



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***HYSTERIA AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN SELECTED NOVELS BY
FAY WELDON AND NAWAL EL SAADAWI***

OMAR MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

FBMK 2016 74



**HYSTERIA AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN SELECTED NOVELS BY
FAY WELDON AND NAWAL EL SAADAWI**

By

OMAR MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

November 2016



All material contained within the thesis, including without limitation text, logos, icons, photographs and all other artwork, is copyright material of Universiti Putra Malaysia unless otherwise stated. Use may be made of any material contained within the thesis for non-commercial purposes from the copyright holder. Commercial use of material may only be made with the express, prior, written permission of Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Copyright © Universiti Putra Malaysia



For my parents, who have done a lot for me.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**HYSTERIA AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN SELECTED NOVELS
BY FAY WELDON AND NAWAL EL SAADAWI**

By

OMAR MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

November 2016

Chairman : Assoc. Prof. Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, PhD
Faculty : Modern Languages and Communications

Hysteria is a quite common phenomenon that prevailed in the twentieth century literature, as such, for its importance, it needs to be highlighted. This thesis focuses on the female authored texts that knit hysteria in the very fabric of their material. I argue that patriarchy, subjugation, sexual violation and the resulting psychological disturbance, gnaw females' subjectivity and help in enacting hysteria intentionally or otherwise. Fay Weldon and Nawal El Saadawi are postmodern feminist contemporary writers, focusing on the problems and maladies of women. In Weldon's *Praxis* and *The Life and Loves of a She- Devil*, and El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile*, hysteria surfaces on female characters' bodies revealing the shortcomings and problems they suffer from. In this study, hysteric subjects tear the norms imposed by individuals or the society and transform from silent subjects into revolutionary individuals. Because their bodies are invaded and haunted, female characters cannot speak and even if they can, they will not be heard. Consequently, they develop a hysteric body language and reflect what their tongues could not communicate. Using Freud's and Irigaray's concepts of *hysteria* alongside with Kristeva's concept of *Abjection*, I will investigate what drives women to be hysterics. Is it a consequence of sexual fantasies and a result of an earlier trauma as Freud theorized? Or is it a protest that comes out of repression and silencing practiced by the society as Irigaray puts it? What role does Abjection play in initiating or healing hysteria and absolving the subject? How can hysteria be inferred through Freudian and Irigarayan ideas in certain texts? Investigating hysteria according to these readings has shown the reasons that fall behind the infliction of hysteria and simultaneously revealed, through abjection, how new identities are restructured. The hysterics rebelled against degradation, suppression and exploitation using the body as the only medium of expression and managed to restructure and actualize themselves by employing abjection. Hence, this expressive subversion becomes women's strategy to reclaim power.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

HISTERIA DAN PEMBENTUKAN IDENTITI DI DALAM KARYA FAY WELDON DAN NAWAL EL SADAWI

Oleh

OMAR MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

November 2016

Pengerusi : Prof. Madya Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, PhD
Fakulti : Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi

Histeria merupakan satu fenomena lazim yang wujud dalam kesusasteraan abad kedua puluh, dan oleh sebab kepentingannya, fenomen ini perlu ditonjolkan. Tesis ini berfokus kepada teks yang ditulis oleh penulis wanita yang membicarakan histeria dalam karya mereka. Saya menegaskan bahawa patriarki, penindasan, keganasan seks dan akibat daripada gangguan psikologi telah mempengaruhi subjektiviti wanita dan membantu dalam mencetuskan histeria dengan sengaja atau tidak sengaja. Fay Weldon dan Nawal El Saadawi adalah antara penulis wanita feminis kontemporari pascamoden yang memfokuskan masalah dan penyakit wanita dalam karya mereka. Dalam karya Weldon, *Praxis* dan *The Life and Loves of the She-Devil*, dan Karya El Saadawi, *Woman at Point Zero* dan *God Dies by the Nile*, histeria dipaparkan melalui tubuh watak wanita dengan menyerlahkan kelemahan dan masalah yang dideritai mereka. Dalam kajian ini, watak wanita yang mengalami histeria menolak norma-norma sosial yang telah ditetapkan oleh individu atau masyarakat, dan berubah daripada watak senyap kepada individu yang radikal. Oleh sebab tubuh mereka diserang dan dihantui, semua watak ini tidak boleh bersuara, dan jika boleh sekalipun, suara mereka tidak akan didengar. Oleh yang demikian, mereka membentuk bahasa tubuh yang memperlihatkan pengaruh histeria yang tidak dapat dikatakan secara lisan. Dengan menggunakan konsep histeria oleh Freud dan Irigaray seiring dengan konsep Abjection (penghinaan) oleh Kristeva, saya akan meneliti apakah punca wanita mengalami histeria. Adakah disebabkan oleh fantasi seksual dan kesan trauma yang terdahulu, seperti yang dikatakan oleh Freud? Atau satu manifestasi protes akibat tekanan dan paksaan untuk tidak bersuara yang diamalkan oleh masyarakat, seperti yang ditonjolkan oleh Irigaray. Apakah peranan yang dimainkan oleh Abjection (penghinaan) dalam mencetuskan dan menyembuhkan histeria serta membebaskan watak-watak wanita ini? Bagaimana histeria dapat dirujuk dengan menggunakan idea Freud dan Irigaray dalam analisis teks. Dengan menganalisis histeria berdasarkan semua rujukan ini, kajian ini dapat menunjukkan sebab-sebab yang berlaku disebalik perlakuan histeria dan secara langsung terbukti bahawa melalui Abjection (penghinaan) subjektiviti baharu dapat distrukturkan semula. Watak wanita histeria menolak degradasi, penindasan dan eksploitasi yang menggunakan tubuh sebagai satu-satunya medium ekspresi, dan

berjaya menstrukturkan semula serta meyakinkan diri mereka dengan menggunakan Abjection (penghinaan). Oleh yang demikian, ekspresi subversif ini menjadi strategi wanita menuntut balik kuasa.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise and thanks are due to Allah for granting me the fortitude to be persistent in my studies. I would not have been able to accomplish this work without the support of many people. I am deeply indebted to Associate Professor Dr Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, who has been a mother and a supervisor at the same time. She has done a lot through her detailed reading of the drafts, invaluable guidance and endless support she provided through this journey. Words fail me to thank my co-supervisor Dr Hardev Kaur, who has been my friend and supporter, for her encouragement and help on many levels. Thanks also to Dr Manimangai my third supervisor for her help and warm welcome.

