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Abstract

*The reality of Arab immigrants in Western countries as culturally and psychologically alienated and having a sense of in-betweenness is very common in travel writing. However, Diana Abu-Jaber's *Crescent* (2003) challenges such a discourse through the portrayal of several Arab immigrant characters. The latter find it easy and interesting to cope with the American society and way of life. The present study, then, will rely on Maria Lugones' concepts of the "multiplicitous self" and "world travelling" in order to highlight the attempt and strong desire of several characters in the novel, mainly Sirine, to inhabit and occupy each others' 'worlds'. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that these characters' ability to cross borders lead to the multiplicity of their selves.*

Keywords: *Crescent, Lugones, world-travelling, multiplicitous.*

Résumé

*La réalité des immigrés arabes dans les pays occidentaux, culturellement et psychologiquement aliénés et ayant un sentiment d'entre-deux, est très courante dans les récits de voyage. Cependant, *Croissant* (2003) de Diana Abu-Jaber remet en question un tel discours à travers la représentation de plusieurs personnages arabes immigrés. Ces derniers trouvent facile et intéressant de faire face à la société et au mode de vie Américains. La présente étude s'appuiera donc sur les concepts comme « le soi multiple » et « voyage dans le monde » de Maria Lugones afin de mettre en évidence la tentative et le fort désir de plusieurs personnages du roman, principalement Sirine, d'habiter et d'occuper les uns les autres 'mondes'. De plus, l'étude démontre que la capacité de ces personnages à traverser les frontières conduit à la multiplicité d'eux-mêmes.*

Mots clés: *Crescent-Lugones-monde-voyage-multiple*

1. Introduction

Immigration is currently a crucial topic for scholars, writers, and politicians as well; especially in the West. However, Arab immigrants are increasingly facing cultural challenges that hamper their full integration, leading to their in-betweenness and loss of sense of belonging. As an Arab-American, Diana Abu Jaber used her *Crescent* (2003) to picture the lives of several Arab immigrant characters. This novel revolves mainly around a group of outsiders who are living in America. These characters belong to different countries but they share the same feeling of nostalgia for their left homes. In America, they usually gather in Nadia's café, where the main character Sirine works as a chef. Through Nadia's café and Sirine's food, these characters seem to travel, psychologically, to their homes. This study, thus, aims at challenging such a dominant discourse on Arab immigrants through shedding light on several characters, mainly Sirine, in the novel under scrutiny. Stated differently, the focal point of the present study will be Sirine and other characters' attempt and strong desire to cope with both the Arab and Western worlds and identities. In order to reach the stated aim, the researcher will adopt Maria Lugones' approach of resistance. Light will be shed on concepts like the "multiplicitous self" and "world travelling" as means to inhabit more than one world. As a result, this will lead to the multiplicity of these characters' selves.

2. Review of Related Literature

The scholarship on the novel has tackled it from a variety of perspectives, focusing mainly on identity, loneliness, and characters' nostalgia for home. To start with, the critic Hasnul Insani Djoha (2019) sheds light on minorities, including exiles and immigrants, in Abu-Jaber's *Crescent*. The main focus of the study was to pinpoint the importance of home and the sense of belonging and in-betweenness these groups live within the United States. The researcher highlights these minorities' refuge to Um-Nadia's café in order to share their feelings of nostalgia.

Since the same novel is rich with storytelling, immigrant characters' memories of their left countries, and Arab food in Um-Nadia's Lebanese café, Leila Maghmoul (2016) pays attention to these elements. She emphasizes their importance as means for these characters to refresh their memories and strengthen them about their Arab "roots" and "origins"; since they suffer from identity in-betweeness. In a similar study, Khalid Easa (2020) brought into light the role of exile in shaping "hyphenated identities", and how some characters, especially Sirine, are thinking about their identities. He focused on Sirine's sense of belonging and her recurrent thoughts about her romantic relationship with the Arab Hanif. Stated differently, Sirine keeps thinking about whether she seems too American to Hanif or too Arab which leads her to a deep thinking about her identity.

