

ЛІТЕРАТУРА ЗАРУБІЖНИХ КРАЇН

UDC 82

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/2710-4656/2026.4/33>

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EAST-WEST CONFLICT AND NATIONAL IDENTITY CRISIS IN TAYYIP SALIH'S NOVEL "THE SEASON OF MIGRATION TO THE NORTH"

The presented article examines the East-West conflict and the national identity crisis formed under colonial conditions based on Tayyip Salih's novel "The Season of Migration to the North". The study analyzes in detail the traumas of internal fragmentation, hybridity and cultural rootlessness caused by the encounter with foreign cultures in individuals through the characters of the work. The article compares the fate of the anonymous narrator, who maintains a stable identity thanks to his attachment to his roots, and Mustafa Said, who destroys himself while trying to take revenge on the West. The article also aims to reveal the artistic embodiment of cultural hybridity, the trauma of migration, and the process of human inner catharsis (purification) in the novel "Season of Migration to the North". Relevance of the research Tayyip Salih's work represents the brightest philosophical-psychological stage of Sudanese and Arab postcolonial literature. In his artistic heritage, the psychological depth of the inner world of man, the fragmentation of identity between two different civilizations, and the aesthetic reconstruction of the metaphor of the "Migration to the North" are important research objects for contemporary literary criticism. In the modern era, Tayyip Salih's works act as a topical scientific problem in terms of globalization, cultural adaptation, and the preservation of national identity. When comparing the two main characters of the novel - the narrator and Mustafa Said - the researcher M. Alkhawaldeh draws attention to the relationship between their "sense of place" and the stability of their identity. It has been proven that the concept of "Migration to the North" in the novel is explained from a new aspect as a two-sided metaphor symbolizing not just a geographical journey, but both ideological and cultural emigration and a return to the roots. The results of the article can be successfully applied in the study of postcolonial Arab and African literature, comparative literary studies and intercultural dialogue studies.

Keywords: hybridity, national identity, postcolonialism, catharsis, metaphor.

Introduction. The colonialists tried to make the peoples of the countries they conquered accept their advantages in order to plunder them, devaluing their culture, race, language, and identity. Similarly, as Lois Tyson notes in her *Critical Theory Today*: "...a colonized people is any group of people who have been subjected to the political domination of another population" [3, p. 145].

This process also left deep scars on the individual level. Many people living under colonization traveled to developed Western countries to study in the hope of saving their people and homeland. However, being con-

fronted with a foreign culture and language created an incomplete, fragmented, and sometimes dual identity in these people, which was one of the unexpected but inevitable consequences of colonialism. The colonizers, being technologically more advanced, believed that their own culture was equally superior and superior, and they rejected or completely ignored the religions, customs, and ways of behavior of the peoples they conquered. Thus, the colonizers saw themselves at the center of the world, and the colonized on the periphery [3, p. 419].

The West was the center, and the East was the periphery. One of the artists who most deeply felt this

complex colonial environment, which he was perceived as, both in his personal life and in his work, is the prominent representative of Sudanese literature, Tayyip Salih. Tayyip Salih (1929–2009) was born in the Northern Province of Sudan, but lived most of his life outside the land of his birth. As a Sudanese writer, he studied at the University of Khartoum, and later left his country to study and work in London, Qatar, and Paris. Thus, as a colonized individual, Salih also experienced the life of the colonizers. Moreover, living in the diaspora and being a dark-skinned Arab in “white” London prompted him to write about his original identity and the land of his ancestors, Sudan, in order to fulfill and complete his duty to the literature of resistance in his country. Although Salih is the author of four novels and a collection of short stories, his most famous work is undoubtedly the book “The Land of the Sudan”, translated from Arabic by Denis Johnson-Davies and published in 1969.

Task statement. The article aims to examine the East-West conflict, the artistic embodiment of the national identity crisis, and the role of the author’s postcolonial worldview in the literary value system in Tayyip Salih’s work.

Analysis of recent research and publications. There are many works devoted to this topic. In our work, we relied on the work of such scientists as Alkhaldeh M., Tyson L., Zohdi E., Tayeb S., Daghamin R. and etcs.

The novel “Season of Migration to the North” published in 2001. Tayyip Salih’s novel “Season of Migration to the North” is an example of how this general colonial model becomes an individual destiny. The societies of the Arab world, Africa and the Third World have just freed themselves from the decades-long oppression of military colonialism, full of hope for deliverance from its chronic consequences, or from the microbes, as he calls them in the novel, that it left in the structure of these societies. The author deeply explores the philosophical and psychological layers throughout the plot, bringing into focus the duality of identity and the trauma of cultural dislocation, the model of exoticization of the East in the Western mind, and the internal conflict between modernity and traditionalism in society [2].