I am also grateful to the dedicated staff of UPM library, Perpustakaan Sultan Abdul Samad, for their assistance in providing me with required books and articles from local and foreign libraries.

I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues for their help and support. Thanks to my colleague and friend Mr. Mohamad Fleih for his time in discussing many issues related to my thesis, his help is unforgettable. Thanks are due to my dearest friend Abdulhameed who provided me with the family atmosphere and made my stay enjoyable in Malaysia and thanks to my colleague Camelia for her help and support.

Finally, I wish to pay a heartfelt tribute to my parents, wife and siblings for their support. They have been a nourishing source of help and encouragement that made me capable of doing my work easily and on time.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 3 November 2016 to conduct the final examination of Omar Mohammed Abdullah on his thesis entitled "Hysteria and Identity Formation in Selected Novels by Fay Weldon and Nawal El Saadawi" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:

Rosli bin Talif, PhD

Associate Professor
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Arbaayah binti Ali Termizi, PhD

Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Shakila Abdul Manan, PhD

Professor
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Malaysia
(External Examiner)

Ugo Rubeo, PhD

Professor
University of Rome "La Sapienza"
Italy
(External Examiner)



NOR AINI AB. SHUKOR, PhD

Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: 27 December 2016

This dissertation was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, PhD

Associate Professor

Faculty of Modern Languages and Communications

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Chairman)

Hardev Kaur, PhD

Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Modern Languages and Communications

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Member)

Manimangai Mani, PhD

Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Modern Languages and Communications

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Member)

ROBIAH BINTI YUNUS, PhD

Professor and Dean

School of Graduate Studies

Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

Declaration by graduate student

I hereby confirm that:

- this thesis is my original work
- quotations, illustrations and citations have been duly referenced
- the thesis has not been submitted previously or concurrently for any other degree at any institutions
- intellectual property from the thesis and copyright of thesis are fully-owned by Universiti Putra Malaysia, as according to the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Research) Rules 2012;
- written permission must be owned from supervisor and deputy vice –chancellor (Research and innovation) before thesis is published (in the form of written, printed or in electronic form) including books, journals, modules, proceedings, popular writings, seminar papers, manuscripts, posters, reports, lecture notes, learning modules or any other materials as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Research) Rules 2012;
- there is no plagiarism or data falsification/fabrication in the thesis, and scholarly integrity is upheld as according to the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) and the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Research) Rules 2012. The thesis has undergone plagiarism detection software

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name and Matric No.: Omar Mohammed Abdullah, GS37253

Declaration by Members of Supervisory Committee

This is to confirm that:

- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) were adhered to.

Signature: _____
Name of
Chairman of
Supervisory Committee: Assoc.Prof. Dr.Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya

Signature: _____
Name of
Member of
Supervisory Committee: Dr.Hardev Kaur

Signature: _____
Name of
Member of
Supervisory Committee: Dr.Manimangai Mani

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	i
ABSTRAK	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
APPROVAL	v
DECLARATION	vii
LIST OF DIAGRAM	xii
 CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Research Questions	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study	4
1.5 Significance of the Study	5
1.6 Conceptual Framework	6
1.7 Methodology	8
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study	12
1.9 Justification of Texts Selection	12
1.10 Definition of Terms	15
 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	16
2.2 Overview of Hysteria	16
2.2.1 Hysteria in French Domain	17
2.2.2 Beyond Charcot, Freud and Breuer	20
2.3 Hysteria from Freud to Irigaray: Sexuality to Society	21
2.4 Major Theorists and Hysteria	25
2.5 Fay Weldon: Woman, Mother and Writer	29
2.5.1 Past Studies on <i>Praxis</i>	31
2.5.2 Past Studies on <i>The Life and Loves of a She-Devil</i>	33
2.6 Nawal El Saadawi in the Literary Context	37
2.6.1 Past Studies on <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	40
2.6.2 Past Studies on <i>God Dies by the Nile</i>	45
2.7 Conclusion	47
 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	
3.1 Why Freud and Psychoanalysis	49
3.1.1 Freud: Conceptualization of Hysteria	50
3.1.2 Fright Hysteria	51
3.1.3 Conversion hysteria	52
3.1.4 Freud and Hysteria: The First Phase	53
3.1.5 Evolvment of Hysteria: The Second Phase	55
3.1.6 Dora's Case of Hysteria: The Third Phase	55
3.2 Luce Irigaray	57

3.2.1	Irigaray, an Extension of Freud	57
3.2.2	Mimicry	59
3.2.3	Masquerade	61
3.2.4	Hysteria	62
3.3	Julia Kristeva	65
3.3.1	Kristeva, Freud and Lacan	65
3.3.2	Abjection and Identity Formation	66
3.3.3	The Abject Mother	67
3.4	Conclusion	69
4.	SEXUALITY AND HYSTERIA	
4.1	Introduction	71
4.2	Hysteria in <i>Praxis</i>	71
4.2.1	Praxis as a Hysteric Subject	72
4.2.2	Fright Hysteria	75
4.2.3	Praxis, Hysteria and Society	76
4.2.4	Conversion Hysteria	77
4.3	Hysteria in <i>The Life and Loves of a She-Devil</i>	78
4.3.1	Eating Disorders (Anorexia and Bulimia)	80
4.3.2	Hysteria in Society	81
4.4	Hysteria in <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	83
4.4.1	Freudian Hysteria and Firdaus' Vicissitude	84
4.4.2	Firdaus and Fright Hysteria	86
4.4.3	Conversion Hysteria	88
4.5	Hysteria in <i>God Dies by the Nile</i>	90
4.5.1	Fright Hysteria in <i>God Dies by the Nile</i>	91
4.5.2	Hysteria and Society	92
4.5.3	Sexuality and Hysteria	94
4.6	Conclusion	96
5.	SOCIETY AND HYSTERIA	
5.1	Introduction	97
5.2	Hysteria in <i>Praxis</i>	97
5.2.1	Praxis' Hysteria Within the Family	98
5.2.2	Hysteria, Society and Praxis	99
5.2.3	Mimicry in <i>Praxis</i>	101
5.2.4	Masquerade in <i>Praxis</i>	103
5.3.	Hysteria in <i>The Life and Loves of a She-Devil</i>	104
5.3.1	Mimicry in <i>The Life and Loves of a She-Devil</i>	107
5.3.2	Masquerade in <i>The Life and Loves of a She-Devil</i>	110
5.4	Hysteria in <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	112
5.4.1	Firdaus from Slavery to Hysteria	114
5.4.2	Mimicry in <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	116
5.5	Hysteria in <i>God Dies by the Nile</i>	118
5.5.1	Mimicry in <i>God Dies by the Nile</i>	121
5.6	Conclusion	122