In another study, Ishak Berrebbah (2020) pinpoints the importance of food and the cooking skill as means of Arab-American characters to affirm and emphasize their Arab identity in a multicultural community like the United States of America. To reach this aim, the researcher relied on figures like Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha and others. Thus, observing that there is a need for detailed studies on Lugones' "world travelling" and "the multiplicitous self" in Abu Jaber's *Crescent*, this study aims at taking up the lacuna by investigating the stated concepts. Hence, the kernel of the present research is the analysis of several Eastern and Western characters' effort and wish to inhabit the Arab and American 'worlds'. The main focus will be on the character of Sirine as an Arab American. The purpose, then, is to highlight these characters' acceptability to live as multiple and "world travellers" to each others' 'worlds', without being racist or inferior to each other. Therefore, their capability to cross borders leads to the multiplicity of their selves. Accordingly, the present study is meant to be analytical as it will rely heavily on Maria Lugones' concepts of the 'multiplicitous self' and 'world travelling'.

3. Lugones' *Multiplicity in the World of the Novel*

According to Maria Lugones (2003), the person has the choice either to live as an alienated being or develops a multiple self. That is, the person can perceive him/herself as a 'multiplicitous' one. She clearly emphasized her abandonment of the belief in the "unity of the self.... Instead, [she] lived the experience as an exposure of psychic multiplicity and [she] strove to make sense of it by locating the multiple self in space, conceiving of space itself as multiple, interesting, co-temporaneous realities" (p. 16). In other words, when the person experiences multiplicity, s/he must be aware of it as s/he is expected to show strong feelings of enthusiasm. But the most important step is that the person must develop that multiplicity psychologically and s/he puts it into practice. For instance, in the world of the novel, Hanif is portrayed as an Iraqi character who shows a great interest in living in America, though he misses his home. In one instance, "Han doesn't seem to have noticed Sirine. He's standing on the far end of one of the pool-lagoons lit by rose- colored spotlights, dressed in a way that seems deliberately American" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p.32). This indicates his Americaness and his desire to develop "a multiple self" rather than living as alienated in exile.

For Lugones, minorities cannot preserve one culture, reality, and way of life and get rid of the other while they are contributing to different realities. She argues: "[T]hough there are subaltern groups, none are mono+cultural or mono-logical, but complex, heterogenous, pluri-logical. Social reality is thus understood as multiple rather than fragmented" (2000, p. 175). Her perspective strongly highlights the importance of understanding among different groups because purity is unreachable and one's insistence on seeking it will lead to his/her fragmentation. That multiplicity, Lugones believes, can be embodied in "the multiple languages [the person] speaks or discourses [s/he] participates in and the social practices that [s/he] affirms" (Bendfeld, 2000, p. 90). Thus, by taking part in such activities, the person shows his strong desire to be integrated in a certain society and as a result, they consider themselves as part of each 'community' they participate in though they do not consider themselves as essential constituents of it. For instance, Hanif proves to be a character who wills to be

integrated in both “communities”, Iraq and America as the following quote shows:

In America, you say ‘secret code,’ but in Iraq, that’s just the way things are. Everything is sort of folded up and layered, just a bit more complicated. Here it’s all right out there, right on the surfaces. Everyone’s telling you exactly how they feel all the time and what they’re thinking. Trying to pin everything down (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 36).

This comparison between Iraq and America emphasizes Hanif as a character who participates in the American discourse and activities. Thus, in this case Hanif embodies what Lugones calls “[t]he multiple subject [who] retains an understanding of each community [s/he] belongs to as its member” (Bendfeld, 2000, p. 91). Therefore, Hanif acts as a character that attempts to develop his multiple self and shows an interest in the multiplicity of the community he is participating in.

Furthermore, Lugones strongly highlights the person’s perseverance to reach a positive result which is to “maintain a vibrant and critical life” (Bendfeld, 2000, p. 90). In other words, the person’s success to have a multiplicitous self and hence, their capacity to live in different ‘worlds’ ensure these persons as “creative being[s]” (as cited in Bendfeld, 2000, p. 91). Another instance that well clarifies this idea is the following:

“Bonjour, honored chef!” Khoorosh cries out as soon as she enters. The shop is small and close, the air damp with a rich influx of spices, garlic, saffron, and clove. Sirine often shops there, even when she doesn’t need anything—just to sample a new spice or to taste one of Khoorosh’s ingredients, dreaming of new dishes located somewhere between Iraq, Iran, and America (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 100).

Sirine’s attempt to invent “new dishes” to gather the tastes of the three mentioned countries can be related to food as a symbol and a means to experience the “multiplicitous self” and her culinary skill shows her as a “creative being”.

