibid. and also Alfonso de Toro: 2006: 30 and 2006a).

In summary, to speak about nomadism, nomadic or displaced literature, culture or identity, and to speak about ‘transculturalism’ or ‘transidentity’ means to not at all have literatures, cultures, or identities without a location – a fixed point from where we speak, think, write, feel and live. What we have is a hybrid-performative location, a speaking, thinking, writing, feeling and living crossed by many traditions. That is what Fernando de Toro is describing when he speaks about new “sonorities and colors” (2003: 88) and has nothing to do with a literature or culture without a fixed place or with a homeless literature and culture. A home can be changed by another home, but the cultural anchorage that is imposed by situation-imperative or situation-dispositive is unavoidable to an individual or a community.

In the following section, my main interest will lie in the description of the crucial question of how individual members of an arriving culture in a new society can, after a while, develop the *feeling* of belonging to the new country, and whether they feel welcome and receive hospitality (Aprile/Montandon 2004).

In order to answer this, we have focused on diasporic formations related to hospitality and belonging in the context of the Maghrebian culture and the migration processes to Central Europe; now we put Spain in the center of our attention.

We consider the concepts of hospitality and belonging, which are closely related to those of emotion, body and desire (see below), to be fundamental in order to come to new politics of migration as well as new ideas, notions and conceptions of integration and citizenship. Thus we emphasize the psychological, affective, and subjective aspects of persons, without which nei-

ther hospitality nor belonging, nor any felt or experienced citizenship, would be possible. The emotion passes always through the body, which is registered by the gaze. This process delineates a fundamental moment in culture and society for the recognition or refusal of the ‘Other’ and is at the same time, the source of the desire. Therefore, I understand emotion – I repeat – as the experience of the hospitality that passes via the gaze, via the body, and via desire – and not only via citizenship, language, or via the “prosthesis of origin” (“*prothèse d’origine*,” Derrida 1996). Similar life experiences and destinies (for example the unfulfilled longing for the original homeland vs. the settlement in a new country for an indefinite length of time) determine the living situation of the new arrival. At the same time, individuals on the one hand develop a feeling of *emotional belonging*, and, on the other hand and at the same time, are dependent on and are vulnerable to external assignation, which also determines their *feeling of belonging*.<sup>3</sup> This ambivalent process should be understood as an individual experience with a fragmented belonging and identity that is collected through the *body* and the *emotionality* of the individual. This experience is then a *conditio* for cultural and social integration.<sup>4</sup> In this context, emotion refers to and implies a longing for the affective and psychological security of the inviolable rights of the individual and for access to individual possibilities for development such as education, work, respect, and so forth. With regard to the concepts of body and desire, we follow the theories of Deleuze/Guattari (i.a. *Capitalisme et schizophrénie*), Foucault (*Surveiller et punir; Histoire de la sexualité*), Butler, in the consideration of her concept of performativity (*Gender Trouble; Bodies that Matter*), and Kamper/Wulf (*Die Wiederkehr des Körpers*). We treat the concept of ‘body’ as an anthropological category, as a discourse formation, as “*archéologie du savoir*” that connects the fields of desire and sexuality with those of power and institutions and which builds them as a dispositive. Important in this context is the conception of a body as a *knowledge machine as a network of relations that bleed in every direction, through all kind of layers and social, scientific and institutional structures. The body is the place where experiences are performed and treated, it is the starting point and arriving point of experience, the archive of memory, the ‘heterotopic space,’*<sup>5</sup> the

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3 Vaassen (1996: 214 et seqq.) also refers to the self and external assignments when he speaks about the ‘context of references.’

4 See Tal Dingott Alkopher’s contribution (2013/2014) where she speaks in a similar way about ‘interculturalisme.’

5 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1575): ‘*hétérotopie*’; Foucault (1967/1990: 39): ‘*Heterotopie*.’

'*crisis heterotopias*';<sup>6</sup> the '*sitting or placement*';<sup>7</sup> the '*relations among sites*';<sup>8</sup> the '*heterogeneous space*';<sup>9</sup> the '*effective site*';<sup>10</sup> and the '*counter-sites*'<sup>11</sup> of individual and collective history, the traced and tattooed surface.

Emotion is constitutive for the disposition and willingness to accept and recognize, and to respectively refuse, the 'different Other' on the basis of positive or negative experiences, of rational or irrational, justified or unjustified fear, prejudices and other similar aspects. Emotion can be conceived as a dynamic and incessant process and is the determining factor for judgments, negotiations, and *finding a place in the world*, as for example, Nico H. Fridja (2000: 63) underlines.

As I already indicated, emotion can be understood as an essential part of knowledge and as an instrument of cognition in the encounter with 'different Others,' as Errol Bedford (1956/1957), George Pitcher (1965: 327) and Robert C. Solomon (2000: 11) have already argued. Following Errol Bedford (1956/1957) and René Ceballos (2016), we can assert that emotion must be considered to be conditions and fluctuations, as impulses that can explain, legitimate or sanction individual or collective behavior. Thus, emotion must be included in the political discourse on migration and considered constitutive for any concept of integration, no matter how it is conceived. For all of these reasons, I assign emotion also a pragmatic negotiation status.

Our concept of integration, as a *reciprocal and dynamic interaction*, includes immigrant cultures as well as the society of arrival and aims to create the possibility for 'recognition,' and consequently, for hospitality and belonging. They are the fundamental conditions for the cohabitation in difference in a hybrid space. Integration understood as reciprocal and dynamic interaction means a shared responsibility, a sort of permanent "third space" (Bhabha 1994) and a nomadic '*home*' and nomadic '*identity*' (= hybrid-performati-

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6 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1575): '*hétérotopies de crise*'; Foucault (1967/1990: 40): '*Krisenheterotopien.*'

7 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1572): '*l'emplacement*'/'*la localisation*'; Foucault (1967/1990: 36): '*Lagerung*'/'*Plazierung.*'

8 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1573): '*relations d'emplacements*'; Foucault (1967/1990: 37): '*Lagerungsbeziehungen.*'

9 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1574): '*espace hétérogène*'; Foucault (1967/1990: 38): '*heterogener Raum.*'

10 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1574): '*lieux effectifs*'; Foucault (1967/1990: 39): '*Wirksame Orte.*'

11 Foucault (1967b/1994/2001: 1574): '*sortes de contre-emplacements*'; Foucault (1967/1990: 39): '*Gegenplazierung*'/'*Widerlager.*'

ve-diaspora) that must be continuously performed, relocated, negotiated, and developed in an endless nomadic process.

These concepts and praxis are characterized in particular by the already mentioned '*situation imperative*' or '*situation dispositive*' as one of the columns of the concept and practice of hybrid-performative-diasporas. They are almost synonymous, two sides of the same coin: the first term refers to an inevitable situation that is imposed as such, so that it also demands the migrants become conscious of the new situation; the second term refers to concrete situations that migrants are confronted with, e.g. new rules and norms, language and culture, etc. These two terms encompass concrete and particular situations in which migrants live, as well as new cultural and social forms that are no longer only stemming from original homelands. This situation imperative or situation dispositive are built by situations that develop from concrete positive or negative circumstances and experiences, such as success or settlement, dual or multiple origins or cosmopolitanism. Further possibilities include a diverse and rich sense of being or living as an illegal alien, living with discrimination, living in poverty, being socially downcast, dependent, exploited, persecuted (in cases of illegal migration), or similar emotional and concrete situations such as living in fear, and living in ghettos. We have also positive cases of successful lives and of social belonging. But in both cases the social milieu, the surrounding environments, the neighborhood, and its inhabitants comprise the determining situation imperative/situation dispositive with their similar or equal fates and life situations. In this context, individual or collective subjects must reinvent themselves in a complex interaction of self-determination and the determination of that which is foreign; they must find a new identity and a new sense of belonging.

Here, factors located both within and outside of the subject play a central role. These formations and situations become increasingly large and influential, so that for migrants, the 'micro-world' comes to play a larger role than the macro-world qua State or Nation. These in turn lose their primary identity-shaping influence. The 'micro-world-formations' do not compete with or question the State (with the exception of fundamentalist parallel societies) but rather they offer life alternatives that have altered and will continue to alter nations at their cores. From these diverse diaspora-dispositives and situation-dispositives, major issues and central questions emerge tied to security – the security of belonging, emotional, affective, and psychological security, the security of undistorted personal integrity, the secure access to opportunities and resources like education, work, respect, and acknowledgement – as we have already underlined above. The theory and praxis of the performative and hybrid diaspora-concept, constitutive parts of post-modern, global societies, express in the Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan-corpora diverse

experiences of writers and migrants in general. The oscillation between difference and negotiation is a complex process that is rife with conflict. The degree of its complexity is made clear in light of this new concept of diaspora, which seeks at all costs to avoid the *clouding* of differences and conflicts within hybrid diaspora formations.

For this reason, we considered the performative/hybrid diaspora *to be a new form of economic, political, social, cultural and religious practice that do not consist primarily in a specific origin or with a particular form of government serving as its main reference. Furthermore it is independent from the number of members in, and the homogeneity of, any group, as well as independent from nostalgia or a longing to return – factors which no longer constitute a solid element of reality or primary objective.*

The concept and praxis of a performative and hybrid diaspora is also based on some particular characteristics. The following non-comprehensive list of features includes those that are not ethnic (or that are multi-ethnic) in nature. Here, the concept of ethnicity is not only understood in Hall's (1988/1996) sense of "*new ethnicity*" (which, in the context of my argumentation, is only one building aspect, one element among many others in the construction of performative/hybrid diasporas), but is also replaced by the term *sociocultural constellation*, since this is not as semantically, historically and culturally charged as the term "ethnicity."

The constituents of hybrid-performative-diaspora are:

1. Movement; de- and reterritorialization;
2. location in space and time;
3. identifiable structures;
4. awareness of being part of a diaspora, strong group interest;
5. similar experience of destiny;
6. similar life and emotional situations (unfulfilled yearning for home vs. a long-term locational project);
7. common forms of representation;
8. strong internal sense of loyalty and solidarity and external hybrid loyalty and solidarity;
9. transethnic, transcultural, transidentity;
10. reinvention of the self and invention of the homeland;
11. external assignments and internal description of the Self.

The advantage of this concept of diaspora is that it encompasses almost all of Cohen's (1997/2008) diaspora classifications, including the "victim diaspora," "work diaspora," "behavioral diaspora," and "deterritorialized diaspora" (those of the Post-Modernity and hybridity of the twentieth and twenty-



first centuries). In addition to the Franco-Maghrebian diaspora, it also encompasses the 'Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan' diasporas that Cohen did not describe.

In this dynamic context, we use the term 'diasporization,' or the concrete appearance of diaspora formations, situations, representations and practices, in the sense of diverse *stagings* or *performances* of social, cultural and religious manners of cohabitation. This provides alternative or supplementary models to the traditional concepts of 'nation,' 'culture,' 'identity' or 'citizenship.' These new alternatives are based neither on the binomial 'blood/land' nor on the "*prothèse d'origine*," nor on the *language prosthesis*, nor on citizenship, but rather on the result of a web of relationships and constellations, stagings, and performances (see Krämer/Stahlhut 2001: 45-47, 56; Fischer-Lichte 1998, 2004, 2004).

The terms '*staging*' and '*performance*' indicate a dynamic, nomadic, open, negotiated and contested representation of culture, identity and diaspora. They also indicate the *negotiated* and *contested reinventio* of themselves in an open and indeterminate process. For this reason, the performative-hybrid diaspora term is distinct from the traditional one. It develops on the basis of a *self-determined belonging* and an *emotion* or *feeling of belonging* on the one hand, and on external assignments on the other. It thus develops not only at the interfaces of cultures, but also between different subjects. This should be understood as an individual experience with a fragmented belonging and identity that is collected through the *body* and the *emotionality* of the individual, and not through citizenship. This experience is then a *conditio* for global society, in which individuals and groups live in a permanent state of tension between the nostalgia of origin and foreignness, new loyalties and group or situational conditions.

The hybrid-performative-diaspora concept implies not only new economic, political, and social formations, as already stated, but also a concept and practice in which the decisive and sole determining reference is no longer the local or legal belonging to any nation state, but rather the social diasporic constellation. The hybrid-performative-diaspora concept means a '*warping*' of traditional dichotomy constructions like 'oneness vs. otherness,' 'local vs. migrant culture,' old community vs. foreign or new community,' or 'national citizens vs. foreigners.' We are dealing with cultural, psychological, and emotional constructions that yield 'micro-home-networks.'