This novel, which has a postcolonial character, centers on the lives and complex fates of two men who spent a certain period in Europe. One of these characters is the unnamed narrator who returns to his native village after seven years of education in London and narrates the events to us. The other is Mustafa Said, a colonial intellectual who rose to intellectual heights through the Western educational system, but

sacrificed his identity and life by transforming the trauma within him into a mission to take revenge on the colonialists. Mustafa Said, an intelligent, educated child of the colony, goes to London to study, subconsciously taking on the mission of taking revenge on the colonialists. However, this mission ends in tragedy for him: Said gradually loses his original identity on the way and finally disappears as a victim of this confused, fragmented identity.

Results and discussion. The title of the work, “The Season of Migration to the North”, is not just a geographical journey, but a deep symbol. This name expresses the separation of the Southerner from his roots and his departure towards the cold world of the North. The natural flow of the Nile River’s waters to the north becomes an important metaphor in the work; the migration of colonial intellectuals to the North with a mission of education or revenge is as inevitable as this natural flow. It should be noted that the symbol “North” in the title of the work is not limited to expressing only Europe (the North). This concept also refers to the Northern Province of Sudan, where the events take place, and the natural movement of the Nile River, which flows absolutely northward.

Thus, “Migration to the North” is a double metaphor that symbolizes both the ideological and cultural migration to the West and the return to the native lands and roots in northern Sudan along the waters of the Nile River. However, this migration season does not bring them success. As can be seen in the example of Mustafa Said, the protagonist of the work, this journey results in the loss of the individual’s national identity and the division between two different worlds. One of the central issues in Tayyip Salih’s novel “The Season of Migration to the North” is the deep trauma inflicted on individual identity by the clash of Eastern and Western civilizations. This clash is particularly acute in the personality of the work’s protagonist, Mustafa Said, and leads to the tragic end of his life.

According to the researcher, the narrator is able to maintain a stable and integral identity due to his strong emotional attachment to his native village, family and the nature around the Nile River. In fact, the narrator believes that he is not like Mustafa Said. He believes that the Northern culture has no influence on his identity. Because when he was abroad, he always imagined small fragments of his homeland and created a “third space” in his mind to protect himself from the world of the North (colonialists):

“Sometimes in London, in the summer months, after the rain, I would breathe in the scent of my homeland. In the brief moments before sunset, I would bring my homeland before my eyes. Towards

the end of the night, foreign voices would come to me as if they were the voices of my people here. I would dream of the faces of the people there in brown or black, so that they would resemble the people I knew" [5, p.44]. On the other hand, the most important factor that protected the narrator from losing his identity in the colonial country was his grandfather and his dreams about him. This shows that although a person can forget everything, he cannot forget his local roots and the true place to which he belongs.

Mustafa Said subsequently became a legend, celebrated by many. He immersed himself in Western culture until he felt a part of it, absorbing all its details and cultural components in theater, music, and economics.

Mustafa Said, on the other hand, cannot fully belong to any place or culture, since he grew up without a father, relatives, and any serious emotional ties. This rootlessness makes him a figure in constant flux, unable to form a stable sense of self [1]. This is also evident in Said's self-presentation: he identifies with Shakespeare's Othello, declaring himself both Arab and African, but this dual identity was more a mask than a real identity, designed to attract the English women around him. The fact that Said adopted both Arab (Hasan, Amin, Mustafa) and English (Charles, Richard) names in London is a clear indication of his lack of commitment to any one race or origin. Said's split identity also finds symbolic expression in the physical spaces in which he lives.

His London room is decorated in an oriental style - with the scent of incense, ostrich feathers, and ivory figurines - while his village room, by contrast, is filled with English fireplaces, Victorian armchairs, and an English copy of the Quran. Alkhawaldeh explains this contradictory spatial organization as a manifestation of Said's inability to fully belong to either the East or the West, and his constant movement back and forth between the two worlds, transferred to architecture.

Another researcher, R. Daghamin, approaches the issue from a different but complementary angle, interpreting Said's countless relationships with English women as a kind of "reverse invasion" and revenge against colonialism [6, p.110]. According to the researcher, Said seeks to symbolically "cleanse" the historical suffering of Africa through racially based exploitation of these women, and the murder of his wife, Jean Morris, is the culmination of this revenge mission. However, the paradox is that Said's behavior actually reinforces, rather than undermines, the colonial stereotype of the black man as a hypersexual and dangerous "Other". Thus, since Said cannot break away from colonial memory, his "revenge" ultimately destroys both himself and his victims, which demon-

strates the insoluble, self-repeating nature of the East-West conflict.