Lugones calls that space occupied by the self, as a multiplicitous one, “the limen”. When a person takes part in the latter, s/he emphasizes the impossibility of having one unique self which she refers to as ‘purity’. Stated differently, she believes that the experience

of multiplicity highlights one's self as 'impure' and 'hybrid'. That is, the self cannot be 'pure'. It cannot be "the product of one conscience, one language" (Bendfeld, 2000, p. 95) because "it is tainted by traces of alternative understandings from the other 'selves' that qualitatively change the original conscience, conscious of itself as Mexican, or American, or lesbian" (Bendfeld, 2000, pp. 95-96). To illustrate, one can refer to Arab students who usually come to Um-Nadia's café:

There are voices blurring and unblurring, complicated gestures, winding hands and arms. It sounds like the same sort of argument the students are always having—about America, the Middle East, and who is wronging whom—this time it's in Arabic, sometimes it's in English, usually it's a little of both (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 11).

Thus, the fact that these students most of the time communicate in both English and Arabic proves them as "hybrid", "impure", and willing to act as multiple inhabitants.

That is, a person's multiplicity affects his/her identity and their perception of themselves for the different selves they occupy will deny their belonging to one world only. To highlight the same perspective, Lugones illustrates the impossibility of developing a 'pure self' by making

a distinction between separation as curdling, and separation as splitting. Separation as splitting is an exercise in purity, in fragmentation, while separation as curdling is an exercise in impurity. She uses the metaphor of curdling to express what happens when an emulsion curdles. When emulsions curdle, ingredients separate from each other, but they do not entirely separate.... 'The same with mayonnaise; when it separates, you are left with yolkly oil or oily yolk' (Bendfeld, 2000, p. 96).

This means that separation can be achieved but only to a certain extent because there is always an amalgamation of selves affected by several factors in the inhabited 'worlds'. For example, Hanif's "accent has nuances of England and Eastern Europe, like a complicated sauce" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 11). This emphasizes Hanif as a "multiplicitous", "impure" character. Furthermore, to emphasize her "multiplicitous self" and encourage the same principle,

Sirine and her uncle try to invite over anyone who needs a place to sit and have a bite and a conversation. At work, Sirine announces that this year will be an Arabic Thanksgiving with

rice and pine nuts and ground lamb in the turkey instead of cornbread, and yogurt sauce instead of cranberries (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 174).

Sirine's way of thinking and her suggestion of the "Arab Thanksgiving" symbolize the impossibility of separating the American culture from the Arab one or the host country from the minorities. By doing so, she is encouraging all the immigrants in the café to develop their "multiplicitous selves".

For Lugones, one's development of "a multiplicitous self" is a form of resistance, and the fact that one *develops* it means that it does not occur haphazardly. Rather, it is "something that one does" (Bendfeld, 2000, p. 102). In addition to that, she emphasizes the idea that one must have the "logic" of resistance by inquiring his/her position as inferior to others in the same society. As a result, she believes, the person will insist on his/her multiplicity and rejects the possibility of one "true self" to exist (Lugones, 2003). Abu-Jaber, for instance, portrays Sirine as a character who insists on developing her "multiplicitous self". This is painted through Sirine's curiosity to know about Islam, religion, and Arabic as she clearly states: "I'd love to be able to speak Arabic...[as] she feels guilty that she can't speak it" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, pp. 106-107). However, Sirine's strong desire to know about and inhabit the Arab world is justified because since her father is an Arab one, she always experiences loneliness as the following citation emphasizes: "I guess I'm always looking for my home, a little bit. I mean even though I live here, I have this feeling that my real home is somewhere else somehow" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 108). Consequently, when persons experience a variety of situations, they will be able to take in and grasp a variety of languages as they will be familiar with dominant discourses in those environments (Bendfeld, 2000). The following quotation shows Aziz, an Arab poet, as a character who is aware and familiar with the dominant discourse about Islam:

He shrugs. "Who knows? I am Aziz, I am large, I contain multitudes. I defy classification. And it just seems to me like Islam has a hard enough time in this country. So, okay, it is the patriarchy and the oppressor and ten million other things besides. That's what religion is supposed to be! But how are the Americans in my class going to learn anything about anything

with this woman yelling like a terrorist?” (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 83)