6.	OBJECTION AND SUBJECTIVITY	
6.1	Introduction	123
6.2	Abjection in <i>Praxis</i>	123
6.2.1	Abjection within the Family	124
6.2.2	Incest and Abjection	126
6.2.3	Euthanasia: An Act of Abjection	127
6.3	Abjection in <i>The Life and Loves of a She-Devil</i>	129
6.3.1	Ruth, Society and Abjection.	130
6.3.2	Abjection Via Plastic Surgery	133
6.4	Abjection in <i>Woman at Point Zero</i>	135
6.4.1	Bisexuality and Abjection	137
6.4.2	Abjection and Society	141
6.5	Abjection in <i>God Dies by the Nile</i>	143
6.5.1	Interpersonal Abjection	143
6.5.2	Zakeya, an Abject Figure	145
6.6	Conclusion	147
7.	CONCLUSION	
7.1	Conclusion	148
7.2	Contributions of the Study	152
7.3	Recommendations	153
	WORKS CITED	154
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	163
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	164

LIST OF DIAGRAM

Diagram	Page
1.1 Methodology	11
3.1 Conceptual Framework	70



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

[H]ysteria tells a story, and specialists in understanding and interpreting stories know ways to read it. As hysteria has moved from the clinic to the library, from the case study to the novel, from bodies to books, from stage to screen, it has developed its own prototypes archetypes, and plots (Showalter 1997, 6).

1.1 Background of the Study

Hysteria is one of the main problems inhabiting the female subjects. Many of those females suffer hysteric symptoms which manifest as a consequence of sexual violations such as rape, molestation and female circumcision in certain patriarchal-centered communities. These violations lead to psychological traumas which can eventually give rise to hysteria. Hysteria is read as 'the female malady', a disease or sickness women suffer from and this reading could be one among other readings of hysteria as it can also be read as a transgressive force by which women achieve or regain some lost desire. As such, hysteria is sometimes considered as a non-verbal language employed as a form of protest against the patriarchal law which is a culprit in bequeathing hysteric symptoms to women. Symptoms of fear, disturbed sleep, marginalization and others are products of patriarchy which emanate on women's bodies (See section 2.2).

Hysteria has been studied as a phenomenon in literary discourse; Christina Wald explores the interrelatedness among hysteria, trauma and melancholia with relevance to the interpretations of Freud and Lacan. Hysteria is revealed by some scholars as Helene Cixous, Catherine Clement, Luce Irigaray, Elaine Showalter and others, as a powerful mode in discussing "the exclusion of feminine subjectivity that is intrinsic in patriarchal western cultures" (Wald 2). Those critics revealed the role of the hysteric as a figure who oscillates between "victimhood and rebellion" in a male-inscribed discourse. Thus, hysteria in this perspective is shown as a weapon of resistance sometimes worn to achieve certain goals. Wald presents protagonists whose conduct displays hysteric symptoms which invites the audience to think about the repressed unconscious psychic processes. Hence, one can conclude that hysteria oscillates between subversion and affirmation, between rebellion against norms of femininity and reinforcement of the image of the debilitated and mute woman. Hysteria is vividly reflected in literature which highlights the issue that hysteria is no more a clinical issue, but a social phenomenon.

Peter Logan and Roy Porter explored hysteria in a more social level in *Nerves and Narratives: a Cultural History of Hysteria in the Nineteenth Century British Prose* (1997). Hysteria is associated more with literature and the long-deemed medical case history is considered as stories and narratives to be told. This study focuses on the doctors as therapists which is indicated in the word 'nerve' in the title. The central

characteristics of the nervous body and its inclination to talk about itself are emphasized. Logan and Porter contended that hysteria is associated with women's exclusion from the sphere of representation, the Lacanian Symbolic which is definitely male - gendered. According to them, the hysterical discourse has become more valuable as a counter reaction because it is the means of locating a space for women in the phallogentric scope which terminated women. Hysteria is successfully attached to the literary space through exploring the hysterical symptoms in works as Marry Wollstonecraft's *Mary and Maria*, Mary Hays' *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and others.

However, the discourse of hysteria is employed by women as a strategy characterizing woman's rhetoric. Logan Dale Green (2004) tried to locate the feminist discourse, the women rhetoric which tries to gain power and ascend by hysteria. This discourse, according to Green, carries three representative themes employed by women since the eleventh century by Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) until Cixous in the 20th century. Such themes as humility; which refers to inferiority as a means to secure approval, physicality; (more relevant to my study) which depends on using the body in imagery and gesture, and authority; which is a claim to voice the hidden and being heard, are used by women to achieve their aims. Green asserts "women have invented strategies in response to their gendered situation that differ from the strategies of these more culturally placed in the master discourse" (2). Then, the hysterical subject addressing the women of his study, despite the apparent powerlessness, rhetorically challenges institutions of power and act in a way that run against the grain. Therefore, hysteria is read as "a means of resistance, an acknowledgment of the unbearable contradictions and suffocation of women's existence" and yet, this resistance was a failure (Camhi 15). As such, psychoanalysis emerged from the silencing of hysterical bodies.

Hysteria takes a new shape not as a disease in clinics but as a phenomenon in the society. In *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) Breuer and Freud managed to identify hysteria not as the classic Greeks and earliest French, but they observed symptoms including; anaesthesia, neuralgia, vomiting, paralyses, anorexia, hallucinations – which they described as *Petite Hystérie* (4). Hysteria, then, is a consequence to "social oppression of women throughout history" which is recognized in such a mechanical way and this issue carries in its waves "serious implications for hysteria" (Gilman 93).

Roy Porter argued that being a hysterical woman means showing a battery of incapacitating symptoms which symbolize helplessness, enfeeblement, and immobilization and acting these out through sickness pantomime. Hence, hysteria is considered "mock escape by self- mutilation" (Gilman 229). In this regard, Juliet Mitchell in her *Feminism and Psychoanalysis* contends that, hysterical symptoms are "an alternative representation of a forbidden wish which has broken through from the un-conscious, whence it was banished, into consciousness-but in an 'unrecognizable' form" (9). So, there are many reasons that surface hysteria, it is not only "modelled 'stylistically' on its surrounding culture, but it might also be a consequence of the tensions, conflicts and crises of a specific culture" (Wald, 27).