This concept of hybrid-performative-diaspora no longer considers migrants as such, nor are they seen as negative migrants, *expatrias*, persons without a homeland. Rather they are a part of a cosmopolitan, restless, and fragmented world. It develops ideas of social cohesion and belonging, of being anchored, and of new homes ('*Heimaten*'). However, we must make cle-

ar that we understand new hybrid-performative-diaspora also as *societies that constitute temporal and spatial limits within which identification or cohesion becomes traceable or visible and that has an existential function for individuals or groups, regardless of which characteristics these individuals or groups evince.*

The concept of cultural performance and the idea of a performative identity or of a performative diaspora do not imply alienation, rootlessness, or the impenetrability of history, amnesia, or the undecipherable. The concept of performativity and that of performative diaspora do not represent a threat to cultural patrimony or to the national state. Rather, they mean the reinvention of the Self: this is an indeterminate process in which the past performs both itself and the present through experience and emotion. It is a radical individual and democratic system spread by occidental politics, but also devoured by the national state and by citizenship. It is a performativity of time, place, and of the individual, in which the 'I' *invents and re-invents himself* incessantly because the individual cannot exist within a language, place, and time that are inaccessible to him (Derrida 1996: 117):

[...] he is denied any language, and he has no other possibility, neither the Arab, nor the Berber, nor the Hebrew, nor any other language that have spoken his ancestors, because this monolingualism is a kind of aphasia [...]. (Ibid.)<sup>12</sup>

## 1.2 'Hybrid-Performative-Identity'/'Transidentity'/'Transversal Identities'

In the context of post-modern and post-structural theory, I start from a type of 'multi-identity' or 'pluri-identity' that I have called in other essays 'transidentity' or 'transversal identity,' in the line of the term of transversality from Deleuze.<sup>13</sup> Here identity must always be renegotiated because, particularly

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12 [...] qu'il est privé de toute langue, et qu'il n'a plus d'autre recours, ni l'arabe, ni le berbère, ni l'hébreu, ni aucune des langues qu'auraient parlées des ancêtres, parce que ce monolinguisme est en quelque sorte aphasique [...]. (Derrida 1996: 117).

13 See also Wolfgang Iser here in the bibliography, and his theory of transversality from 1987 and particularly 1996, as well as his fundamental concepts of Identity/Subjectivity, like '*Vielheit*'/ 'Multiplicity' (1991: 357 following Nietzsche, term that also developed in philosophy by Deleuze/Guattari (1972/1973 and 1980), or like '*Differenzierungs-, Begrenzungs- und Übergangungsvermögen*'/'The capacity of differentiation, of delimitation and of crossing capability' (ibid.: 360; my translation); or like '*Identität in Übergängen*'/'Identity in passages; transversal identity constructions' (1990/<sup>5</sup>1998: 168 et seqq.; my translation); Alfonso de Toro, see bibliography and <http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~detoro/>; see Fernando de Toro (2003: 85 et seqq. and specially 90 et seqq. and 95 et seqq.).

in our age of globalization, it is located at the interface of cultures in contact with one another within a trans-territorial cartography (Bhabha 1994; A. de Toro 1995, 1999, 2009/2011, 2014a) that includes constant deterritorializations and reterritorializations in order to make the new place habitable and *cohabitable*. We also think identity as ‘différance,’ as ‘slide’ (*glissement*), as performance and staging, and as a hybrid phenomenon that imposes itself through the dynamic of life in a given anthropological situation.

In the following pages, I would like to contextualize my concept of a ‘performative-hybrid-Identity’ (see particularly A. de Toro 2009/2011, and bibliography) in the frame of the international, and particularly the German, discussion of identity and in the context of this paper.<sup>14</sup>

I will not enter into the superfluous and unproductive discussion of whether the term identity should be avoided because it has become obsolete as a bourgeois construction of traditional civic societies.<sup>15</sup> Nor will I discuss whether this term is archaic or a product of hegemonic ideology or whether it is a monolithic and ontological, positivist and teleological construction.

The sciences of psychology, sociology, and philosophy have long since demonstrated that something like a *pure identity* or homogeneous construction of identity have never existed in human history, and if we find them in large societies like nation states, they are the result of ideological nationalist constructions. Individuals do not have just one identity, rather the contrary is correct. Moreover, if we speak of hybrid identity or transidentity, we always work from a concept or idea of a specific identity. As a consequence,

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14 I would like to thank Dr. Sarah Moldenhauer (2015) who, in the context of her PhD-Thesis (*Kuba postmodern Denken. Identitätskonstruktionen in der schreibenden Praxis von Kubanerinnen während des período especial*), dedicated a chapter to new theories of identity coming from the Social Sciences, and made an important contribution to useful applications of it in cultural theory.

15 For example Helga Bilden (1998: 29): “I tend to avoid the term Identity, because it evokes again and again the uniform idea, the civic idea of identity in the pejorative sense of ‘bourgeois,’ which has been inserted into all our heads. But in order to understand, it is often necessary” (my translation; original version: “Ich neige dazu, den Begriff Identität möglichst zu meiden, weil das Einheitsdenken, die bürgerliche Identitätsvorstellung, die in unser aller Köpfen steckt, dadurch immer wieder evoziert wird. Aber zur Verständigung ist er oft nötig”); on the contrary, I follow the very productive work of Vaassen (1996:200 et seqq.) who conceives of identity as negotiation ‘*Aushandeln*’) and of Keupp, particularly from the late 1980s onwards; see bibliography and Keupp’s *et alii* (1999/2008) introduction about the stand of research in the field of identity; see Vaassen (1996: 200 et seqq.) who conceives identity as negotiation ‘*Aushandeln*’); see Welsch (1991,1999, 1990a/51998) and see A. de Toro (2002a, 2006, 2006a, 2009/2011, 2014a, 2015).

the ‘hybrid’ and the ‘trans’ are only applicable in relation to some concepts of identity and to what is apparently not hybrid.

The concept of ‘trans’ or of ‘hybrid’ means always a complementation to a given identity. Every being with a subjective consciousness has an identity, and the interesting question is how we, as individuals, deal with living in a nation state that contains large communities with *multiple cultural identities*, with different loyalties and references. Furthermore, what space do we allow the different Other in the arrival society in the context of the national culture and heritage discourses and of the Nation State.

Can we, in Europe, continue to speak of ‘our Nation,’ ‘our Culture,’ despite the presence of millions and millions of immigrants or citizens that were not born in, and do not even have a passport from the country of arrival, and are living in European countries in the third or fourth generation? We can hardly do so as is shown by the current and very critical political debate, at least in Germany, and the new waves of refugees since August 2015.

In several publications about hybridity in the sense of *differance*, I have defined and understood this term and strategy as the negotiation of difference, as a tensional oscillation in a space of conflicts and frictions.<sup>16</sup> Since the 1990s, I have insisted on and developed a concept of performative identity, based on concepts of hybridity, which is now a *locus communis* for many other scholars, for example Junge:

To the critical reservations belong current considerations that work from the assumption that precisely the assumed idea of the unity of the system of a personality under postmodern conditions can no longer be relied upon. At the latest, with the socio-theoretical and socio-philosophical arguments of Lyotard about the End of the Meta-Narrations, there has been a progressive tendency in the social theory no longer to work from the fictive assumption of a uniform/ homogeneous personality, but rather to understand the Self as a multiple Self, as an amalgam of a multifaceted Fragmented-Self [...] and thus to displace the concept of an uniform personality. (Junge 2010: 117-118; my translation)<sup>17</sup>

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16 See here similarly Reckwitz (2006: 88): “This Hybridity does not construct itself in a passive process of tradition, but in an active process of selective appropriation” (original version: “Diese Hybridität konstituiert sich nicht in einem passiven Prozess der Tradierung, sondern in einem aktiven Prozess der selektiven Aneignung”, my translation; and also de Toro’s concept of ‘*hybride Identität*,’ 2004 et seqq., specially 2014a, and Welsch 1987).

17 Zu den kritischen Vorbehalten gehören in der Gegenwart Überlegungen, die davon ausgehen, dass gerade die vorausgesetzte Idee der Einheit eines Persönlichkeits-systems unter postmodernen Bedingungen nicht mehr gewährleistet werden kann [...]. Spätestens seit der sozialtheoretischen und sozialphilosophischen Erörterun-

Or in Vaassen's (1996) enlightening work in which he also developed a concept of 'transversal' and 'performative identity:'

In the way in which a decentralized understanding of a person can become, for us, thinkable and 'lived,' a new concept of freedom and ethics can open [...]

The idea of an 'inner nucleus,' an instance that governs and controls the experience and behavior of a person, has itself epistemologically crystalized as untenable and as ever less socially 'lived,' for as the possibility of the delimitation is performed, the limits of the own person volatilize. The origins of actions can no longer be localized in preconceived structures of persons, but as narrative sequences that encompass the person (in their significance).

[...]

The topic of identity in this context of references with terms like person, I, Self, etc. [...] may have important consequences for Psychology and Social Sciences in general. (Vaassen 1996: 214, my translation)<sup>18</sup>

Particularly the contributions by Keupp (1999/<sup>4</sup>2008), who speaks of a 'patchwork Identity' in 'late Modernity' (I should say in 'Post-Modernity'; see Keupp 1988: 146) as well Gross' (1985: 78-81) theory of the 'tinker mentality' ('*Bastel-Mentalität*'); also quoted by Keupp 1988: 144) and the 'paradigm of the rag-rug' ('*Paradigma des Fleckerlteppichs*' (ibid.: 80));<sup>19</sup> also

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gen von Lyotard über das Ende der Meta-Erzählungen hat sich auch in der Sozialisationstheorie schrittweise eine Tendenz entfaltet, nicht mehr von der fiktiven Unterstellung einer einheitlichen Persönlichkeit auszugehen, sondern vielmehr das Selbst als ein multiples Selbst, als ein Amalgam vielfältiger Teil-Selbst [...] zu verstehen und insofern das Konzept der Einheitlichkeit einer Persönlichkeit beiseite zu legen. (Junge 2010: 117-118)

- 18 Insofar as a 'decentralized' understanding of the person and identity becomes thinkable and liveable, new concepts of freedom and ethics emerge [...]: Die Vorstellung eines 'inneren Kerns,' einer Instanz, die Erleben und Verhalten der Person steuert und kontrolliert, hat sich als epistemologisch unhaltbar und sozial immer weniger 'lebbar' erwiesen, denn in dem Maße, wie sich eine Entgrenzung der Möglichkeiten vollzieht, verflüchtigen sich die Grenzen der eigenen Person. Ursprünge von Handlungen lassen sich nun nicht mehr in entitativ verstandenen Strukturen von Personen lokalisieren, sondern in narrativen Sequenzen, die die Person (in ihrer Bedeutung) mitumgreifen.

[...]

Die Thematik der Identität in ihrem Verweisungszusammenhang mit Begriffen wie Person, Ich, Selbst usw. [...] [kann] maßgebliche Konsequenzen für die Psychologie und auch für die Sozialwissenschaften allgemein [haben]. (Vaassen 1996: 214)

- 19 The term I use is originally from Thomas Luckmann (1980). Gross uses the terms 'tinker mentality' ('*Bastel-Mentalität*') and the 'rag-rug' ('*Fleckerlteppich*') in his highly ideological, ranting article – crowded with clichés and half-digested theories

quoted by Keupp 1988: 145) or Vaassen's (1996: 211) 'Pastiche-Personality' ('*Pastiche-Persönlichkeit*') are fundamental to the concept of identity in my approach and coincide with my own positions. Keupp defines his term of the 'tinker identity' in a way similar to ours and following Lacan and Derrida, as a 'decentralized identity' ('*dezentralisierte Identität*') (Keupp 1988: 147); Vaassen (1996: 214; A. de Toro 1999 et seqq.). With the end, or with the change status, of Western logocentrism, and with it, of binaries; with the end, or with the change of status, of the meta-discourses or of messianic claims of truth; with the awareness of the Lacanian definition of the Self through a Third-Self-Instance, and with the awareness that every enunciation is an '*Entäußerung*,' (a 'relinquishing,') and that every discourse is part of a paralogical power structure (Lyotard, Foucault), societies develop in direction of a radical pluralism. The logical consequence of this development is that a conception of a homogenous Self and of an 'auto-defining identity' is impossible to formulate. Identities are in post-structural-deconstructionist, post-colonial and post-modern theory, a construction and a highly differentiated and complex system of relations (see Reckwitz 2001: 31, 32; A. de Toro 1999, 2004 et seqq.). In contrast to monolithic, populist and demagogical, political national discourses on nation, culture, history, identity, we have to be aware that all those concepts are also and always constructions and that they are submitted to the imperative of the local and temporal situation and of cultural performativity. In this context, the notions of nomadism and of the processing of identity construction, as for example Reckwitz understands them, are also important:

When identities are no longer understood as a dispositions structure, but as an interpretation of the Self, then for post-modernist authors it follows that the interpretation of the Self, and thus the assignment of specific meanings vis-à-vis the Self, no longer build a fixed structure, but represent a temporal problem, in that the meanings can continually slide and transform themselves. (Reckwitz 2001: 33, my translation)<sup>20</sup>

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of Post-Modernism – in a negative way. I see in those terms an adequate description and an expression of a highly developed society in terms of freedom and self-determination. Both terms can be seen as equivalent to the term of 'paralogy' of Lyotard (1983).