Although both studies proceed from different theoretical frameworks (bioregionalism and colonial discourse theory), the same conclusion can be drawn: Mustafa Said's tragedy is the fate of an individual trapped between East and West, unable to fully belong to either. His suicide (or accidental death) can be read as the final and inevitable result of the irreconcilable tension between these two worlds, experienced at the individual level. Mustafa wanted to escape from the culture of the colonizers and regain his lost culture. However, he could not achieve this, because the culture and language of the colonizers had already become an integral part of his character. He would recite poetry in English when he was drunk. Sometimes at night, while sleeping, he would speak incomprehensible words that resembled European languages. He also had a locked room in his house full of European memories. Indeed, it can be argued that foreign countries had already become Mustafa's homeland, and the memories there had acquired the status of belongings, playing the role of "fragments" for him.

Thus, the hybrid situations in which Mustafa lives both in his homeland and in the country of his emigration lead him to a loss of identity. This is a direct result of "hybridity" and "ambivalence". This weakening and disappearing identity forces him to disappear. For he is no longer a fully colonized individual, nor a fully colonized; he is a hybrid person who cannot escape from both worlds.

After completing his education in England, the unnamed narrator of Tayeb Salih's novel "The Season of Migration to the North" returns to the small village of Wad Hamid, on the banks of the Nile in northern Sudan, where he spent his childhood. After a long exile, being among the familiar landscapes and people of his native country brings him happiness. However, upon returning to the village, he is met by a stranger. This stranger is Mustafa Said, a middle-aged man who had settled in the village five years earlier. Little is known about him. Nevertheless, the villagers accepted and welcomed him, because he presented himself as a good neighbor and a model villager.

One day, while the narrator is drinking with the villagers, Mustafa Said begins to recite a poem in English. At this moment, the narrator's view of him changes and he feels that what he sees in Said's personality is much deeper. The situation is further complicated when Said comes to the narrator's house and tells him his life story all night. Mustafa Said tells the narrator that he was born near Khartoum and was raised by his mother after his father died when he was a baby. After standing

out as a child prodigy in colonial schools, he was sent on a scholarship to Cairo and then to London to study. In London, he attracted many English women with his “Arab-African” roots and began to have relationships with them. Said presented himself as a “noble savage” from the jungles and deserts of Africa. Three of these relationships resulted in suicide.

But his real enemy was the Englishwoman Jean Morris. Jean constantly provoked and insulted Mustafa Said, and even after they were married, she refused to submit to his will. Their marriage had turned into an endless war, accompanied by verbal and physical violence, betrayal and humiliation. Returning home on a cold February night, Mustafa Said found Jean waiting for him naked in bed. During their lovemaking, he stabbed the woman in the chest and killed her; strangely enough, it seemed that Jean herself had met this death [4, p.146].

After this murder, Mustafa Said was tried in London. Although the court found him guilty, it sentenced him to only seven years in prison. When the London court wanted to punish him, he felt a great “sense of superiority” towards them because he had already achieved his goal. Mustafa believed that the laws only protected the interests of the occupiers. Therefore, he was happy that he could become a “usurper” in the colonialists’ own land; he was able to take revenge on the occupiers of his homeland with their own strategy. After his release, Mustafa, who traveled to many countries, finally returned to Wad Hamid, where he built a house for himself and met the narrator.

However, this toxic relationship with Jin Morris creates deep, incurable complications in Mustafa Said’s inner world. The fact that his relationship with Jin ended in violence and death confirms within him the idea that life and his own identity have no value. The strange welcome (desire) of the death of the genie is also a manifestation of Said’s inner emptiness, his inner desire to escape from the outside world and to destroy himself. Said’s subsequent mysterious death (suicide) is also the inevitable result of his inability to come to terms with his past and future, and his refusal to accept his own identity.

This suicide is not only the hero’s attempt to escape psychological trauma, but also the most dramatic indicator of his inner fragmentation. The life story of Mustafa Said turns the narrator’s world upside down. Although he feels deeply connected to his people after returning to Sudan, his encounter with Said awakens a strange feeling of alienation and strangeness within him. Suddenly, he begins to wonder whether, like Said, living abroad for a long time has completely alienated him from those around him.

Despite these inner hesitations, the narrator returns to the flow of life, starts working in Khartoum, and visits his native village from time to time. Soon, news spreads of Said’s sudden disappearance during a violent flood. It is believed that he drowned in the raging river, or committed suicide in this way. When Mustafa Said bids farewell to life, he leaves his family - his wife Husna bint Mahmoud and his two young sons - in the care and responsibility of the narrator. A year later, the narrator returns to the village to learn that the elderly villager Wad Rayyes is courting Said’s widowed wife Husna, and he is forced to intervene in Said’s family affairs again. Despite the forty-year age difference between them and Husna’s firm objections, Rayyes stubbornly plans to marry her. Husna begs the narrator for help, but the narrator does not help her and returns to Khartoum. However, a few weeks later, he returns to the village in a panic after receiving terrible news: Husna’s father has forcibly married her to Wad Rayyes.