Helene Cixous also has claimed that the “female malady” is a real style of expressing feminine identity and this is clearly shown in observing minutely that “hysteria is a kind of female language that opposes the rigid structures of male discourse and thought” and hysteric characters lost the ability to speak and their tongues are cut off and it’s the body that talks and man doesn’t hear the body (Biswas 326). Cixous attributes hysteria to where women live, the culture and the sexual role played in this culture. In her *The Newly Born Woman* she says “[T]he hysteric suffers from symbolic transgression as much as she suffers from memories. She suffers because her father, her brother and her brother in law come to act as sexual aggressors arousing feelings that will convert to suffering” (44).

1.2 The Statement of the Problem

While there has been much scholarly work of exploring and tracing hysteria in western literature, culture and media, less concern is paid to contemporary Middle Eastern literature, especially fiction. Hysteria is originally theorized and developed by Freud in collaboration with Joseph Breuer in their *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) and Freud later undertook responsibility and developed hysteria in his *The Aetiology of Hysteria* (1896). As a psychoanalytic disease, hysteria invaded fields like literature, culture and media. Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s (1860-1935) “The Yellow Paper” (1892) is one of the first fictional works in which hysteria can be traced. Also, twentieth century black women writers are clear examples in whose works hysteria can be traced visibly; Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Gloria Naylor to name a few. White writers, as well, referred to this disease as a phenomenon attached to women curbing and crippling their identity.

Less attention has been paid to hysteria especially in contemporary Middle Eastern domain, namely in Nawal El Saadawi, in comparison with the British Fay Weldon. Weldon’s and El Saadawi’s oeuvres hide hysteric elements which have been left hardly unexplored, especially through a psycho-feminist point of view.

There is hardly any research, so far, analyzing Weldon’s and El Saadawi’s texts on hysteria because these two writers belong to two different social, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Rita Faulkner (2005) and Deema Ammari (2007) referred separately to hysteria in El Saadawi but within a postcolonial domain. These two writers did not explore hysteria through Freudian, Irigararian and Kristevan readings all together. As such, my framework incorporates in subverting hysteria as one of the many problems that infect women which leads to ‘abjecting’ the world around and liberating their identities. Aforementioned studies, although have made a good contribution in exploring the female gendered roles which are affected by hysteria, they have mostly concentrated on achieving this through a postcolonial perspective, neglecting that hysteria and abjection are significant breeders of subjective Identity.

There are some studies that treat Weldon and El Saadawi’s works psychoanalytically but they lack the conflation of Freud, Irigaray and Kristeva which I employ in looking at hysteria as the ‘female trouble’ that leads women to actualize themselves.

This, in turn, leads the study to employ Kristeva's abjection as a concept employed in absolving the self and constructing identity. I seek to indicate that hysteria is inflicted by repression of desires and fantasies, social suppression, and patriarchy. These elements lead women to revolutionize against the current norms, and through abjection, act what they could not say through their tongues in order to liberate themselves and construct their identities.

1.3 Research Questions

My research intends to answer the following questions:

- What are the reasons that stand behind women's being hysterics in *Praxis* and *The Life and Loves of a She- Devil* by Fay Weldon and *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile* by Nawal El Saadawi?
- How is hysteria portrayed in the selected novels?
- How can the concepts of Freud, Irigaray and Kristeva be employed to analyze hysteric female characters in the selected novels?
- How is abjection manifested as a means for actualizing the self and constructing subjectivity?

1.4 Research Objectives

This research intends to:

- Identify the different representations and characteristics of hysteria and highlight the importance this phenomenon adds to the novels through the disorders incorporated by female identity.
- Examine the authors' representation of hysteria in the selected novels based on Freud's and Irigaray's readings and concepts.
- Explore the impact of hysteria on silent and submissive women and examine if abjection helps in the process of self- actualization.

A study on hysteria and its reflection in fiction cannot be implemented properly unless by identifying the characteristics of this disease and how it can be indicated through women's bodies. It has many symptoms which clearly reflect the characteristics of the personality it infects. Hysteria adds a lot to the novels selected for this study. It indicates the portrayal of the characters, the fabric of the society and its fragility and the status of women who represent the very embodiment of hysteria in the allocated texts. The troubles suffered by the female gender can surface visibly through the exploration of hysteria. All of this can be traced under the first objective of this study.

The second objective will be achieved through the employment of Freud's and Irigaray's interpretations of hysteria and their application on the selected texts. Hysteria can be studied through many perspectives because of its huge elements and its variety. Many critics since the time of Charcot at the end of the 19th century till the present time, looked at hysteria and studied it under different names and titles. Most recently are the studies of Elaine Showalter whom I will refer to later. Applying Freud's and Irigaray's points of view on my texts will show how these two concepts are important for the understanding of hysteria on one hand. On the other hand, it will lead to the full exploration of the selected texts and the consequent multiple readings of these texts. Examining hysteria can also be indicated through exploring the themes of prostitution, patriarchy, body exploitation, and other themes that engage women in its very center.

Self-actualization, constructing identity, and acquiring subjectivity are the focus of the third objective. Hysteria is an infection targeting women but sometimes they employ it to achieve their actualization. Usually, hysteric characters are those who are submissive, obedient, and simple characters in the first phase of their being hysterics, as in the case of; Praxis, Ruth, Firdaus and Zakeya. This objective also seeks to prove the workability of Kristeva's concept of abjection in relevance to hysteria. I seek to prove that abjection is a kind of filter the hysteric characters exploit in order to free themselves from the burdens represented by the symptoms of hysteria. Their use of abjection will lead to the actualization of the self and the construction of the aspired identity. Under this objective, I will examine the main characters who suffer from hysteria and those who resorted to abjection as their defensive weapon. Those characters are silent and submissive ones who change drastically at the end of the stories. This kind of revolution undertaken by these characters as a result to hysteria and their undergoing abjection may lead them to construct themselves through a process that aims at liberating their desires and selves. They may produce of themselves then, free and unburdened characters to undertake the constructive role adopted by their hysteric predecessor Anna O. in the 19th century.