- 20 Wenn Identität nicht mehr als Dispositionsstruktur, sondern als Sinnverstehen des Selbst begriffen wird, dann ist für die postmodernistischen Autoren die Annahme konsequent, daß dieses Sinnverstehen, das heißt die Zuordnung bestimmter Bedeutungen gegenüber dem Selbst, keine fixe Struktur bildet, sondern einen zeitlichen Prozeß darstellt, in dem sich die Bedeutungen beständig verschieben und wandeln können. (Reckwitz 2001: 33)

identity – as already told – can never be, and has never been, something static, but rather in our age of Post-Modernity and globalization, it represents a radical dynamic construction. According to Reckwitz and, as we have already illustrated in other essays, and particularly according to Lacan, Derrida, and the Franco- and Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan authors, the dynamic of identity constructions consists in the fact that, on one hand, they are built by ‘*self-assignments*’ on the part of the Self, and on the other hand, by ‘*external assignments*’ coming from other Selves. This basic role of performativity, upon which we have always insisted in past years (A. de Toro 1999 et seqq.), has been now underlined in different contexts, particularly as an instrument against the binary and dichotomy construction of society and culture. In line with the formulations of, for example, Krämer/Stahlhut (2001: 55-56), performativity is in “a particular form of building a situation [...] in a medium of any kind of symbolic acts” (see *ibid.*: 45-47), or as Fischer-Lichte (2005: 236, 2004: 32) formulates, “the construction of cultural acts” or of “institutional and social relations.” We draw our concept of hybrid-performative-identity from the destabilization and overcoming of binary logic as a consequence of the Derridian deconstruction of logocentrism, from the Lyotardian collapsed meta-discourses, and from the Lacanian anthropological decentring of the Self.

If identity has always been basically and fundamentally built by different factors through self- and external-assignments, then identity is, in a globalized world and in the context of diasporic formations, in a very particular and determined way, the result of very different and often contradictory forms of individual and collective experiences of origin and new cultural experiences, and they are determined by the situation imperative or situation dispositive, which corresponds to Nünning’s statement:

Mutual consent seems, however, to reign concerning the circumstance that identity, unlike terms like ‘Self,’ ‘Personality,’ or ‘Character,’ already implies a relational term (something that can only be identical to something else), that is named is and located within a network of relations in which the respective constituting relations depend on the different facets of identities are generated: as transtemporal continuities, as transsituative consistencies, and as compensation for inner and external perspectives.

[...]

Thus, it follows that identity can neither be understood as a tangible static dimension [...] nor as simply given, but as the process of construction and revision of self-perception implemented by the individual subject at a point of intersection of

social interaction and individual biographies, which must be accomplished over and over again. (Nünning 2008: 306-307, my translation)<sup>21</sup>

And in this process – as we have already developed in other contexts (A. de Toro 1999 et seqq.) – the hybridization of identity may be more or less intentional and more or less conscious; yet, it happens, and happens permanently and independently, whether the individual wishes it to do so or not. Also Wieviorka underlines the constructivity of identity as that

[...] new identities are constructed from migration, often at the price of a considerable distance, identities that, still extant, revive the elements borrowed from tradition – they ‘tinker’ in the famous words of Claude Lévi-Strauss – but above all give birth to new faces of alterity. (Wieviorka 2001: 116, my translation)<sup>22</sup>

These “new faces of alterity” is what she calls the ‘*seconde figure de l’immigré*’ (ibid: 118).

Saurwein (1999: 9-27, here particularly 9) also shares the same position and refers explicitly to that which, once again, I denominate the situation-imperative or situation-dispositive when he affirms,

Collective identities can only be generated and contested through communication. Questions of identification [...] are questions of a prevalent social ‘definition of the situation.’ [...]

[...]

The term of the collective identity refers to the prevailing *Idea* that should prevail in a distinguishable communicative and action context that connects the different

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21 Einigkeit scheint jedoch bezüglich des Umstandes zu herrschen, dass Identität anders als Begriffe wie ‘Selbst’; ‘Persönlichkeit’ oder ‘Charakter,’ als relationaler Begriff (etwas kann nur identisch mit etwas sein) bereits impliziert, dass sich das Bezeichnete innerhalb eines Beziehungsgeflechtes situiert, wobei die hierfür konstitutiven Relationen je unterschiedliche Facetten von Identität aufscheinen lassen: als überzeitliche Kontinuität, als übersituative Konsistenz, wie auch als Abgleich von Innen- und Außenperspektive. Hieraus folgt, dass Identität weder als dinghafte, statische Größe [...] noch als einfach gegeben zu verstehen ist, sondern als der von der oder dem Einzelnen immer wieder zu bewerkstelligende, am Schnittpunkt von gesellschaftlicher Interaktion und individueller Biographie stattfindende Prozess der Konstruktion und Revision von Selbstbildern. (Nünning 2008: 306-307)

22 [...] se forment des identités nouvelles à partir de l’migration, au prix souvent d’un éloignement considérable, identités qui, là encore, reprennent des éléments empruntés à la tradition – ‘bricolent,’ selon le mot célèbre de Claude Lévi-Strauss – mais donnent surtout naissance à de nouvelles figures de l’altérité. (Wieviorka 2001: 116)



members [of a community/diaspora] through specific solidarity expectations. (Saurwein 1999: 9, my translation)<sup>23</sup>

This aspect of solidarity results from the constitution of the situation imperative or situation dispositive (and not of a particularly ethnos, but rather of a social group) as we have already worked out (A. de Toro 2014a: 11).

At this point, we cannot enter into the systematic description of the multiple socio-psychological effects and consequences of the theory of the “*différance*” of Derrida (1967, 1967a, 1972) or of the hospitality of Derrida (1977)/Levinas (1971/2008) in relation to the theory of Keupp’s ‘*Patchwork-Identity*’ and my concept of hybrid-performative-identity (A. de Toro 2009/<sup>2</sup>2011 et seqq.). The short panoramic view that I offered here should be sufficient, I hope, to follow what I mean by the term of ‘performative-hybrid-identity’ and its central role in the current cultural-social-political debate that is related to the new diasporas.

## 2. The case of the Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan Literature and Culture Studies

### 2.1 Some preliminary observations

It is no surprise that to this day – with some exceptions – Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literatures has enjoyed neither strong reader interest nor much academic attention in the field of literary criticism and cultural studies.

One can list many different reasons for this. On one hand, we see one century of dominance of Franco-Maghrebian literature, through which a considerable number of now internationally and globally renowned authors and masterpieces, supported by publishing houses in the Maghreb, but particularly in France and in Europe, have been brought to the forefront over the years.

Many of them have won multiple important literary awards and have been translated into other languages, particularly into German and English. This

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23 Kollektive Identitäten können nur kommunikativ erzeugt oder bestritten werden. Identitätsfragen betreffen [...] die Frage nach der sozial geltenden ‘Definition der Situation.’ [...] Der Begriff der kollektiven Identität bezieht sich auf Vorstellungen vom Gelten und Geltensollen eines unterscheidbaren Kommunikations- und Handlungszusammenhangs, der ihre Teilnehmer durch spezifische Solidaritätserwartungen verbindet. (Saurwein 1999: 9)

has opened access to journals and other media, and has drawn the attention of scholars. The final result has been a broad and diverse audience. Taken together, all this has created this literature's remarkable reputation.

In light of this situation, it is no wonder that Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature has been relegated to a peripheral and niche position, not only because of the dominance of Franco-Maghrebian literature, but also because Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature seems to have no such reputation in Spain itself. To this day, it takes enormous effort and is a true adventure to procure these books, which are printed in small numbers and tend to go out of print quickly (see Vera 2000; Lomas López 2011). In many cases, the books' imprints indicate that the authors must often finance their own publications. In addition to all this, we must also note the relatively small number of academic publications concerning the Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature, although this situation has been changing rapidly since the late 1990s.

What we really see continuously is a great deal of good information only, a large number of publications by journalists, and many important anthologies (although these are not always available) with orientating introductions. These text fragments may be unfit substitutes for comprehensive texts, but they are helpful and invaluable given the circumstances. Many conferences and publications on the topic of Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature have also been organized and edited.<sup>24</sup>

Because of the difficulty finding academic publications in common international bibliography databases, it is difficult to get an overview of where the focus of research is placed at the moment. Some informative bibliographies from different origins contribute to the building of the academic field, which we find in e.g. *Crítica literatura marroquí*.

The Iberian Peninsula without a doubt produces the majority of criticism on Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature and culture, but some important publications also come from the U.S. Here, Cristián H. Ricci has played a considerable role in the development of criticism. In addition, some contributions have also come from Switzerland, the Netherlands and Germany.

In the German context, post-colonial and culture studies are essential. These have been established in Hispanic research since 1990 at the latest (A. de Toro 1995). Furthermore, in the context of the Franco-Maghrebian Literature in Post-Colonial studies, without forgetting that of France and other places of the francophone world (e.g. Walters 2003; Bonn 2005; Gauch 2007; Miragli 2007; A. de Toro 2008, 2009/2011; Rosello 2009; Cheref 2010;

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24 See the PhD of Yasmina El Haddad (2013).

Barclay 2011; Pears 2001), important texts had already been published in the late 1990s and 2000, thereby also helping to prepare the field. But at the same time, in the context of Hispanic cultural studies, we find some publications on post-colonialism and Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature (s. here Campoy 2011: 67-74; Ricci 2014: 95-130), a field, like post-colonial studies, that Spanish academia (but not only this group) have completely neglected. Until now, this approach has been confronted with remarkable ideologically motivated prejudices. In any case, the current Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature has its place partially beyond Post-Colonialism and is to be placed in the frame of what I understood as ‘Post-Coloniality,’<sup>25</sup> and the ‘hybrid-performative-diaspora as it results from diasporasing situations, dispositive situations, or imperative situations, as we will see later. Importantly, I do not use the terms ‘periphery,’ ‘border’ or ‘*orilla*’ in the traditional context of culture theory in the sense of marginalization. Rather, since 1999, I use it in the sense of an *epistemological place of enunciation*, of a laboratory, of a *subversive and innovative as well powerful production* at the *interfaces of cultures, thinking, traditions, and writing* in the context of hybrid processes – not only in the sense of negotiation of Homi Bhabha and Gómez Peña, but also in the sense of epistemological strategies. In this sense, my terminology has little, or nothing, to do with that of ‘*literatura periférica*’ or ‘*modernidades periféricas*’ or ‘*heterogéneas*’ in the context of Latin American cultural theory (see A. de Toro 1999, 2002-2002a and following publications up to 2008 and 2009/2011), and has not really much to do with the term ‘*orilla*’ as it has been used in current Hispano-Maghrebian criticism.

In consequence, the texts that we will analyze in the context of this essay are of a different kind of enunciation and we do not classify them normatively. We are interested only in their productivity and in the epistemological-cultural results for the description of that which we call ‘new hybrid-performative-diaspora or identities’.

## 2.2 Creating and constructing the field: some important literary references

### 2.2.1 Literary texts

Here is not the right place for a systematic, and even less for an exhaustive, survey on the origin, development, and current situation of Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature and studies. However, we want to dedicate

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25 About this concept and theory see below.

some lines to a brief survey and some moments of this remarkable literature, referring at the same time to the bibliography in order to give some information about, of course only a part of what has been published, but also especially about some useful sources.

We are not getting into the (from my point of view) superfluous discussion of whether we can talk about a genuine Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan (or Hispano-Maghrebian') literature. This is a discussion that is charged largely by colonial and neo-colonial ideology, by different interests and norms, like the high or low/poor quality of literary production, which reminds me of the introductory normative observations of Harald Bloom (1994 /<sup>2</sup>1995), discussions that have been carried out in the context of Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan (Hispano-Maghrebian) literature particularly by Madariaga (01.10.2007) following the tirades of Driss Jebrouni (2007) in a debate with Mohamed Lahchiri (2007). For me, the only important aspect is the fact that different texts appear on the academic market and in the cultural arena, and that they are generating an important public discussion. And the form of publications at the beginning of an author's career is so laborious and unproductive to discuss, that it is better not to do so.

In spite of all that, at the end of the 1970s, we find a text by Pedro Martínez Montávez, *Nuevos Cantos Árabes A Granada* (1979) and in the 1980s, a large number of texts were published, of which I would like to mention *Del Atlas al Tigris: relatos árabes de hoy*, published by Mayid Al-Rubay'i, Abdel-Rahmán et alii (1985), the *Antología de relatos marroquíes en lengua Española*, published by Mohamed Chakor (1985 ff.), and Tomás García Figueras et alii's, *Cuentos de Yehá. Sevilla* (1989).