Upon arriving in the village, the narrator learns that shortly after their marriage, Wad Rayyes attempted to rape Husna, and she responded by killing him and committing suicide.

This horrific act of violence deeply shocks the quiet, peaceful village, which had never experienced anything like it before. Although the villagers try to cover up the murder and suicide, it is clear to everyone that nothing will ever be the same again. The narrator, who harbors deep feelings for Said’s widowed wife, is completely shaken by this incident. During his time in the village, he finally decides to open the door to the secret room in his house with the key that Mustafa Said had entrusted to him after his death.

Entering the room, the narrator is shocked by it; for this place reminded him of a temple erected to Said’s life in England. Among the thousands of books that adorned the shelves, there was not a single volume in Arabic. The narrator finds other traces and fragments of Said’s life in England in the room, including his diaries and photographs of various women he had affairs with. He spends hours in this room piecing together the pieces of Said’s secret life abroad [7].

The narrator, who leaves the room at dawn, decides to bathe in the Nile River to recover from the shock he has experienced and calm down. Entering the river, he begins to swim towards the opposite bank. However, he soon loses direction, loses strength and feels the current pulling him towards the dark bottom of the river. As the waters meet above his head, a strange desire for surrender awakens within him; he wants to abandon himself to the river and die as Mustafa Said once did. However, a sudden awakening occurs: he

realizes that he wants to live and, gathering his last strength, calls for help and starts swimming again.

The dramatic and shocking events left behind after Said's death suddenly separate the narrator from the illusion of a quiet village life. Entering the room that hides Mustafa Said's past and realizing the gravity of his tragic fate creates a deep catharsis in the narrator's own inner world. The fact that he escaped the clutches of death in the Nile River and chose life is a confirmation that he has gained his own individuality by refusing to live in the shadow of others.

Conclusions. Tayyip Salih's writing style constitutes a synthesis of a rich artistic language with postcolonial

realism; his descriptions are based on local Eastern elements and the metaphor of the Nile River, focusing on the internal psychological crises of the characters.

With this work, Tayyip Salih shows the deep wounds and fragmentation of identity created in the human soul by the East-West clash in all its nakedness. Mustafa Said's tragedy proves to us that it is impossible to escape the traumas of the past through revenge and hatred. The narrator's awakening at the last moment and his choice of life in the Nile River are symbolic confirmation that a person can be reborn again only thanks to his own will and roots, freed from foreign influences.

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Алібейова З. Ф. КОНФЛІКТ СХІД-ЗАХІД ТА КРИЗА НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ В РОМАНІ ТАЙІБА САЛІХА «СЕЗОН МІГРАЦІЇ НА ПІВНІЧ»

У представленій статті розглядається конфлікт Схід-Захід та криза національної ідентичності, що сформувалися в колоніальних умовах, на основі роману Тайіба Саліха «Сезон міграції на Північ». У дослідженні детально аналізуються травми внутрішньої фрагментації, гібридності та культурної безкоренності, спричинені зустріччю з чужими культурами у окремих людей через персонажів твору. У статті порівнюється доля анонімного оповідача, який зберігає стабільну ідентичність завдяки прихильності до свого коріння, та Мустафи Саїда, який руйнує себе, намагаючись помститися Заходу. Стаття також має на меті розкрити художнє втілення культурної гібридності, травми міграції та процесу внутрішнього катарсису (очищення) людини в романі «Сезон міграції на Північ». Актуальність дослідження. Творчість Тайіба Саліха репрезентує найяскравіший філософсько-психологічний етап суданської та арабської постколоніальної літератури. У його художній спадщині психологічна глибина внутрішнього світу людини, фрагментація ідентичності між двома різними цивілізаціями та естетична реконструкція метафори «Міграції на Північ» є важливими об'єктами дослідження сучасної літературної критики. У сучасну епоху твори Тайіба Саліха виступають актуальною науковою проблемою з точки зору глобалізації, культурної адаптації та збереження національної ідентичності. Порівнюючи двох головних героїв роману – оповідача та Мустафу Саїда – дослідниця М. Альхавальде звертає увагу на взаємозв'язок між їхнім «відчуттям місця» та стабільністю їхньої ідентичності. Доведено, що концепція «Міграції на Північ» у романі пояснюється з нового аспекту як двостороння метафора, що символізує не просто географічну подорож, а й ідеологічну, і культурну еміграцію та повернення до коріння. Результати статті можуть бути успішно застосовані у вивченні постколоніальної арабської та африканської літератури, порівняльному літературознавстві та дослідженнях міжкультурного діалогу.

Ключові слова: гібридність, національна ідентичність, постколоніалізм, катарсис, метафора.

Дата першого надходження статті до видання: 06.07.2026
Дата прийняття статті до друку після рецензування: 23.07.2026
Дата публікації (оприлюднення) статті: 09.10.2026