This citation, then, suggests that Aziz as a Muslim is aware of the image of Islam in America. He also suffers from the effects of the negative perception of Islam in the same country; which brings to light Lugones’ idea that people cannot get rid of such alienating feelings. However, his words indicate that he challenges the fact of being classified as an inferior non-Muslim through showing a strong will to inhabit the American world. Hence, Aziz’s perseverance to develop his multiplicitous self goes hand in hand with Lugones’ suggestion of multiplicity as a strategy through which one can avoid disintegration. In other words, as a result of oppression, racism, etc., a person cannot avoid the inner suffering, breakup, alienation, inbetweenness, etc. Thus, instead of surrendering to such a psychological state, one has to perceive him/herself as multiple as a means to settle such a psychological crisis (Bendfeld, 2000). This brings to light Lugones (2003)’ perspective again: “The tension of being oppressed---resisting oppression ‘places’ one *inside the processes* of production of multiple realities. It is from within these processes that the practice of shifting to different constructions, different spatialities, is created” (p. 17). This means that once a person experiences such a feeling, as explained above, and s/he is willing to go beyond such a state, the same person participates in creating a different reality. This act paves the way for the occupation of different ‘worlds’ as the upcoming part will highlight.

4. Abu-Jaber’s Eastern and Western Characters as “World Travellers”

For ‘world travelling’, Lugones (1987) provides a clear and simplified definition of the term ‘world’ as she means it. She states:

A "world" in my sense may be an actual society given its dominant culture's description and construction of life, including a construction of the relationships of production, of gender, race, etc. But a "world" can also be such a society given a non-dominant construction, or it can be such a society or a society given an idiosyncratic construction. As we will see it is problematic to say that these are all constructions of the same society. But they are different "worlds." A "world" need not be a construction of a whole society. It may be a construction of a

tiny portion of a particular society. It may be inhabited by just a few people. Some "worlds" are bigger than others" (p. 10).

Lugones (1987) means that one society can include more than one 'world'. The dominant group in a society has its 'world' and each minority has its 'world' also and these 'worlds' cannot be called as such unless they are "inhabited at present by some flesh and blood people" (pp. 9-10). In other words, in countries where there exist minorities, people from the mainstream as well as from these groups must travel to each others' 'worlds'. The minorities do that in order to defy their perception as inferior or as the 'Other' and people from the dominant group in the same society accept and cope with the minorities' difference. Furthermore, based on Lugones' perspective, if such groups do not occupy each other's 'worlds', it cannot be referred to as such. In the world of the novel, for instance, one can refer to two "worlds", at least: the one inhabited by the Americans as a dominant group and the one occupied by Arab immigrants as a minority. Further, it is referred to as a 'world' because both Arab and American characters show a willingness to challenge the borders between the two groups and cultures through occupying each others' worlds.

Lugones (1987) also believes that one can occupy these worlds at the same time. To illustrate, she refers to the USA as the mainstream and classified herself as an outsider to the USA's culture, way of life, etc. Further, she pinpoints the fact that her 'travel' to the mainstream's 'world' is done out of 'necessity' as it forms an essential part of her experience as an outsider. She exemplifies through demonstrating the difference between occupying two 'worlds' that classify the same person or group differently at the same time. For instance, one 'world' perceives the person as 'stereotypically latin' while the other perceives him/her as 'simply latin'. In this case, the two classifications are different but they happen at the same time to people who "are part of different 'worlds'" (pp. 10-11). Thus, the same person can live both situations but they are completely aware of both worlds without mixing up between them. Therefore, people can occupy several and different 'worlds' concurrently (Mcweeny, 2010).

Lugones (1987) used the term 'world travelling' in order to describe the 'flexibility' of 'outsiders' to change from one world into another. She sheds light on the fact that 'outsiders' are perceived in a

certain way and associated with a certain image in the mainstream society which leads to their familiarity with such a 'constructed' image. As a result, the 'outsider' develops a 'flexible' character through which s/he can easily move "from the mainstream construction of life where she is constructed as an outsider to other constructions of life where she is more or less 'at home.'" (p. 3). Hence, Lugones (1987) considers this 'flexibility' as an essential step and she calls such a move from one construction to another as 'world-travelling'. In addition to that, she highly recommends that by travelling to 'each other's worlds', 'outsiders' and inhabitants of the mainstream must develop the ability to 'love each other' (pp. 3-4). For instance, when "Sirine has just turned from the leben to the eggplant when Hanif bursts into English, "Of course I love Iraq, Iraq is my home—and there is, of course, no going home--" and then back into Arabic" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 11). Hanif's expression of love of Iraq and that he will not go there as well as his mixture of English and Arabic to express that feeling is highly symbolic. This suggests his will and ability to travel to his world (the Arab world) and the American one as he seems to "love" being in the world of the mainstream society.