In the 1990s, we have an impressive production of texts, e.g., those of Mohamend Sibari's *El Caballo* (1993), who also edits the *Judería de Tetuán* (1994) and publishes *Sidi Baba* (1999), or Lourdes Ortíz's *Fátima de los Naufragios* (1998), or the anthology edited by Jacinto López Gorgé, *Nueva Antología de relatos marroquíes* (1999), *Intramuros* by Mohamed Bouissef Rekab, also from 1999, and Rachid Nini (1999) *Diario de un ilegal*.

In the 2000s, we really see an explosion of publications, of which we only want to mention a few that we find representative for the purpose of this essay. The first to be mentioned is Nieves García Benito's *Al-Yazar. Por la vía de Tarifa* (2000), followed by Mohamed Sibari, who edited two compilations of short stories, and as well his own *Relatos de las Hespérid* (2000) and *Relatos del hammam* (2001) and *Pinchos y divorcios* (2002), another two compilations, *El Babuchazo* (2005) and *De Larache al cielo* (2006). Another very productive writer is Said Jedidi, who published *Grito primal* (2001), *Autodeterminación de invernadero* (2002), *Precintado* (2005), and *Yamma o memoria íntima* (2006), but also the work *El dédalo de Abdelkrim*

by Mohamed Bouissef Rekab (2002) must also be mentioned. In the same year, we have the film on the representation of migration and 'identity' in Spain, *Poniente. Guión cinematográfico* by Chus Gutiérrez (2002).

The period 2003-2004 is one of the most productive, and during this time some of the most striking texts for the constitution of a Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature were published, supporting its international breakthrough. These texts include Mohamed Akalay's collective work *Entre dos mundos* (2003), followed by another compilation, *Entre Tánger y Larache* (2006), and Larbi El Harti's *Después de Tánger* (2003; Premio Sial de Narrativa 2002), Abderrahman El Fathi's *Primavera en Ramallah y Bagdad* (2003) and *Desde la Otra Orilla* (2004), as well as Antonio Lozano's *Donde mueren los ríos* (2003). In 2004, Mohamed Lahchiri edited the *Cuentos ceutíes*, and two years later *Una tumbita en Sidi Embarek y otros cuentos ceutíes* (2006); also in 2004 follows Mohamed Lemrini El-Ouahhabi's *Viaje al pasado* and Marta Cerezales et alii's remarkable anthology, *Puerta de los vientos. Narradores marroquíes contemporáneos* (2004). In the same year, Najat El Hachmi published *Jo també sóc catalana* (2004), and four years later she published two more texts, the short story 'L'home que nedava' (2008: 23-32), and a novel in Catalan and Spanish, which would transform her into an international star and would contribute as no other text to the visibility of Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature, *El último patriarca/L'últim patriarca* (2008; Spanish 2011; for this novel she received the Ramon Llull Award in 2008), and one of her last texts is *La cazadora de coscos* (2011), *La cazadora de cuerpos*. Other significant texts are that of Laila Karrouch, *De Nador a Vic* (2004), and Sara Alauí's *Sólo mujer* (2005).

The year 2006 is an interesting period with regard to Laila Karrouch's *Un meravellós llibre de contes àrabs per a nens i nenes*, and Mohamed Bouissef Rekab's *El Motín del Silencio*. In the same year, he published *La señora* and a year later (2007) *Aixa, el cielo de Pandora*, which had been preceded by the influential anthology by José Monléon, *Cuentos de las dos orillas II* (2006) and by Angela Vallery's *Cruce de civilizaciones* (2006), as well as by Carmelo Pérez Beltrán's, *Entre las dos orillas. Literatura marroquí en lengua española* (2007), which included numerous outstanding writers with very diverse texts. Also to be mentioned are texts by Rachida Gharrafi, "Cartas al estrecho" (2007), "El sacrificio de los corderos" (2007), as well as by Mohamed Chakor, "El menor" (2007a) and in the same year "Las dos orillas, el mar y la muerte."

In addition to the texts by Najat El Hachmi, we count among the major anthologies from the year 2008 *El llibre de La Marató. El llibre de la Marató. Vuit relats contra les malalties mentals greus* and Manuel Gahete Jurado's *Calle del agua. Antología contemporánea de Literatura Hispanomagebrí*, followed

by Ahm Oubali's *Chivos expiatorios y otros relatos* (2009), Salah Jamal's *Aroma Arabe. Recetas y relatos* (2011) and Cristián Ricci's anthology *Letras Marruecas. Antología de escritores marroquíes en Castell-ano* (2012).

### 2.2.2 Literary Criticism

Of course, the thematic boundaries of many of these texts are not static, and many of them also consider other fields. There are many diverse topics, such as that of Moroccan women (Amo 2000; Pears 2001; Walters 2003; Miraglia 2007; Cheref 2010), the question of the existence of post-colonialism in the Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature, and the question of the existence of a genuine Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature, etc.

In the field of Islam, prominent publications include those by Abdellah Djbilou (1986, 2007), who deals with visions of the Orient in different cultural contexts and societies; that of Mohamed Chakor (1989), who deals with characteristic of Islamic culture; or that of Darcy A. Zabel (2006) on the Arab diaspora in the Americas; followed by Daniela Flesler (2008) with the polemic theme of 'the return of the Moor', related to the issue of Moroccan migration. In the same year, a prominent bibliography was published with the title: *Mil y un Libro. Para asomarse al mundo arabe 09* with a important list of books compiled on one hundred and twenty-five pages covering all relevant themes within the subject.

It is evident that the Moroccan literature in Spanish or 'of Spanish expression' mostly deals with migration, diaspora, and 'identity' and is related particularly to literature. But in recent years, we have seen some special publications that treat the migration issue in a transdisciplinary way and from the perspective of the social sciences, such as those of Irene Andrés-Suárez et alii (2002) and (2004) published in Vervum and Ana Rueda's compilation from 2010, in which she makes a helpful panoramic introduction and considers a large number of literary texts, which has won her broad reception and dissemination. A text in which migration and racism are considered together is that by Beatriz Celaya-Carrillo (2011), and it takes as its starting point Najat El Hachmi's novel *L'últim patriarca* (2008), which would go on to be the object of several publications such as the ones by Ricci (2010) or Ingeneschay (2011).

But the largest field of research is concentrated on literature. Here, many publications focus on the problem of the status and denomination of this new literature, on whether there is a genuine Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature or not, and whether or not the concepts are borrowed from the Francophone Moroccan literary criticism such as '*literatura marroquí en español/en castellano/de expresión española,*' as we already pointed out.

In the link of *Crítica*, we determine that, starting in the early 1990s, there is production of literary criticism on Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature: Chakor/López (1985), Chakor (1987), Chakor/Macías (1996). But it is only in the new millennium that we have a significant growing number of publications, such as the much quoted collective work of Aziz Tazi (2004) followed by Mohamed Bouissef Rekab's esteemed and much discussed essay "*Escritores marroquíes de expresión Española*" (2005) and Gonzalo Fernández Parrilla's (2005, 2005a, 2006) essay about cultural relations and contemporary Moroccan literature and novels. The most productive scholar in this field is – as already stated – without doubt Cristián H. Ricci who, from 2006 until 2015, covered numerous themes and authors. He is thus the scholar who has contributed most impressively to establishing serious literary criticism in the field of Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan literature not only by offering some panoramic introductions but particularly by caring about, dealing with, and considering issues such as 'identity' (particularly an Amazigh-Catalan identity in Najat El Hachim's *L'Ultim Patriaca*), post-colonialism, post-modernity (which he calls 'transmodernity,' following the terminology of Latin American culture theory), periphery literature/culture (a term that also comes from Latin American cultural theory), migration, hybridity, problems of 'Orientalism,' etc. (see also A. de Toro 2006, 2010, 2012, 2012a, 2014a; see also Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo 2011, 2012).

Other publications that deal with the status of what this new literature is and how to denominate it are divided into pro and contra positions. – e.g., the proposition of Mohamed Lahchiri (2007) and the contra position in the polemic contribution by Driss Jebrouni (2007), who provoked a heated discussion that was taken up by the well-known historian María Rosa Madariaga (2007).

Other contributions are dedicated to the gaze of Western critique on Oriental culture and a comparison between Spain and Morocco by Carla Fibla García-Sala (2005) and Gonzalo Fernández Parrilla 2005 and 2005a or such as the texts by María Victoria Alberola Fioravanti/Juan Manuel Vizcaíno Plaza (2006), by Abdellah Djbilou (2007), and by Max Doppelbauer/Stephanie Fleischmann (2011). A long list of books of literary criticism that was published in 2008 has already been referenced above, *Mil y un Libro*, as was an eighty-page compilation of literary texts, *Acercarse a la Literatura marroquí en Español*.

The literary criticism becomes more specialized in 2010, and we find some comparative studies on Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan and Sahraoui literature, e.g., from Enrique Lomas López (2011); or on Moroccan literature written both in Catalan and Spanish, by Roselia Ekhause (2012); and some publications about the relationship Islam-Maghreb-Spain, e.g., that by Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo (2012).



### 3. The Construction of ‘Hybrid-Performative-Diaspora’ and ‘Identity’ in Najat El Hachmi’s *L’Ultim patriarca* and *Jo també sóc catalana*

#### 3.1 *L’Ultim Patriarca*

This is not the place to enter into an academic discussion of the different interpretations of this novel. My interest in this part of my article is exclusively to describe, to analyze and to interpret a new form of hybrid-performative-diaspora and identities in this text by El Hachmi.

Several central aspects of El Hachmi’s *L’Ultim Patriarca*, like religion, the identity of an Afro-European modern woman, some acceptable and some hypothetical and highly speculative intertextual relations, and particularly the central aspects of sexuality, violence, and oppression have already been described i.a. by Cristián H. Ricci (2010: 71-91). Moreover, following the interpretation of Ricci, much relevant content has been fleshed out by Ingeneschay (2011: 57-70; see also Cramer 2014; Celaya-Carillo 2011).<sup>26</sup>

El Hachmi’s *L’Ultim Patriarca* is a wonderful example of my theory of performative and hybrid constructions of identities and diaspora, a theory that is definitely a product of the new social processes and of this new literature coming not from the Franco-Maghrebian, but from the Ibero-American-Maghrebian-Moroccan context.

We want to describe these concepts on the basis of the two major characters, Mimoun Driouch, also referred to by the Spanish name Manel, the father, ironically called the ‘Patriarch,’ and his nameless daughter,<sup>27</sup> at the same time the narrator of the story, and who we are calling the ‘daughter-narrator’;<sup>28</sup> both will be at the center of our considerations.

26 It is surprising that no scholar mentions the tremendous literary influence of García Márquez in the literary style of El Hachmi and the adoption of some strategies of the magic realism.

27 All members of the family, e.g. her brothers, with the exception of the mother, called Mila, are simply mentioned as “my brother” or “my uncle,” “my grandfather,” “my grandmother,” “my aunt,” etc.)

28 Because we have to do with a novel, with a fiction, and not with an autobiography, we do not consider equivalent the ‘daughter-narrator’ and the author of the novel El Hachmi, and this in spite of diverse autobiographic elements that are known in internet or deduced from the essay *Jo també sóc catalana*. This is also because I do not know the biography of the author and because at latest, since the structural semiotics (e.g. Doležel 1980, 1985, 1988), it becomes obvious that even the utilization of real names in fiction have to be considered as fictional. El Hachmi herself wants



Emotion is a central aspect that dominates Mimoun as the ‘daughter-narrator.’ But as we shall see, emotion is in most cases by Mimoun/Manel a destructive force, for himself and for the others members of the family, and is mostly accompanied by violence, brutality and suffering. Emotion is for the ‘daughter-narrator,’ on the contrary, a source of knowledge, experience, self-discovery and the self-identification process. In this context of ‘auto-assignments’ or ‘self-reinvention’, and its opposite, the ‘external assignments’, we find the highly discriminating and racist term of ‘*moro*’ in which it inscribes on the one side historical processes of colonization, and decolonization, that have been deconstructed in the frame of ‘Post-Coloniality’ strategies. On the other side, this term is located at the interfaces between racism and the overcoming of racism. It is a structure of cultural and social translation and becomes the status of a ‘hybrid-figure,’ as a ‘border-category,’ and as a productive strategy. We have the Hispanic tradition and the gaze on the ‘*moros*’ and its deconstruction. In this sense this novel is to be considered partly as ‘Post-Colonial,’ but in the sense of ‘Post-Coloniality’ (A. de Toro 1995, 1996, 1999), as a new form of cultural pluralistic and international dialogue between the periphery and the center, between social and gender, religious and political minorities. This conception of ‘Post-Coloniality’ surpassed the traditional binary oppositions. ‘Post-Coloniality’ as part of ‘Post-Modernity’ (ibid.) is rather transtextual and transcultural deconstructionist thinking that has the capacity of re-codifies and decentred history. It is a system of both subjective and of radical particularity and diversity. Post-Coloniality is not exclusionary, rather, it includes multidimensionality, the interaction of diverse codified series of knowledge and experiences, which is ultimately capable of unmasking that which, in Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism, have been established as power and traditions, as *the* history, as *the* irrefutable truth, as something contradictory and irregular, as plural and multiple.