1.5 Significance of Study

Exploring the female character's suffering and their quest for identity formation in Weldon's and El Saadawi's works will enrich the scholarship on their fiction. Because so much research has been done on early twentieth century novelists, when hysteria flourished, and late twentieth century when the black women writers undertook the revival of hysteria in their fiction, the majority of studies on hysteria approach the subject matter using Freudian or Lacanian or even Irigararian concepts each separately. Moreover, there is not enough research on Fay Weldon's novels concerning hysteria, that is why it needs to be explored. Regarding El Saadawi, Rita Faulkner's *National Allegory: Land and Body in Nawal El Saadawi and Asia Djebar* (2005) touches hysteria in certain parts but not through a psycho-feminist perspective, otherwise through a postcolonial one and also does not provide full exploration and analysis of the same selected texts. Another study is Deema Ammari's *Cross-Cultural Exchanges: Nawal El Saadawi and Feminism in Arab*

World (2007) in which she cites a postcolonial approach in relation to a psychoanalytical one, constructing the relation between the female and *Other* on similar scales to that of the colonizer and colonized. Both studies evince postcolonial elements in their restructuring of the female identity which is different than what this research, ubiquitously undergoes.

The significance of this study lies in its juxtaposing Western and Middle Eastern texts to explore hysteria in two different scopes. This underscores the motives and results of hysteria and its effect on female characters in two different societies. Also significance lies in citng Weldon's and El Saadawi's works together regarding hysteria and abjection which enriches the scholarship on the fiction of those two writers.

The uniqueness of this study also lies in its framework beside the writers. Normally, researchers employ one or two theorists in their application of Hysteria which is Freudian or Lacanian, sometimes others. This study presents three different readings by Freud and Irigaray from one side and Kristeva's *Abjection* which is a way women resort to in their disgorgement of hysteria to initiate their identity, from another side. The amalgamation of these three concepts altogether is significant enough to put an end to the idea that hysteric subjects are incurable via applying these concepts to dehysterize the female subjects and to help re-forming their identities.

1.6 Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework of my research is planned to include feminist and psychoanalytic use of hysteria. It is limited to Freud's reading of hysteria as a background study and his analyzed case histories, Irigaray's concept of hysteria and Kristeva's abjection.

Exploring hysterics needs a psychoanalytic lens because it sheds light on what runs in the mind of the character from memories, motives, perceptions that lead one to be a hysteric. It is also psychoanalysis that enables the interpretation of oppression, molestation and harassment by one's family or other individuals of the society which constitute possible grounds for forming the hysteric. The individual personality development is the main concern of psychoanalytic theory, that is why it sets a framework in which the unconscious structure is unstable and in constant changes affected by the interaction among one's childhood experiences, drives, physiology and desires. This theoretical system when applied to literary criticism offers a rich and powerful perspective.

Freud worked on hysteria from a psychopathological point of view and offered a bunch of reasons and justifications for why 'women' turn hysterics. Furnishing his claims with his Oedipal and pre-Oedipal theories, he links everything in his claims to the sexual drive. In his book, *Studies on Hysteria* with Joseph Breuer, Freud claims that hysteria is a result to sexual trauma and all the cases he treated proved that their

being hysterics is a result to sexual molestation, incest or repression of sexual desires.

Freud's theory lies in the emergence of reminiscences and memories of some sexual harassment which are kept in the memory in the form of traumas. He confirms "Hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences" (Breuer and Freud 7). These reminiscences are memories that are stored and repressed in the unconscious, just to surface years later disguised as symptoms. According to Freud, these symptoms appear as a result to a motive that awakens them and emerge in the form of hysteria.

The repression we talk about, is a direct result to sexual motives as Joseph Breuer predicts and as Freud confirms. Freud holds the idea that the sexual trauma is the base of every disturbance and it is the repressed memories of sexual assaults, molestation and incest, inflicted in childhood, that create hysteria.

In his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) Freud declared that libido is the central psychological underpinning for humans, and as Christopher Bolas puts it "the energy that was supplied by unconscious sexual drives. 'It is the sexual function' he [Freud] announced, 'that I look upon as the foundation of hysteria and of the psychoneuroses in general'" (Bolas 146).

Hysteria could be inflicted due to reasons other than those offered by Freud, as Luce Irigaray advocates ideas on hysteria which are complementary. She reads hysteria as a protest against patriarchy and locates it outside the Symbolic order. The hysteric according to Irigaray, "articulates' a corporeal discourse; her symptoms 'speak' on her behalf" (Grosz 135). So, hysteria according to Irigararian ideals can be read as a product of the public as well as one's own repression to some stored reminiscences. It is then "the *symptomatic acting out* of a proposition the hysteric cannot articulate" (Italics in original) (Grosz 134). She supports the mutability of women as a main reason to hysteria and considers it as a form of repressed words that lead women to such state asserting that the hysteric "senses something re-mains to be said that resists all speech" (Irigaray 1985a, 193). Irigaray extends Freud's ideas in including the role of the mother; she suggests that hysterical discourse has credited a link to the maternal body. She further explains in her *This Sex Which is not One* (1985b) that the hysteric, unable to represent her desire in the Symbolic, will withdraw into her body, and preserve only a fragile link to the Symbolic Order (1985b 113-4). This, according to Irigaray, is an addition and extension of Freud's theory on hysteria.

Irigaray reads hysteria as women's rejection of the injunction to nullify her own desires which empower her role in the Symbolic but to work from within to disrupt and expand its limits. Therefore she indicates that the phallogentric Symbolic order urges women to act a hysterical reaction if they do not wish to be submissive. She underscores that women's articulation of repressed desires is not permissible. Consequently, this phallogentric Symbolic order divested the female subject of her own voice and stopped the articulation of her desire. Women's inability to represent what they feel in a male dominated order leads her to withdraw into her own body

and keeps a fragile connection with the Symbolic order. This desire which does not have vent will finally appear as a “script body language” (Irigaray 1985a, 70).

On a feminist perspective, Irigaray interprets hysteria as a strategy women employ to contest patriarchal regulations. Hysteria then is considered as an oppositional reaction correlative to controlling social circumstances. It is a frustrated form of feminism and a desire of women in a male dominated society.