Lugones (1987) adds that persons who experience 'world-travelling' are characterized by "being different in different "worlds" and of having the capacity to remember other "worlds" and [them]selves in them" (p. 11). That is, a person can have a 'memory' of the 'world' he travels to as s/he can feel pleased and satisfied about that 'world'. Lugones (1987) clearly states: "The shift from being one person to being a different person is what I call "travel"" (pp. 11-12). However, she insists on the fact that the person is not necessarily aware of this difference. Stated differently, by changing from one person to another, she does not mean that the person plays the role of or imitates someone else. Rather, that person acts in a "particular way" in different worlds (Lugones, 1987, pp. 11-12).

As opposed to the "arrogant perception", Lugones also refers to Frye's statement: "The loving eye is a contrary of the arrogant eye" (as cited in Lugones, 1987, p. 5). Put differently, when a person is perceived "arrogantly", he is a victim of racism, stereotype, etc. But

when s/he is perceived with a “loving eye”, s/he can be related and integrated in mainstream societies without being considered as a slave or as inferior. In this novel, American characters are pictured as modest, humble, and treat Arab characters well without being “arrogant perceivers”. For instance, “Sirine learned about food from her parents. Even though her mother was American, her father always said his wife thought about food like an Arab”(Abu-Jaber, 2003, pp. 39-40). In the light of this quotation, one can consider Sirine's mother as a lover of “world travelling” though she is American as she is the embodiment of the “loving eye”. That is, she is able as she likes to travel to the Arab world through food, without trying to act as superior.

Lugones (1987) also introduced another interesting concept in relation to ‘world travelling’ which she calls ‘identification’. According to her, “[t]o the extent that we learn to perceive others arrogantly or come to see them only as products of arrogant perception and continue to perceive them that way, we fail to identify with them-fail to love them-in this particularly deep way” (p. 4). To put it another way, sometimes persons fail to travel to others’ ‘worlds’ because of the discourse they have been associated with or were generated as its effects. Thus, those who are perceived ‘arrogantly’ cannot be seen positively and hence, members of the mainstream cannot travel to their world most of the time. On the contrary, she strongly urges minorities to travel to the ‘arrogant perceiver’s world’ because this is a way of resistance, she believes. For her, they cannot be ‘purely’ separated from them. They depend on each other and travel to each others’ ‘worlds’ “without having to be their subordinate, their slave, their servant” (Lugones, 1987, p. 8). This means the inferiority of one group is not a necessary condition in such relations.

To illustrate this point, Lugones (1987) refers to her situation with her mother whom she fails to love, to a certain extent. Later, she was able to love her mother and this was through ‘travelling’ to her mother’s ‘world’. After all, she started to see through her mother’s eyes and the image they have both been associated with, as women; and the way her mother feels and perceives herself. This ‘travelling’ was the only means through which Lugones was able to love her mother. She stopped disregarding her and started to see her as a ‘subject’ and therefore she concludes:

We are fully dependent on each other for the possibility of being understood and without this understanding we are not intelligible, we do not make sense, we are not solid, visible, integrated; we are lacking. So travelling to each other's "worlds" would enable us to be through loving each other (1987, p.8).

Lugones and her mother, then, though both are women, failed to inhabit each others' worlds at the beginning. But once they did so, they realized that through travelling, they develop a positive sense of their selves, position, and importance. Travelling enabled them also to love both "worlds" and hence they increased their acceptability of each others' opinions and perspectives.

In the novel, though Sirine looks an American character who is dominated by the American culture, principles, etc., she succeeds to "identify" with Hanif as an Arab because she does not consider him as inferior or subordinate to her. Rather, she has a deep impulse to travel to both "worlds", his and hers as the following conversation between her and Hanif demonstrates:

"How lovely," Sirine says. "What a lovely voice she has."

"It's Fairuz," Han says. "I was going to play some American music for you but I guess I don't actually own any. I meant for tonight to be all-American for you." "But I'm not really all-American," Sirine says.

"Well, then I hope you will tell me what you are," Han says.