The ‘daughter-narrator’ decolonizes herself from her own cultural tradition, as Khatibi and Sansal demand an auto-decolonization<sup>29</sup> and that means in

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evidently to avoid this equivalence thereby she does not give a name to her narrator. Considering my essay from 2014 on Frida Kahlo, we prefer to speak, following Barthes’ (1980: 54) of ‘bio-graphemes’ for the simple reason that the real name, or the person, is the product of a linguistic performance. It is transformed in language. We have to do with this very evident phenomenon that Magritte embraces in his painting “La trahison des images,” (*‘Ceci n’est pas une pipe’*). Finally El Hachmi underlines the hybrid status of the text, the oscillation between real fragments and fiction in *Jo també sóc catalana*:

És per això que aquest llibre es perfila com una espècie d’hibrid transgenèric: unes memòries que no són ben bé memòries, experiències reals que semblen fictícies i un component d’anàlisi d’aquest relat vivencial que no és ben bé assaig. (El Hachmi 2008: 13)

29 C’est pourquoi lorsque nous dialoguons avec des pensées occidentales de la différence (celle de Nietzsche, de Heidegger, et parmi nos contemporains proches,

our case to break free from her father's authority, despotism, violence and surveillance, and to become a 'normal' woman with civic rights.

The performativity of diaspora we find in the behavior of Mimoun/Manel who, contrary to his uncle, that receives him at his arriving for the first time in the Vic, near Barcelona, arrives without a project of return. Mimoun/Manel is a commuter between two worlds: Spain and Morocco. He travels five times between the two continents in a period of more than ten years. He is, as well as the 'daughter-narrator,' primarily determined by the specific situation and constellation that he finds in his new work and social context, in his new 'home,' where he, in a way, gains a freedom and a liberty from his father, the real patriarch, and from all the social and cultural pressures and expectations of his clan. Now he accepts and enjoys his freedom and sexual privileges; he adapts, as well as the 'daughter-narrator,' to that we have called situation imperative or situation dispositive. Now both develop, unlike the mother who never learned to speak Spanish, a nomadic and hybrid life with two references: in Spain and in Morocco. Hybridity and nomadism are now performed at the interfaces of both worlds as *unhomely home*.

### 3.1.1 The Deconstruction and Overcoming of the Patriarch figure

Performativity and hybridism are present even in the title of the novel *L'Ultim patriarca*, as the word '*patriarca*' both insinuates and denotes power, authority, respect, and innovation: the exact opposite of what Mimoun/Manel represents. The first name 'Mimoun' is highly ironic and derisive, both because it is usually a first name given to young boys, and because it is a very common name for peasants. Moreover the name has no particular meaning (El Khayat 2006: 165). What's more, it contrasts with 'Mimouna,' the feminine version, which means "she who is certain of her victory" (ibid.: 79; original version: "*celle qui est assurée de la victoire*"; see more below).

Let us remember that the etymological meaning of the term *patriarca* in Greek πατριάρχης (*patriarchēs*) means 'chief or father of a family,' as the result of two sub-terms: πατρία (*patria*), in the sense of 'family,' and ἄρχειν (*archein*), in the sense of 'to rule' or 'the rule.' Under Roman

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celle de Maurice Blanchot et de Jacques Derrida), nous prenons en compte non seulement leur style de pensée, mais aussi leur stratégie et leur machinerie de guerre, afin de les mettre au service de notre combat qui est, forcément, une autre conjuration de l'esprit, exigeant une décolonisation effective, une pensée concrète de la différence.

[...]

Se décoloniser serait l'autre nom de cette pensée-autre. (Khatibi 1983: 20; 51)

Se 'débarasser [...] de [ces] complexes de colonisé colonisateur et [à] mettre [le]patrimoine linguistique à la portée de tous.' (Sansal 2006: 42)

law, the patriarch was the *pater familias*, equipped with numerous rights, powers, and privileges. He was the chief of the whole family-clan. This structure is comparable to some Magrebian family traditions, where the father-patriarch is responsible for social organization, and especially for maintaining and sustaining the family. Thus, he represents *the* authority, as he privileges the male line.

But from the start, Mimoun/Manel is very far from embodying these attributes. His life is a failure; he is a loser and an underdog. He was beaten by his father at six months old, he murdered his younger brother (a baby) at seven, and he was assaulted by a relative at twelve. He further suffered epileptic attacks and he dropped out of school. His life as an adult in Barcelona is more or less the continuation of his failed youth. He becomes addicted to alcohol and uses violence excessively. He is not the ultimate patriarch at all and never resembled one. Here, we see the ironic distance of the ‘daughter-narrator’ to the patriarch construction: Mimoun/Manel is a highly deformed and paradoxical patriarch: he has a disturbed personality and an inclination to pedophilia in his relationship with his daughter (2008: 216). The title of the novel, with its calculated irony, represents the first break with Moroccan family tradition.

For the ‘daughter-narrator,’ irony and paradox are two instruments of liberation. Irony is executed in repetition and emphasis, and in the utilization of constant iteration. The paradox here is built by the traditional, nearly mythical, idea of the patriarch’s concept and its erosion in the person of Mimoun. With these tools, the ‘daughter-narrator’ renders the term and the idea of a patriarch obsolete. Many of the very violent passages are described with extreme irony: The description of the slap that Mimoun receives from his father as a child is always given in an iterative mode, creating a comic or droll situation.

I would like to demonstrate this ironic and deconstructive strategy in two series, calling the first one the ‘*slap-plaf!*-series’ and the second the ‘*patriarch*-series.’

#### A) The ‘*slap-plaf!*-series’

Mimoun va rebre la seva primera bufetada als sis mesos. Plaf, va sonar, sorda. La mà que s’hi havia encastat amb prou feines havia tingut prou superfície on estavellarse, però de totes maneres havia sonat així, plaf, sorda. (El Hachmi 2008: 15)

[...]

Deixant de banda l’incident de la bufetada, plaf! (Ibid.: 19)

Sobretot després de l’incident de la bufetada, plaf!

[...] a causa de l’incident de la bufetada, plaf! (Ibid.: 24f.)

[...] I si la teoria de l'àvia per explicar la manera com era el seu fill era la de la bufetada, plaf! (Ibid.: 32)

[...] Probablement va vendre alguna conilla per evitar aquells crits horribles que li recordaven sempre la bufetada, plaf, ben sorda. (40) [...] encara que tot fos per culpa de la bufetada que havia sonat, plaf! (Ibid.: 136)<sup>30</sup>

The slap is for Mimoun's mother one of the main sources of her son's many psychological problems. However, the iterative mention of the slap as a justification for his inexcusable behavior in situations in which Mimoun has lost control and becomes extremely violent, loses its convincing function and reverts to the contrary, e.g., to comedy and ridicule. Mimoun's violence and lack of control is out of proportion with the slap that he received at six months of age, and his behavior delegitimizes it.

## B) The 'patriarch-series'

- (1) És la seva història i la història de l'últim dels grans patriarques que formen la llarga cadena dels avantpassats de Driouch. Cadascun d'ells havia viscut, actuat i influïen la vida de tots els que els envoltaven amb la fermesa de les grans figures bíbliques. De com es forma un gran patriarca o un patriarca mediocre en sabem poques coses [...] d'aquest tipus d'ordre social, que ha existit des de sempre i encara avui perdura. [...] El fet és que Mimoun marca la finalització abrupta d'aquesta línia successòria. Cap més fill seu no s'identificarà amb l'autoritat que el precedia ni intentarà reproduir els mateixos esquemes discriminatoris i dictatorials. (El Hachmi 2008: 7)
- (2) I així va ser. Aquell dia va néixer Mimoun, l'afortunat, el que tindria l'honor de cloure les generacions i generacions de patriarques destinats a fer del món un lloc ordenat i decent. Amb ell s'acabaria per sempre més la condemna del patriarcat. (Ibid.: 14)
- (3) Així fou com el gran patriarca va poder conèixer la mare. (Ibid.: 61)
- (4) I tot i ser l'últim gran patriarca, no podem deixar d'imaginar-nos-el atemorit allà a la coberta del ferri, aferrat amb força a la barana sense atrevir-se a mirar el mar. (Ibid.: 76f.)

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30 Mimoun recibió su primera bofetada a los seis meses. Plaf. soñó, sorda. la mano que se había encastrado a duras penas había tenido superficie donde estrellarse, pero de todas formas había soñado así, plaf, sorda (El Hachmi 2008a: 15) [...] Dejando a un lado el incidente de la bofetada, ¡plaf! (Ibid.: 19) Todo tras el incidente de la bofetada, ¡plaf! (Ibid.: 20) [...] a causa del incidente de la bofetada, ¡plaf! (Ibid.: 24) Y si la teoría de la abuela para explicar el carácter de su hijo era la bofetada, ¡plaf! (El Hachmi 2008a: 32) Es probable que vendiera alguna coneja para evitar aquellos gritos horribles que le recordaban siempre la bofetada. (Ibid.: 41) [...] aunque fuera por culpa de la bofetada que soñó, ¡plaf! (Ibid.: 140)

- (5) Mimoun devia estar mig atemorit i mig emocionat de tantes coses noves, tot i que hauria d'acabar sent l'últim gran patriarca. (Ibid.: 82)
- (6) Però el Manel tenia aquella mena d'instint de caçador que han de tenir per força els que están destinats a ser grans patriarques i no entenia que no era no. (Ibid.: 91)
- (7) [...] perquè al gran patriarca se l'ha vist poques vegades penedit de debò [...]. (Ibid.: 98)
- (8) Era així com Mimoun aconseguia sempre que les dones de la seva vida l'anessin convertint en patriarca. (Ibid.: 99)
- (9) Mimoun pegava [a seva dona] cada vegada més fort (ibid.: 111) [...] i Mimoun no parava de repetir que li havia de fer cas en tot el que li digués, en tot. La mare es va estar no se sap quants dies amb les cames plenes de morats que no podia ni caminar [...] (ibid.: 112). Des que havia passat tot allò, que la mare ja se sabia del tot domesticada i el gran patriarca va començar a exercir com a tal. (116)
- (10) Sí que és cert que el que seria el gran patriarca va anar a para una nit a sota la pedra antiga del pont romànic [...]. (Ibid.: 128)
- (11) Així va ser que el gran patriarca, que encara no l'era del tot, es va veure entrant al pis del carrer de la Gelada, un pis tan atrotinat com el primer, però allunyat de tantes pudors de riu i adoberies. (Ibid.: 129)
- (12) La qualitat de vida del gran patriarca va millorar molt a partir de conèixer Jaume [...]. (El Hachmi 2008: 131)
- (13) Tota nava com havia d'anar. Fins que el gran patriarca es va acostar a les noies que estaven rentant els melons en una palangana [...] tant era el motiu del comportament del gran patriarca. (Ibid.: 136)
- (14) El gran patriarca, però, encara es va especialitzar més. (Ibid.: 143)
- (15) I a l'altra banda de l'estret el patriarca se sentia mig content i mig enfurismat per tenir una filla que no era seva o que no podia assegurar que ho fos. (Ibid.: 148)
- (16) Mimoun va deixar hibernant la seva tasca de gran patriarca, només volia oblidar-ho tot, desfer la maleta definitivament. Ho intentava anant al llit amb tantes dones com podia [...]. (Ibid.: 156)
- (17) Jo era la seva preferida, la niñeta dels seus ulls [...]. Un marge de llibertat que no solen tenir les dones i de què jo gaudia sense precedents en la successió de patriarcats. (Ibid.: 182)
- (18) [...] havia nascut per fer de gran patriarca. (Ibid.: 249)
- (19) [...] o era que començava a teixir el camí cap a l'enderrocament definitiu del patriarcat. (El Hachmi 2008: 303)<sup>31</sup>

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31 (1) Es su historia y es la historia del último de los grandes patriarcas que forman la larga cadena de antepasados de los Driouch [...] Casa uno de ellos vivió, actuó e influyó en la vida de todos lo que lo rodearon con la firmeza de las grandes figuras bíblicas. Sabemos poco acerca de cómo se forma un gran patriarca o un patriarca mediocre [...] este tipo de orden social, que ha existido desde siempre y que aún hoy perdura. [...] El hecho es que Mimoun marca la finalización abrupta de esta línea sucesoria. Ningún otro hijo suyo se identificará con la autoridad que lo precedía ni intentará reproducir los mismos esquemas discriminatorios y dictatoriales (El Hachmi 2008a: 7)