Kristeva theorizes abjection in her *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (PoH) (1982). According to Kristeva abjection is a process of rejecting certain parts of the body similar to the child’s rejection of his mother to constitute his *I* (1982, 2). It helps in clarifying the subversion of hysteria as a means for attaining subjectivity. According to Kristeva, abjection is “death infecting life. Abject. It is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself from an object. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and end up engulfing us” (1982, 4). It is then as Kelly Oliver indicates an explanation for oppression and discrimination (8). It plays an important role in developing subjectivity from a pre-oedipal perspective. The abject according to Kristeva is revealed as a result to the process of individuation and the experiences of loss that emerge after the separation from the *chora* which happens between the infant and the mother. This break up leads to the formation of language and desire accompanied by a “rejection of borderline elements (such as hair, excrements, etc.) which threatens the autonomous identity of the subject” (McAfee 93).

The process of abjection is represented by the child’s separation from his mother ‘*chora*’ in order to develop the borders that separate self from other to construct identity. It is identified in the Oedipal and pre-Oedipal period according to Freud, while in Lacan, to whom there will be a brief reference, it will be in the mirror stage. Abjecting the mother is the first act done by the infant to create the autonomous body. Kelly Oliver in this regard comments “abjection is a way of denying the primal narcissistic identification with the mother, almost” (Oliver 60). Hence, abjection is significant in the process of identity formation that is why it is basic to this study. It works in tandem with hysteria for it represents a reaction and protest similar to hysteria. Hence, abjection can be read as a way for actualizing the self and constructing identity and it is crucial for its significant role in implementing this study.

1.7 Methodology

A textual study is conducted on the selected texts; *Praxis* and *The Life and Loves of a She- Devil* by Fay Weldon and *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile* by Nawal El Saadawi. The focus of my analysis will be on the main female characters through whom the writers portray hysteria. How these writers produce a vivid and disturbing image of women in their strife to gain subjectivity in a male-centered society?

On a deeper level the study will depend on the method of textual analysis to examine the lost female identity and its restructuring through abjection. It will explore how these concepts are significantly employed to read how female characters cite their bodies as the scope of expression to attain the aspired goals.

Hysteria is a huge field which can be well researched if the right concepts are used. In its first section of the analysis this thesis will depend on Freud foregrounding the theory about hysteria for his being the father and pioneer. Two significant concepts of Fright and Conversion hysteria are employed. Fright hysteria is used to highlight the females' shattered status and suffering because of the fright element as in the cases of Praxis and Zakeya. Such feeling pushes hysterical symptoms to emanate on the females' bodies. Conversion hysteria reveals how certain traumatic situations have been converted into hysterical symptoms when the subject's conscious tries to defend against such traumas thus preventing them from the mind but reflecting them on the body.

As far as Luce Irigaray is concerned, the analysis in its fifth chapter considers the concepts of Mimicry and Masquerade along with Irigaray's ideas about hysteria. Mimicry is analogous to hysteria as far as both of them resemble a dress worn to preserve the self. Masquerade represents the role played by the female in the society by which she can defend herself and provide for her living away from male control. These two concepts are significant for the analysis as they reflect hysteria as a society by product. Freud's and Irigaray's concepts are applied to the selected female characters namely; Praxis, Ruth, Firdaus and Zakeya who experience hysteria on personal and social levels.

In the last section of the analysis, chapter six; the study depends on Kristeva's abjection through which the female individuals can achieve their subjectivities and hence construct the aspired identity. Using abjection in the analysis will help reveal how the hysteric female characters become normal beings with subjective identity.

Freud as the pioneer in the field of hysteria made it necessary to set him as the background of the analysis which is covered in chapter four. The four selected novels; *Praxis*, *The She-Devil*, *WPZ* and *GDN* are analyzed through Freudian perspectives. This chapter focuses on the characters on a personal level to reveal what pushes them to be hysteric within the family borders. Irigaray discusses hysteria on a more social level in which she engages society with the social issues of patriarchy, subjugation, prostitution, objectification of women which she considers as pivotal factors of propagating hysteria within the circle of the society. Abjection then occupies chapter six in the analysis and comes to solve the problems produced on the family (Freudian) level and the society (Irigararian).

The analysis chapters are structured in this manner for a purpose. It is based on the framework that each concept is to be applied to the selected four novels starting with Freud, then Irigaray and conclude with Kristeva. This structure is significant in tracing each character's development and how it is affected by the personal level

within the family, then on the public level within the society to go through abjection as a filter in the last step to be absolved. Structuring the analysis in this manner would definitely give a comprehensive reading of each character's development.