Sirine follows him into the kitchen, where a damp wisp is curling out of the top of the stove. She admires the square shape and fit of his hands on the oven door. She inhales and realizes what she's smelling. "Oh! You made meat loaf?" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 58)

This citation is indicative of both Hanif and Sirine's willingness to "identify" with each other. This is illustrated through her admiration of Fairuz's voice, though she is an Arab singer and Hanif's intention to play only American music for Sirine. This shows the two characters' respect for each others' cultures and their avoidance of developing an 'arrogant perception' toward each other. In addition to that, Sirine's declaration that she is not "all-American" reinforces Lugones' rejection of 'purity' among groups. Worded differently, Sirine cannot be purely separated from her Arab roots and therefore, she cannot adopt the American culture only. Thus, she identifies with

Arabs, Hanif in particular, and shows her dependence on them and their 'worlds'.

As previously stated, Lugones (1987) suggested that the person must be satisfied when travelling to 'others' worlds'. She proposed few ways for those people to feel 'at ease' in the 'worlds' they travel to, as the following quotation indicates:

The first way of being at ease in a particular "world" is by being a fluent speaker in that "world." I know all the norms that there are to be followed, I know all the words that there are to be spoken. I know all the moves. I am confident. Another way of being at ease is by being normatively happy. I agree with all the norms, I could not love any norms better. I am asked to do just what I want to do or what I think I should do. At ease. Another way of being at ease in a "world" is by being humanly bonded. I am with those I love and they love me too. It should be noticed that I may be with those I love and be at ease because of them in a "world" that is otherwise as hostile to me as "worlds" get. Finally one may be at ease because one has a history with others that is shared, especially daily history..." (p. 12).

Hence, based on Lugones' perspective, one can feel comfortable in a certain 'world' when s/he gains confidence through getting familiar with all the pillars of a certain society. Such comfort is also felt when s/he can live freely and independently without any pressures. Other aspects that allow the person to feel at ease in any 'world' is when s/he is surrounded by persons they like or use them as a means to heal his/her wounds caused by stereotypes, or when they share and remember some events that form part of their history even if they are not 'humanly bonded'. In *Crescent*, though Sirine is not purely American still, she is an *American-looking* character to the Arab students. Thus, Hanif classifies her as belonging to the American "world" as he is completely satisfied when he contributes to that world as he has no complex mentioning its advantages as the following passage highlights:

"Would you like some?" He offers her a glass. Startled, she nods and then lifts it to her cheek a moment. A few students hover around Hanif but he doesn't look at them. "I saw that you had some prayer beads--" He holds out one hand as if imitating her. "The way you held them was very delightful—very American" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 18).

Sirine's description of Hanif's gesture as American demonstrates Hanif as a character who feels "at ease" in her American "world" because he "is surrounded by [someone he] like[s]", as Lugones emphasizes, as he got accustomed to the American way of life. Also, Sirine's feeling of obligation towards praying is justified because she has some Arab roots. Accordingly, though she has never been in the Arab world physically, she is satisfied and feeling "at ease" learning about and travelling to that world simply because they have a shared history. This idea can be strengthened through this example: "[Sirine] has never actually tried to pray before. She doesn't want to tell him this. It's like not knowing how to play an instrument or how to speak a foreign language—something she feels she should know" (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 61). This means that because Sirine has a shared history with Arabs and though she has never been in an Arab country, she feels obliged to learn to pray. Therefore, Sirine uses her shared history and Hanif utilizes his familiarity with the American world as means to feel "at ease" in each others' 'worlds'.

Even the characters that are purely American, like Nathan, show strong feelings of love to travel to the Arab "world". However, according to Lugones, Nathan's feelings are justified since he has once been in Iraq. Thus, he feels he has a certain "memory" as he shares "a daily history" with them and that is why Nathan, in one instance, travels to the Arab "world" through knaffea as the following excerpt shows: "Oh, knaffea," Nathan says longingly (Abu-Jaber, 2003, p. 29). Thus, Abu-Jaber's depiction of American as well as Arab characters as willing to travel to each other's "worlds" and as feeling "at ease" with each other illustrates Lugones' "point that we all exist, and our actions have meaning in, several different worlds of sense simultaneously" (Moya, 2006, p. 200). On that account, they do not have to be treating each other stereotypically.

5. Conclusion

Last but not least, one can consider Abu-Jaber's *Crescent* as a counter-narrative because it positively presents Arab and American characters, showing their deep impulse to inhabit both the Eastern and Western worlds simultaneously. As a counter-discourse, this novel pictures immigrants as willing to develop a "multiplicitous self" and travel to the Western "world" with a "loving eye". Hence, Abu-Jaber can be classified as a writer who encourages multiplicity; and the way Eastern and Western characters perceive each other is considered as a symbol of and a call for harmony and the two communities' perception of each other with a "loving eye".

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