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- (2) Y así fue. Aquel día nació Mimoun, el afortunado, el que tendría el honor de luir las generaciones y generaciones de patriarcas destinados a hacer del o un lugar ordenando y decente. Con él se acabaría para siempre la condena patriarcado. (Ibid.: 14)
  - (3) Así fue como el gran patriarca pudo conocer a madre. (Ibid.: 63)
  - (4) Y a pesar de ser el último gran patriarca, no podemos dejar de imaginarlo atemorizado en la cubierta del ferry, aferrado a la barandilla sin atreverse siquiera a mirar al mar. (Ibid.: 79)
  - (5) Mimoun debía de estar medio atemorizado y medio emocionado por tantas cosas nuevas, a pesar de que acabaría siendo el último gran patriarca. (Ibid.: 86)
  - (6) Pero Manel tenía esa especie de instinto de cazador que a la fuerza deben tener los que están destinados a ser grandes patriarcas y no entendía lo que era un no. (Ibid.: 95)
  - (7) [...] porque al gran patriarca pocas veces se le ha visto arrepentido de verdad. (Ibid.: 102)
  - (8) Así era como Mimoun conseguía siempre que las mujeres de su vida le fuesen convirtiendo en patriarca. (Ibid.: 103)
  - (9) Mimoun le pegaba [a su mujer] cada vez más fuerte [...] y Mimoun no paraba de repetir que le tenía que hacer caso en todo lo que le dijera, en todo. Madre se pasó no se sabe cuántos días con las piernas tan llenas de moretones que no podía ni caminar [...]. Desde que sucedió todo aquello madre ya se supo del todo domesticada y el gran patriarca empezó a ejercer como tal. (El Hachmi 2008a: 120).
  - (10) Sí que es cierto que el sería el gran patriarca fie a parar una noche debajo de las antiguas piedras del puente románico. (Ibid.: 132)
  - (11) Así fue cómo el gran patriarca, que todavía no lo era del todo, se vio entrando en el piso de la Gelada, un piso tan deteriorado como el primero, pero lejos de las pestilencias del río y de los curtidores. (Ibid.: 133)
  - (12) La calidad de viuda del patriarca mejoró mucho desde que conoció a Jaume [...]. (Ibid.: 136)
  - (13) Todo iba como es debido. Hasta que el gran patriarca se acercó a las chicas que estaban levantando los melones [...] tanto daba el comportamiento del gran patriarca. (Ibid. 140)
  - (14) Pero el gran patriarca se especializó más. (Ibid.: 147)
  - (15) Al otro lado del estrecho el patriarca se sentía medio contento y medio enfurecido por tener una hija que no era suya o que no podía asegurar que lo fuera. (Ibid.: 152)
  - (16) Mimoun dejó hibernando sus funciones de gran patriarca, que quería olvidarlo todo, deshacer la maleta definitivamente. Lo intentaba encamándose con tantas mujeres. (El hachmi 2008a: 160)
  - (17) Yo era su preferida, la niña de sus ojos [...] Un margen de libertad que no acostumbra a tener las mujeres y del que yo gozaba, algo sin precedentes en la sucesión de patriarcados. (Ibid.: 186)
  - (18) [...] había nacido para hacer de gran patriarca. (Ibid.: 253)

The iterative mention of the term '*patriarca*' has two functions. The first is a deconstruction and delegitimization of this status, while the second contributes to the loss of semantic meaning, to an erosion of its semantic power, and to the elimination of its social function.<sup>32</sup>

Concerning the first function, the 'daughter-narrator' gives (example 1) a description of the nearly mythical status of the patriarch in society, and in the collective imaginary, and she compares the patriarch with the 'great biblical personages.' At the same time, however, she anticipates that Mimoun will represent the end of this tradition (example 19), from which point onward no one will identify with such a disturbed figure nor seek to reproduce it. Thus the 'daughter-narrator' narrates the history of a failure (also example 19). From the ruins of this social construct, she will see the beginning of a new way of life.

From the very beginning of the story, Mimoun/Manel becomes an object of derision, mockery, and ridicule, and the sarcastic tone of the 'daughter-narrator' becomes increasingly evident throughout the narration. Again and again, the 'daughter-narrator' (example 2) returns to the figure of the paradox, using it as a weapon of resistance and emancipation, when she, e.g., calls Mimoun/Manel the "fortunate," meaning happy, lucky, and successful:<sup>33</sup> all these are attributes that represent just the opposite of what Mimoun/Manel really is.

This sarcasm and irony is reinforced and intensified by the attribution of the term 'honor,' meaning an honorable person who can create a well ordered and decent world; the contrary of the very amoral and psychologically disturbed Mimoun/Manel. He is called 'patriarch' in his weakest moments, (as in examples 4, 5, and 19) when he feels anxious and lost, or when he uses violence against his wife (example 9).

The narrator says that this is the moment when he, Mimoun/Manel, *begins to perform his role as the great patriarch*, using violence as a major instrument for the institution of the patriarch, just as it was in the case of Mimoun's father.

In another passage, he is called now "Manel, the patriarch," which represents once more a use of irony and paradox: A real Moroccan patriarch would never change his Arabic name. It is well known that names generally have a deep significance in the Arab and Muslim world; they are rooted in tradition,

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(19) [...] o era que empezaba a tejer el camino hacia la derrota definitiva del patriarcado. (Ibid.: 308)

32 Concerning the phenomenon of the relation between iteration and meaning, see Lotman. (1972: 122 et seqq.)

33 Apparently derived from the feminine first name Mimouna.

they serve to coin unique identities, and so forth. Considered from a very strict perspective, a patriarch who loses his birth name is someone who has lost his original identity, and who therefore can never serve as an example of power, authority, respect, preservation or innovation of a tradition. He can never be at the head of the family or of the law.

In (example 5) Manel is considered a patriarch because he has the power and the instinct of a “hunter,” but he is a hunter of women, whom he uses as sex objects. He exploits and degrades them, and because he is a successful hunter in this sense, it is the “hunted” women who make him into a patriarch (example 8), not his upright behavior or the protection of his family, which is constantly subjected to brutal violence.

### 3.1.2 The Construction of a ‘Hybrid-Performative-Identity-Diaspora’: Mimoun/Manel and the narrator

#### 3.1.2.1 *Mimoun/Manel or the restless wanderer*

Mimoun/Manel is driven, a wanderer between the worlds of Morocco and Spain. His individual and social transformation is not an act of will, nor an autonomous decision. It is determined by what we call, once more, the situation imperative/dispositive. This begins with the area in which he lives, with many slaughterhouses for pigs full of fetid, decomposing offal (El Hachmi 2008: 81). In addition to this, we have the disgusting, unsanitary conditions of his new home (ibid. and 86). He has to do housework, women’s work in his Moroccan home: “*Ja ho veus, aquest és el nostre reialme, sense dones i sense ningú que ens faci la feina*” (ibid.: 81).<sup>34</sup> Finally, he pays no mind to whether he eats pork or beef:

[...] Ramona, aquella dona tan grassa que li omplia una vegada i una alta el plat de macarrons amb carn o botifarra amb seques. No era pas que ja no el preocupés allò del tipus de carn que menjava, només que de vegades arribava tan afamat de la feina que ni tenia temps de fixar-se en què hi havia i què no dins del plat. Per bona educació tampoc gosava preguntar què era i encara menys hauria refusat un plat cuinat amb tanta destresa per la senyora de la casa. (Ibid.: 85)<sup>35</sup>

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34 “Ya ves, éste es nuestro reino, sin mujeres y sin nadie que nos haga las tareas de la casa” (El Hachmi 2008a: 85).

35 Ramona, aquella mujer tan gorda que le llenaba una y otra vez el plato de macarrones con carne o butifarra con judías. Eso no quería decir que ya no le preocupase el tipo de carne que comía, sólo que en ocasiones llegaba tan hambriento del trabajo que ni tiempo tenía de fijarse en qué había y qué no dentro del plato. Por



At the very beginning he shares his room not only with his uncle, but also with a gypsy. For nearly eight years, Mimoun/Manel forgets his traditions and his family and lives a new life in Spain. He travels back and forth between the two cultures. For a while, he also discards his cultural and religious traditions, using them only strategically, e.g. when he seeks to convince his lover, the wife of his supervisor, to allow him to penetrate her in the anus, arguing that this practice is a Muslim social and religious tradition, holy as the Quran itself:

Va, dona, diria, si això és un costum musulmà, pensa que totes les generacions de la meva família ho han fet i és el primer que aprenen les dones en sexe. Ho diu la nostra religió, que ho hem de fer, és tan sagrat com l'alcorà o resar cinc cops al dia. I ella li deia que no i que no i que ell no resava, ni llegia l'alcorà, i que l'únic precepte islàmic que volia complir era el de follar-la er allà. (El Hachmi 2008: 90)<sup>36</sup>

Mimoun/Manel celebrates Christmas together with Rosa, one of his lovers, called by the 'daughter-narrator' 'the butane bomb' ('*la bomba de butano*'), and with his own family (all of whom live in the same apartment complex):

Amb aquest ordre nou establert vam celebrar el nostre primer Nadal, l'únic durant molt de temps [...] t'agradarà anar a comprar un arbre amb nosaltres i les boles de colors i els llums que s'apaguen i s'encenen. Joho vaig explicar a l'escola: aquest any ja celebrem el Ndal, i tothom es devia pensar, mira ja són com d'aquí, aquests, quin pare més obert que tenen. (Ibid.: 200 f.)<sup>37</sup>

The tables turn for Mimoun/Manel when Isabel, another former lover, throws him out of their shared apartment because of his chronic infidelity. Now he lets his abandoned family come to Spain to live in pitiable conditions. This

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buena educación, tampoco se atrevía a preguntar qué era y aún menos habría rechazado un plato cocinado con tanta destreza por la señora de la casa. (El Hachmi 2008a: 89)

36 Va, mujer, diría, si es una costumbre musulmana, piensa que todas las generaciones de mi familia lo han hecho y es lo primero que aprenden del sexo las mujeres. Lo dice nuestra religión, que lo tenemos que hacer, es tan sa-grado como el Corán o como rezar cinco veces al día.

Y ella le decía que no y que no y que él no rezaba, ni leía el Corán, y que el único precepto islámico que quería cumplir era el de follarla por ahí. (El Hachmi 2008a: 94-95)

37 Con este nuevo orden establecido celebramos nuestra primera Navidad, la única durante mucho tiempo [...] te gustará ir a comprar un árbol con no-sotros y las bolas de colores y las luces que se apagan y se encienden. Yo lo conté en el colegio: este año celebramos Navidad, y todo el mundo debía de pensar, mira estoy ya son como de aquí, que padres tan abierto tienen. (El Hachmi 2008a: 205)

change will not mean that Mimoun/Manel will become a good husband and father in the long term; on the contrary, he will continue his life with several women, and he will go on drinking and spending his money for pleasure. Moreover, his family will be constantly subjected to extreme violent outbursts. The children grow up in fact as orphans (*ibid.*: 207). But one crucial incident occurs: Mila, Mimoun/Manel's wife, retaliates for the first time: she slaps Mimoun/Manel's lover Rosa and expels her from their home. This initiates a deep change in Mimoun/Manel's character. From then on, he wants to become a "good Muslim", and he begins to frequent the mosque and to read holy texts. The whole family becomes religious, begins to pray five times a day and to observe Muslim dietary restrictions (El Hachmi 2008: 225-227). This transformation – the performance of Western/Spanish and Muslim cultural practices, the oscillation between these two worlds – has consequences for Mimoun/Manel, but also for the 'daughter-narrator,' as we will see below. When the daughter, motivated by her religiosity, begins to wear a headscarf, it is amazingly her father who forbids her to go out while wearing it. For him, the scarf is a clear symbol of shame and foreignness, to the extent that the second time she wears it, he beats her brutally (*ibid.*: 228-229).

This behavior shows that Mimoun/Manel is highly divided between Muslim and Western cultural practices, as the 'daughter-narrator' underlines:

Tot i que continuava mirant les pel·lícules de missatges divins i anticolonials, alternades amb les de Bud Spencer i Terence Hill i les gravacions del Tom i Jerry que li agradaven tant. (*Ibid.*: 226 f.)<sup>38</sup>

On the other side, he exercises a permanent control over the modern clothes that the 'daughter-narrator' wears (*ibid.*: 252, 286) and over her own sexual maturity (*ibid.*: 268). It is at this moment that all of Mimoun/Manel's forgotten social practices and all of his prejudices break through. A time of rigid control begins for the 'daughter-narrator,' with frequent psychological torture and beatings. This control is then expanded to all of her social activities, e.g. at school (*ibid.*: 267 et seqq.). The 'daughter-narrator' experiences increasing restriction (*ibid.*: 266, 282 et seqq.) and despotism (*ibid.*: p. 270 et seqq.).