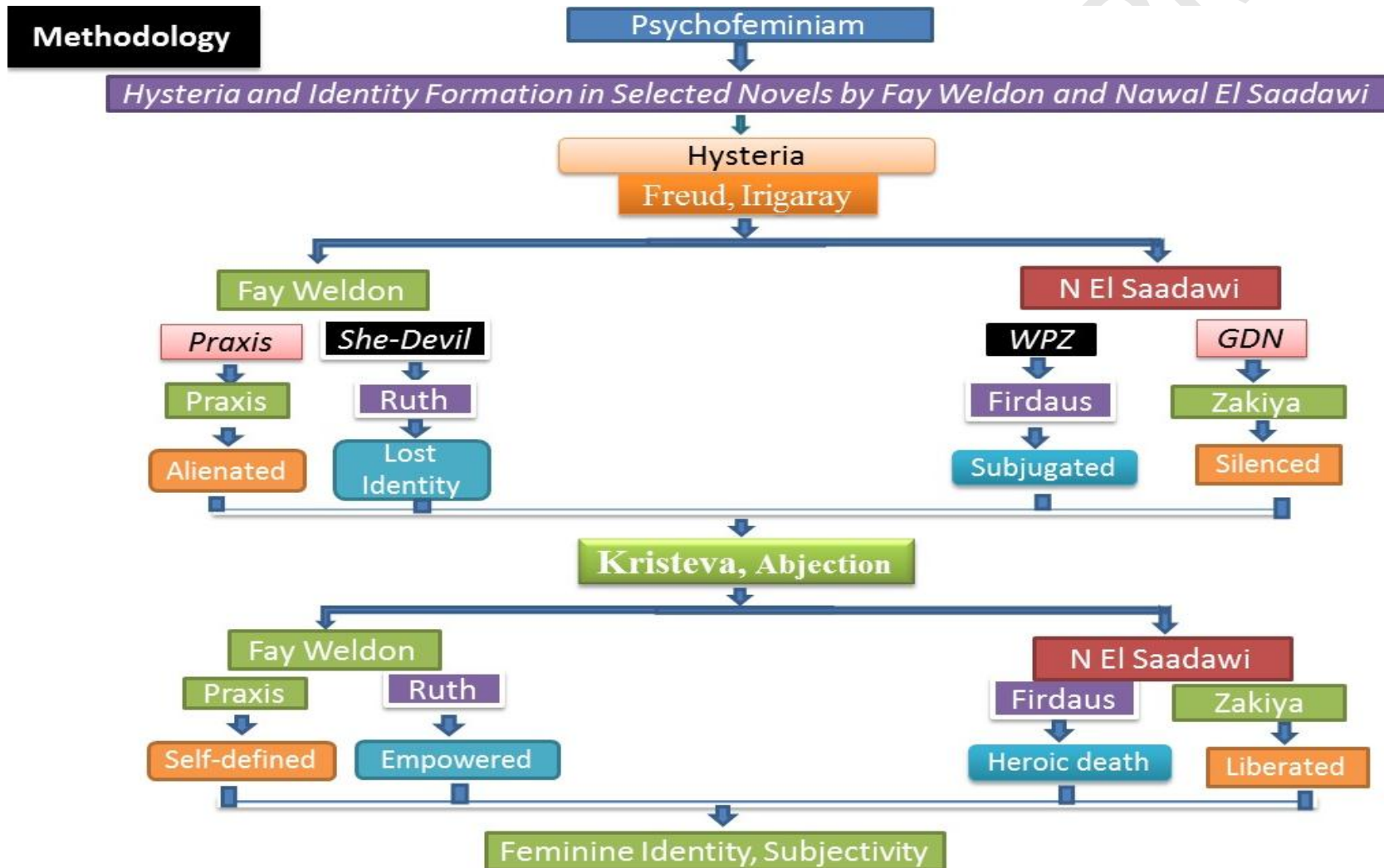


Diagram.1.1: Methodology

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The concept of hysteria is traced in *Praxis* and *The Life and Loves of a She- Devil* by Weldon and *Woman at Point Zero* and *God Dies by the Nile* by El Saadawi. Hysteria according to Freud's reading with its sub-concepts of fright and conversion are applied to the aforementioned texts to flesh out the hysteric symptoms according to Freud's interpretation. Also, Irigaray's reading of hysteria with two sub-concepts of mimicry and masquerade are significantly employed to highlight hysteria as a social phenomenon incorporated onto women's bodies by the society. A third concept of Julia's Kristeva's abjection is also applied to the aforementioned texts in order to formulate the aspired identity as the study aims. These three readings, two of hysteria and one of abjection constitute the conceptual framework employed for analyzing the selected four novels.

Hysteria has been explored psychoanalytically, psychiatrically and socially. My research is carried out according to psychoanalytic and social modes only because of the effect of hysteria in society and its development, and how society helps in reproducing hysterics. The psychoanalytic way of study is most often linked to feminist critics because they read and analyze female psyches which locate the study under the title of psychofeminism. Thus, the psychiatric and medical readings of hysteria are excluded from this study. Hysteria and abjection are applied on *Praxis* (1978) and *The Life and Loves of a She- Devil* (1983) by Weldon, and *Woman at Point Zero* (1983) and *God Dies by the Nile* (1985) by El Saadawi and the study is limited to these texts because hysteria appears in them evidently. I will only look at Freud's and Irigaray's perspectives on hysteria along with Kristeva's abjection, and their application on the aforementioned texts.

1.9 Justification of Texts Selection

Weldon is a British writer who originally writes in English but for the Egyptian El Saadawi I am going to depend on standard and international translations (discussed below). The reason behind selecting those two novelists lies in their being postmodern, contemporary, well known and their works fall in the field of feminism. Fay Weldon was born in 1933 and still alive while El Saadawi was born in 1931 and died in 2015. Both Weldon and El Saadawi started writing at the 50s and 60s of the last century and their writings are internationally accredited at that time for touching the issues of women which visibly started to appear with the beginning of the second half of the last century. Their writings had advanced the second wave feminism and paved the way for the emergence of third wave feminism along with other various writers. It is right that they belong to two different cultures, languages, religions and countries, but this does not prevent conducting a study on them both. Because hysteria is a universal phenomenon *i.e.* it is not inclusive to one country, language or culture; it happens in England, Egypt and any other part of the world. Besides, both writers portray the suffering of female characters which in one way or another incorporate hysteric elements, even if differently motivated.

Praxis and *The She-Devil* along with *WPZ* and *GDN* are selected for study because they have not been extensively explored in the light of Freud, Irigaray and Krestiva. Both writers cite the identity of women as their quest and share the same attitudes to free women. These texts are chosen over other texts for their stature in fiction and for their true to life portrayal of women. They are also contemporarily written as all the four texts fall at the end 70s and early 80s decades. These texts also touch similar issues but in different scopes. As such, the study will look at two different societies without showing any similarities or discrepancies just to reflect the maladies that can be traced there. Looking at two different cultures will hold a mirror for the representation of women in two different literatures, which is a reflection to real life.

As far as El Saadawi's texts are concerned, they are originally written in Arabic but translated into English by reputable translators. Translation of any work is a necessity because when history, politics, economics and culture are transmitted to different audiences in different languages, change is bound to happen. Therefore, analyzing translated texts as in the case of El Saadawi would bring her writing to the limelight as far as it is accessible to readers from other cultures and languages. According to Deema Ammari, different cultures are capable of transgressing and bringing the cultural gaps that separate them through the barriers of language and this fact is overcome by translation (30). With translation, a text becomes part of the history and available for future generations.

El Saadawi's works have been translated into English by well known and reputable figures. The novels allocated for this study *WPZ* and *GDN* are both translated by her husband Sherif Hetata a translator, scholar, philosopher and a physician. In this regard Susan Bassnett avers that for a novel to be translated, the translator should "read with immense care" and "learn a great deal about the novelist, understand the stylistic devices that writer employs, which may well mean reading all his/her other work" and locate the novel in its historical context (2011, 56). Thus, El Saadawi's voice can better be maintained and communicated in the case of Hetata's translation who fits according to the criteria set by Bassnett. What more justifies our depending on Hetata's translation lies in El Saadawi's approval of these versions as her "translated texts have been approved by her" (Ammari 29) as far as she speaks English well.