The last step of his transformation is the complete loss of his power, the end of this imagined patriarchy and of the control over the daughter, who does not feel any respect for him. She admits to engaging in a sexual act with

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38 A pesar de que continuaba mirando las películas de mensajes divinos y anticoloniales, alternadas con las de Bud Spencer y Terence Hill y las grabaciones de Tom y Jerry que le gustaban tanto. (El Hachmi 2008a: 231)

her uncle, the younger brother of Mimoun/Manel, whom Mimoun/Manel has suspected for years to be the real father of his daughter, and she leaves the curtains open, allowing Mimoun/Manel to watch while the uncle penetrates her anus:

Ho confesso: va ser expressament que vaig deixar les persianes amunt i el llum obert. [...] Ho has fet mai pel darrere?, havia dit sobtadament entre tanta tendresa, i jo no, que fa mal, i ell no pateixis, jo te n'ensenyaré, si saps com fer-ho no ha de fer mal. Qui millor que el teu oncle per ensenyar-te aquesta mena de coses, eh? Són la mena de coses que han de quedar en família. Va dir porta l'oli d'oliva i no va ser la mantega del Marlon Brando, que nosaltres som mediterranis. Va dir deixa't anar, així, i jo només de tenir-lo sobre ja havia tingut un orgasme. [...] Va ser allà mateix, en aquell mateix moment, que van trucar al timbre i al videoporter va aparèixer la cara del pare. Un pare que ja no tornaria a ser patriarca, no pas amb mi, que el que havia vist no ho podria explicar, que una traïció tan fondua no l'hauria imaginada ni ell i encara menys venint d'una filla tan estimada. (El Hachmi 2008: 331 f.)<sup>39</sup>

### 3.1.2.2 The 'daughter-narrator' and her liberation

The 'daughter-narrator' grows up with her mother, brothers, and grandparents in Morocco in a climate of love, peace, and security, despite the poverty they suffer after being abandoned for eight years by Mimoun/Manel. At the beginning of her life in Spain, she enjoys the freedom that her father gives her as his "favorite child" (ibid.: 182, 203 et seqq., 212 et seqq.). However, the problems – mentioned above – begin when she reaches adolescence. Her father seeks to control her every move and wants to marry her to the Moroccan man of his choice. Another critical moment is that in which she becomes aware of her hybrid socio-cultural identity and 'belonging.' After her father decides to become a good Muslim, she imitates him, but being also influenced by negative and a few positive experiences coming from the Spanish community, she becomes aware of her a very complex and hybrid world:

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39 Lo confieso: dejé expresamente las persianas subidas y la luz encendida [...] ¿Lo has hecho laguna vez por atrás?, dijo de pronto entre tanta ternura, y yo no, que duele, y él no te preocupes, yo te enseñaré, si sabes cómo hacerlo no tiene que hacer daño, Quién mejor que tu tío para enseñarte este tipo de co-sas, eh? Son el tipo de cosas que deben quedar en familia. Dijo trae el aceite de oliva, y no fue la mantequilla de Marlon Brando, que nosotros somos mediterráneos. Dijo déjate llevar, así, y en cuando lo tuve encima ya sentí un orgasmo. [...] Fue allí mismo, en aquel mismo instante, cuando llamaron al timbre y en el videoportero apareció la cara de padre. Un padre que ya no volvería a ser patriarca, no conmigo, porque lo que había visto no podía contarlo, que ni él hubiera imaginado nunca una traición tan honda, y aún menos viniendo de una hija tan amada. (El Hachmi 2008a: 336-337)

Jo em vaig proposar de ser una bona musulmana, la millor. [...] Una cosa va portar l'altra. Un musulmà que no havia nascut musulmà va fer els plànols de la que havia de ser la mesquita, i la seva dona, que havia nascut musulmana, ens va venir a veure. [...] L'arquitecte ni aixecava l'esguard per mirar cap dona que no fos la seva. Quina pau, no semblava ni que haguessin tingut mai Roses a casa seva ni bombones de butà ni gots o ganivets voladors. Tot perquè estimaven Déu i seguien al peu de la lletra el que ell havia dit que havien de fer. (El Hachmi 2008: 226)<sup>40</sup>

The civilized behavior of the couple quoted in this passage deeply impresses the 'daughter-narrator.' She deduces that religion is the solution for the conflicts in her family and becomes very pious for pragmatic reasons.

Jo havia de fer igual, havia de ser com aquella família que s'estimaven tant i es respectaven. Així la nostra es transformaria. Resava cinc cops al dia i acabava demanant si us plau, Déu meu, fes que el pare torni al bon camí, però ho deia en la llengua de la capital de comarca perquè en la llengua dels musulmans jo no hauria sabut com dir-ho. S'hi valia: en l'última part de l'oració, on demanes alguna cosa

directament a Déu, podies fer servir la llengua que et fos més còmoda. (El Hachmi 2008: 226)<sup>41</sup>

Here we have a typical hybrid-performative-situation in that she prays to a Muslim God, but instead of doing so in Arabic language, she uses the Spanish language, a Christian language. Once again, the behavior of the 'daughter-narrator' is determined by her situation. She becomes more and more aware of her hybrid state and tries to find an *identity-home* in a "third space" – or "in-between" – by searching for a foothold in her religion and linking this to the real situation. She also observes Ramadan, and hopes that Mimoun/Manel will someday be prepared to return with them to Morocco

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40 Yo me propuse ser una Buena musulmana, la mejor. [...] Una cosa me llevó a la otra. Un musulmán que no había nacido musulmán hizo los planos de lo que habría ser la mezquita, y su mujer, que había nacido musulmana, vino a vernos. [...] El arquitecto no levanta la vista para mirar a otra mujer que no fuese la suya. Qué paz, parecía que nunca hubiesen tenido Rosas en su casa ni bombones de butano ni vasos a cuchillos voladores. Todo porque amaban a Dios y seguían al pie de la letra lo que él habría dicho que debían hacer. (El Hachmi 2008a: 230)

41 Yo debía hacer igual, debía ser como aquella familia que tanto se quería y respetaba. Así la nuestra se transformaría. Rezaba cinco veces al día y ter-minaba pidiendo por favor, Dios mío, haz que padre vuelva a buen camino, pero lo decía en la lengua de la capital de la comarca porque no habría sabido cómo expresarlo en la lengua de los musulmanes. Era válido: en la última parte de la oración, en la que pides algo directamente a Dios, podías utilizar la lengua que te fuese más cómoda. (El Hachmi 2008a: 230)

together as a family (ibid.: 226). At this point, she begins to watch his eating habits carefully:

Vaig començar a llegir les etiquets dels aliments. Mare, aquestes galetes porten porc. I ella, què dius, ara, si són les que hem menjat de tota la vida. Posa greix animal que, en el millor dels casos, és greix d'algun animal que no ha estat sacrificat com ha de ser i en el pitjor dels casos és greix de porc a seques. Anàvem a comprar formatge tallat a llesques i dèiem ens neteges la màquina, si us plau, que abans hi has tallat pernil, i jo no me'n sabia avenir que pogués ser tan d'aquella manera. (Ibid.: 227)<sup>42</sup>

She is permanently situated at the interfaces of oscillating cultural practices, e.g. at school where the pupils sing Christmas carols, and she feels like a traitor. On the other hand, she has nothing against receiving presents at the Epiphany:

Les mestres ens feien cantar nadales i jo no podia dir que no, que jo no les vull cantar igual que no ho fan les filles de testimonis de Jehovà, que no. I em posava entre els nens i cantava i no cantava, tot dissimulant, només movent els llavis i per dins, dient, perdona'm Déu meu, perdona'm, ja sé que Jesús no és fill teu, ja sé que estan equivocats i ja sé que és de cristians cantar aquests cançons. Però no m'hauria fet res tenir regals por reis o celebrar un altre Nadal [...]. (El Hachmi 2008: 227)<sup>43</sup>

She then begins to wear a scarf at prayer and when leaving the house, as we have already discussed. On the other hand, at the same time, she also has her first sexual experiences with two of her classmates, Lalia and Marta, and with a young man named Arumí (ibid.: 243, 248), consequently initiating her emancipation. One central motor of this emancipation is the discovery of her sexuality (also ibid.: 275 et seqq.), which contrasts with the fanatic and neurotic control exercised by Mimoun/Manel and with her trip to Morocco,

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42 Comencé a leer las etiquetas de los alimentos. Madre, estas galletas llevan cerdo. Y ella, qué me dices, hala, si son las que hemos comido toda la vida. Pone grasa animal que, en el mejor de los casos, es grasa de un animal que no ha sido sacrificado como debe ser y en el peor de los casos es grasa de cerdos a secas. Íbamos a comprar queso cortado en lonchas y decíamos: nos limpias la máquina, por favor, que antes has cortado jamón, y yo no me acostumbraba a eso. (El Hachmi 2008a: 231)

43 Los maestros nos hacían cantar villancicos y yo no podía decir que no, que yo no los quiero cantar, como tampoco lo hacen las hijas de los testigos de Jehová, que no. Y me situaba entre los niños y cantaba y no cantaba, disi-mulando, sólo moviendo los labios y por dentro diciendo, perdóname, Dios mío, perdóname, ya sé que Jesús no es hijo tuyo, ya sé que están equivo-cados y ya sé que es de cristianos cantar las canciones. Peor no habría la-mentado para nada tener regalos para Reyes p celebrar otra Navidad [...]. (El Hachmi 2008a: 231)

where she feels completely out of place in an archaic society: “*Tot plegat era pensar massa i jo només volia tornar a casa. Fins que els vaig començar a pensar que aquell no era meu món ni ho seria mai*” (El Hachmi 2008: 250).<sup>44</sup>

It is at this moment that her father decides to marry her off (ibid.: 251), which, fortunately, ultimately never happens (ibid.: 280). We see a contrast between her love for knowledge and learning (ibid.: 266-274; “*Així va ser que l’institut es va començar a convertir en refuge,*” ibid.: 274),<sup>45</sup> and the systematic confinement, as in a monastery, through Mimoun/Manel, who controls the ‘daughter-narrator’s’ every move (ibid.: 203 ff, 284 et seqq., 286 et seqq.).

The extent to which her behavior is determined by the ‘situation dispositive’ shows the constellation of her friends and their respectively unique histories, which are not defined by religion or ethical ‘belonging:’

Però per damunt de totes les coses que no teníem, el que ens unia er el que teníem. Totes tres havíem presenciat fenòmens extraordinaris com plats o gots voladors, històries que si les expliques a algú que no ho ha viscut mai no et creuria, et miraria amb sorna i diria au, va, no fotis.

Sí foto, sí, que a casa meva passen les mateixes coses que a les vostres, encara que ho vam saber molt abans de verbalitzar-ho. A casa meva perquè érem immigrants, a casa de l’amiga u perquè eren pobres i a casa de l’amiga dos encara no se sap, no eren ni una cosa ni l’altra [...]. (El Hachmi 2008: 274)<sup>46</sup>

The last step in her emancipation process is her relation to a young man about whom Mimoun/Manel warns her due to his bad reputation (ibid.: 300 et seqq., 304 et seqq., 308 et seqq.). This is the first time that Mimoun/Manel is right, but his authority has already been completely destroyed. She takes matters into her own hands, leaving her parent’s home in order to live with the young man and becomes pregnant. She learns that he is addicted to drugs,

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44 Todo eso era mucho pensar, y yo solo quería volver a casa. Hasta que lo oí en una de esas conversaciones de hermanos y empecé a pensar que aquél no era mi mundo no lo sería nunca. (El Hachmi 2008a: 254)

45 See El Hachmi 2008a: 270-278; “Y así fue cómo el instituto se empezó a convertir en un refugio”, ibid.: 278.

46 Pero por encima de lo que no teníamos, nos unía lo que sí teníamos. Las tres habíamos presenciado fenómenos extraordinarios como platos o vasos voladores, historias que si se las cuentas a cualquier que nunca las haya vivido no te creerían, te miraría con sorna y diría venga, va, no me fastidies. Sí que fastidio, sí, que en mi casa pasa lo mismo que en la vuestra, aunque lo supimos antes de verbalizarlo. En mi casa pero que éramos inmigrantes, en casa de la amiga uno porque eran pobres y en casa de la amiga dos todavía no se sabe, no era ni lo uno ni lo otro [...]. (El Hachmi 2008a: 278)

does not work, and takes no responsibility for himself. Indeed, he begins to behave like Mimoun/Manel and pressures her to assume a traditional social role. Finally, at the end of a process of suffering, she separates from him.

This failed relationship offers her the opportunity to determine her own life, to resist and revolt against Mimoun/Manel, and to gain her freedom. But as we already know, her ultimate liberation is encompassed in the sexual act with her uncle.

### 3.2 The ‘Hybrid-Performative-Identity.’ Considerations and Debate: *Jo també sóc catalana*

The essay *Jo també sóc catalana* (2004/2010) can be understood as a brilliant intellectual contribution, and furthermore, as a contribution to theory of culture focused on actual issues about migration and about the construction of ‘hybrid-performative- identities and diaspora’. It is also a text that stays in a palimpsest relation to *L’Ultim patriarca*. The essay is the material from which the novel *L’Ultim patriarca* will be produced. *L’Ultim patriarca* functions as a transparent and subtle veil: *L’Ultim patriarca* is laid on *Jo també sóc catalana* thereby disclosing and revealing all the aspects that were at some point hidden in the depth of the essay and thus it allows us to get some insight into many ‘bio-graphemes.’ The essay illuminates and illustrates nearly every episode of the novel. In spite of this fact, we are not going to make a comparison between both texts thereby making a kind of detective search for biographical aspects. We are not interested in that. Our interest lays in the analysis of some passages under the perspective of cultural theory.

Striking here is that in this essay, El Hachmi excludes much of the quotidian life and problems in the family; unlike the ‘daughter-narrator,’ in the essay she does not say a bad word about her father or about Morocco. In the essay, the main subject of her struggle is with the Spanish-Catalan society and the problems of ‘hospitality,’ belonging, identity and ‘emotion.’

A possible explanation for the differences between two such similar texts could be that the novel makes it possible for her to express in fiction, with the distance of fiction to reality, everything that it is not possible to express in an essay. Meanwhile the novel has a cathartic function, whereas the essay is a political statement.

In her essay, El Hachmi criticizes the obsession of people over what Derrida (1996) used to call ‘*la prothèse d’origine*,’ which leads people to use ethnic labels about ‘the origin:’ “[...] *el meu és poder deixar de parlar d’immigració algun dia, no haver de donar més voltes a les etiquetes [...]*” (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 12) and obliged persons “[...] *explicar per enèsima vegada d’on vinc o, si més no, que aquest fet no tingui el pes específic que té.*” (ibid.; see also A. de Toro 2009/2011, 2012). She asserts that society, in this

case the Spanish society, is not yet mature or prepared enough to deal with diversity in an adequate way, and she complains that society discriminates against immigrants or gives them a special status:

De moment, però, no sembla que la nostra societat tingui prou experiència en aquest camp per poder arribar a aquest estat de maduresa en el tracte de la diversitat, un tracte que no ha de discriminar en negatiu, però que tampoc hauria de ser significatiu, no hauria de distingir els individus pel lloc on van néixer. (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 12)

For the construction of her cultural space and ‘identity,’ writing is – as also in the case of Assia Djebar (1999)<sup>47</sup> – an instrument of liberation, as in *Jo també sóc catalana*:

Ho confesso: escric per sentir-me més lliure, per desferme del meu propi enclaustrament, de pors, d’esperances sovint estroncades, de dubtes continus, d’abismes de pioner que exploren nous mons. (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 14)

According to El Hachmi, to ‘explore’ means to find her place at the interfaces of cultures, in the ‘borderlands’ (Anzaldúa 1987) and in the ‘border laboratories’ (Gómez Peña (1996): “*Sóc un esgraó intermedi, formo part del que jo anomenaria generació de frontera,*” or to develop “*Un pensament de frontera que serveix per entendre dues realitats diferenciades, una manera de fer, d’actuar, de ser, de sentir, d’estimar, una manera de buscar la felicitat a cavall entre mons*” (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 14).

Language will play one of the most central functions in the way she defines and emancipates herself, because within and through the language, El Hachmi will experience the whole hybridity and ambiguity of her socio-cultural situation, all the conflicts with the questions about *where to belong*, and ‘from where to speak.’ The language, particularly by a person like El Hachmi, a writer, and who writes in Catalan, in a minority (and in some

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47 Ma francophonie d’écriture est le résultat de cette rencontre bipartite, mon français – de l’école, celui de mon père, de ma liberté acquise au-delà de la puberté et par ma formation individuelle –, ce français écrit qui aurait pu s’éloigner peu à peu de mes racines, de ma communauté féminine d’origine, s’est trouvé au contraire, au cours de ces années d’apparent silence, propulsé, remis en mouvement (d’un mouvement secret, intérieur), dynamisé dans l’espace, grâce justement à cette résonance de mon écoute orale des femmes, dans les montagnes de Chenoua [...]. [...]

Ainsi ma francophonie – au sortir de ces dix années de quête, de recherches souvent dans le noir, de tentatives polyphoniques – ne peut se situer dorénavant que dans cet élargissement du champ. Ma francophonie [...] ne peut que voguer à travers mutations et mouvances. (Djebar 1999: 39, 40)



cases, also militant) language, will be the point of concretion for all the problems that migrants from Morocco have in Spain (and migrants in general and in other parts of the world) – all those who are called with the ambiguous term ‘*moros*’ and the women, who are placed and oscillating between a modern Occidental and a traditionally Oriental culture. Here, in the language, all the debates and discussions within the Moroccan diaspora and the Catalan society will take place:

La llengua era una necessitat vital, hi havia pocs marroquins a Vic, entendre el català era obrir-se les portes a un nou món, tenir les claus per accedir a la intimitat dels habitants d'aquell país de boira. (El Hachmi 2004/<sup>2</sup>2010: 38)

[...]

I sent totes dues llengües marginades per certs poders, encara sentia més el deure de defensar-les, d'eleva-les al lloc que els pertoca encara que fos només fent-ne ús. (Ibid.: 53)

Politicians always sermonize that language is a central instrument for integration, but in reality, this seems inadequate for acceptance as a legitimate and normal citizen. The mastery of a language does not seem in all cases to be the key to belonging to a culture and to a nation, as El Hachmi complains, at least not for a ‘*moro*:’

Tan admirada com havia estat que jo parlés bé el català, vaig imaginar-me que estaria encara més contenta si li demostrava que intentava parlar-lo tan bé como sabia. Però no, ser català és més important que preocupar-se per utilitzar els mots adequats. (Ibid.)

El Hachmi struggles not only with the language, but also with the different customs and practices between Morocco and the Vic. During the holy days in Morocco she develops a profound longing for the ways of life in the Vic and she hates Morocco:

Sentia una nostàlgia del país que havia deixat enrere, aquell on havia viscut els últims set anys.

[...]

Aquell mes passat al Marroc, el primer de feia anys, va esdevenir infinit, insuportablement inacabable. (Ibid.: 74)

The question of belonging turns more and more into an existential question; it provokes fear and causes pain. The questions ‘who am I,’ ‘where do I belong,’ “am I a Catalan?” (“*Jo sóc català, mama?*”), are something that cannot be defined in an autonomous way by the individual person.

We have the external assignations and internal perception of the Self, and these normally diverge and do so substantially:

Jo sóc català, mama? [...] Dir-te senzillament que sí seria mentir-te, dir-te que nop seria abocar-te a l'abisme. Has nascut aquí i només has estat al Marroc deu dies de la teva curta vida, encara ara t'haig de negar la catalanitat?? On es deu adquirir aquest bé tan preuat, deu estar patentat?

Durant anys em vaig creure allò de 'vosaltres ja sou d'aquí,' 'sou catalans, oi?,' però no era més que un trist miratge.

Tota aquella gent que ens acceptava tan bé, no ens acceptava a nosaltres, tal como érem, només expressaven el seu anhel de fer-nos homogenis, es tranquil·litzaven [...] (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 89)

The narrator experiences the fact that knowing the language well enough to be integrated is not enough for being part of the socio-cultural community because this community is not prepared (we spoke about this above) to accept differences and hybrid forms of social and cultural behavior. On the contrary, this kind of European society expects, in many cases, total integration to the point of denying one's own origin:

Quan algú et diu que t'integris, el que en realitat t'està demanant és que et desintegris, que esborris qualsevol rastre de temps anteriors, de vestigis culturals o religiosos, que ho oblidis tot i només recordis els seus records, el seu passat. (Ibid.: 90)

In front of these impasses, which signify the effort to belong to one culture or to be accepted within two cultures, and to experience in both cases refusal, to be seen as a foreigner, without feeling oneself to be one, provokes in her a deep frustration:

El meu altre país, abandonat darrere l'Estret, era massa lluny per poder-me'l fer meu, no podia compondre tota la meva identitat amb només vuit anys d'infantesa i els mesos de retorn. (Ibid.: 90-91)

This impossibility of belonging leads to a temporary situation where migrants live in an 'identity-vacuum,' without new or old roots or roots in both cultures, which, especially at the beginning of this complex process, provokes suffering and frustration:

Vaig passar anys, fill, sense terra, sense terra, sense identitat i sense sentir-me de cap lloc. D'allà on venia em deien que ja no tenia lloc, aquí el rebuig cap als marroquins era cada vegada més intens, ja se sap que quests moros...

[...]

Em vaig fer sensible a tots els comentaris xenòfobs, a qualsevol expressió de recança contra qualsevol que vingués de fora, treia ales unghes sempre que em sentia al·ludida, no n'hi ha per tant, no cal que et posis així. Sempre hi ha algú que et deixa anar la frase, feridora: és que tu est diferent. Jo no sóc diferent, no ho vull ser, vull ser com tots els immigrants, mentre algú els discrimini.

Quan en fereixes un, denigres el seu nom i els tipífiques, m'estàs ferint a mi, m'estàs denigrant. (Ibid.: 91)

In this context, migrants only have the alternative of reinventing themselves in order to create a new space and to accept a hybrid identity and cultural location – to get rid of the *origin prosthesis*:

Potser hauria d'explicar-te: tu ets català, però sempre tingues present les antigues arrels dels teus pares que t'enriquiran. Tingues en compte que hi haurà gent a la teva vida que et retraurà aquestes arrels. Però quan et sentis rebutjat, fill meu, pensa en tots els amics i amigues que tens i veuràs el pes del rebuig contraposat, no sempre s'ha de ser acceptat per tothom, un és com és , sap d'on ve i tot el que porta al darrere, no ens calen etiquetes, no val la pena donar-hi més voltes. Al cap i a la fi, ningú té dret a preguntar-te: i tu com te sents més català o més marroquí? (El Hachmi 2004/2010: 92)

This very unsatisfactory situation forces the narrator to find support in her original cultural and religious tradition. As we indicated above, she demands that her mother and father celebrate Ramadan (ibid.: 96 et seqq.), she goes to the Koran (ibid.: 106), she dresses herself in a more traditional way (ibid.: 107), she prays every day, and she regularly attends the mosque (ibid.: 107 et seqq.) She wants, like her father, to become a good Muslim:

Haví de començar un camí de perfecció per esdevenir una creient més autèntica, estava segura que m'havia integrat tant al nou país que havia deixat de ser una bona musulmana. (Ibid.: 108 et seqq.)

But, at the same time, she gets in trouble with this forced decision “to become a good Muslim” because she does not believe in God (ibid.: 112). Religion was a desperate attempt to build an identity, which was no longer *her* identity. Moreover, this intent was condemned to failure because she was an emancipated and modern woman and someone who wanted to become a writer, which means she was someone with a critical and enlightened spirit: “Com podia fer compatible la meva devoció religiosa amb la vocació literària?” (ibid.: 109).

There is one last aspect left to be underlined here: the description of the behavior of the El Hachmi who is deeply disappointed with the refusal of a society in which she thought herself to be integral part of.

The consequence is to try to find refuge and an anchor in her ancestry culture and religion. Her overwhelming impulse for freedom, liberty, self-realization and literature save her from becoming a radical Muslim. Here, we have a good example of a successful decision and destiny, but also we see a way in which highly frustrated migrants can fall into fundamentalism.

#### 4. Summary

El Hachmi's novel does not follow the purpose of narrating an autobiography, nor a biography of her father, but she instead uses the father's personality, as the assumed last Patriarch, to construct a 'socio-cultural-figure' that represents a complete socio-cultural system of relations, and at the same time deconstructs this system by utilizing the figures of irony and of paradox. She systematically debunks disruptions and failures, and she unmasks an archaic socio-cultural system full of violence and traumatic experiences that are passed down from generation to generation.

She shows that it is possible to escape and to liberate oneself from a depraved and poisoned system. This liberation works via sexuality and writing. Sexuality is what stands in the middle of the conflict through the sexual obsession of Mimoun.

On the one side, he wants to have absolute sexual liberty and to possess all women that he meets, but on the other side, he is no less obsessed with controlling the sexual behavior of his wife and daughter as he imagines all kinds of treacheries. He projects his own dishonesty onto the female members of his family and onto women in general.

Writing opens the 'daughter-narrator' up to a new world of ideas, of diverse possibilities and models of life. It is also a refuge, a place of resistance, of creating new forces of emancipation.

Both, Mimoun and the 'daughter-narrator,' are always influenced by the concrete situations that motivated them to behave in one way or another. Their origins play a secondary, although an important role, but it is this 'third space,' this in-between, which is the most predominant structure in both lives, and this 'third space' is not a paradise, but rather a permanent place of negotiation.

El Hachmi's essay can be considered as very impressive personal and cultural manifesto of the complexity of migration politics related to the performance of main issues such as recognition, hospitality, belonging and emotion.

She further gives an insight into the struggle of migrants by so called ‘integration’ which does not always offer a real opportunity for belonging to a new cultural space so that the new and ‘performative diaspora’ represent the new home.

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(We indicate that meanwhile some of the internet-links that refer to the source of some publications are not anymore active.

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