El Saadawi's oeuvre has been translated from Arabic into and English by many famous figures in the field of translation. Her translators include Hetata, Osman Nusairi, Jana Gough, Marilyn Booth, Catherine Cobham, Mona Baker and others. Noting that *WPZ* and *GDN* have only been translated by Hetata which is the version I consider in my analysis.

It is generally thought that we constantly lose something in translation and thus consider translated texts with a suspicious eye, but conversely we can gain something from it. Susan Bassnett as the pioneer in the field of literary translation opines:

It is again an indication of the low status of translation that so much time should have been spent on discussing what is lost in the transfer of a text from S.L [source language] to T.L [target language] whilst ignoring what can also be gained, for the translator can at times enrich or clarify the S.L text as a direct result of the translation process. Moreover, what is often seen as 'lost' from the S.L context may be replaced in the T.L context. (2005, 38)

Bassnett encourages handling translated texts as far as they are fluently readable and reflect the foreign author's individuality and the fundamental sense of the book. She considers the translator as a "force for good, a creative artist who ensures the survival of writing across time and space" (2005, 4). As such, translation ensures the survival of the text not necessarily in the same culture but in other different cultures. A translated text, Bassnett holds, becomes the after-life of a text, a "new 'original' in another language" (2005, 10). Henceforth, this positive view of translation serves to reinforce the importance of translating as a significant act of inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication.

In sum, based on the previous critical views, handling translated texts would promote and help making such texts well known. As far as the translation is reputable, as in the case of Hetata, there should not be difficulties or hindrances. Besides, considering Arabic as my mother tongue and my reading the texts in Arabic at first hand, makes me certain of the absence of variation or discrepancies between the original and the translated version, which makes the process of analysis run smoothly.

1.10 Definition of Terms

- 1- Hysteria: a disturbance infects the female body represented in many symptoms such as fear, lack of sleep, anorexia, aphasia, hallucinations ... etc which are motivated either by sexual or social factors based on Freud and Irigaray's perspectives (Breuer & Freud 1957, Irigaray 1985b).
1. Abjection: what disturbs identity, system, order which should consequently be rejected and thrown away to gain an autonomous and subjective identity. It is a psychic process the subject uses to fight the destabilizing impact of the abject to reaffirm identity (Kristeva 1982).
2. Subjectivity: is the opposite of objectivity which refers to the self in recent criticism terminology. It highlights the realm of the individual consciousness, feeling and behavior which is determined by social forces. It also means a self-defined individual with free and executed desires which refers also to actualization. In recent criticism subjectivity is used interchangeably with identity (Mikics 2007).
3. Identity: a set of rules the subject follows to have a solid and free self. It is achieved through subjectivity and hence becomes an outcome after the process of self-actualization (subjectivity). In this thesis it is employed as an equivalent to subjectivity (Curti 1998).

WORKS CITED

- Abrams, M. H. A. *Glossary of Literary Terms*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1993. Print.
- Ammari, Deema N. "Cross-Cultural Exchanges: Nawal El Saadawi and Feminism in the Arab World." Diss. Oxford Brookes University, 2007. Print
- Aruna, Marie Josephine A. "Patriarchal Myths in Postmodern Feminist Fiction: A Select Study." Diss. Department of English, Pondicherry University, 2010.
- Aslam, Saiyma. "Travelling and Female Mobility in Saadawi's Fiction." *Pakistan Journal of Women's Studies: Alam e Niswan* 22.2 (2015): 1-11.
- Banash, Jennifer D. and Cheryl Herr. "No Last Word: Revision and Hysteria in Contemporary Narratives." Diss. The University of Iowa, 2008.
- Barreca, Regina. *Fay Weldon's Wicked Fictions*. Hanover, N.H: University Press of New England, 1994. Internet resource.
- Barrett, Estelle. *Kristeva Reframed: Interpreting Key Thinkers for the Arts*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011. Internet resource.
- Bassnett, Susan. *Reflections on Translation*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2011. Internet resource.
- . *Translation Studies*. NY: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005. Internet resource.
- Becker-Leckrone, Megan. *Julia Kristeva and Literary Theory*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Print.
- Bellis, Miriam Hamilton. "Making and Unmaking the Self in the Novels of Fay Weldon, Margaret Atwood and Toni Morrison." Diss. University of Miami, 1996.
- Berlant, Lauren G. *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. Print.
- Bernheimer, Charles, and Claire Kahane. *In Dora's Case: Freud--Hysteria--Feminism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985. Print.
- Biswas, Praggnaparamita "Semiotic Encryption of Women, Violence and Hysteria in Indian Women Dramaturgy" *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*.5.2 (2013) [http:// www.rupkatha.com/about.php](http://www.rupkatha.com/about.php) accessed on 8/12/2013
- Blymiller, Harriet. "The Constructions of Fay Weldon, Woman of Letters." Diss. University of South Florida, 2007. Print.
- Bollas, Christopher. *Hysteria*. London: Routledge, 2000. Print.

- Bouson, J. B. *Embodied Shame: Uncovering Female Shame in Contemporary Women's Writings*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009. Internet resource.
- Bradbury, Malcolm. Ed. *The Modern British Novel*. London: Penguin Group., 1993. Print.
- Breuer, Josef, and Sigmund Freud. *Studies on Hysteria*. New York: Basic Books, 1957. Print.
- Caliskan, Dilek. "The "Criminal Other" and the "Exorcism of Evil" in Fay Weldon's The Life and Loves of a She-Devil." *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies (IJHCS)* ISSN 2356-5926 2.4 (2016): 445-464.
- Camhi, Leslie E. *Prisoners of Gender: Hysteria, Psychoanalysis and Literature in Fin-De-Siècle Culture*. Ann Arbor, Mich: U.M.I, 1991. Print.
- Chen, Chiung-chu. "The Development of Female Consciousness in the Fiction of Eileen Chang and Fay Weldon." Diss. University of South Carolina, 2003.
- Chukuwama, Helen. Ed. *Feminism in African Literature*. Enugu: New Generation, 1994. Print.
- Chukwumezie, T. M. E., and Agu Okechukwu. "Beyond The Emancipated Woman: Revisiting Fictional Experiences In Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman At Point Zero* And Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*." *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 4.1 (2014): 63-68.
- Cixous, Hélène, and Annette Kuhn. "Castration or decapitation?." *Signs* 7.1 (1981): 41-55.
http://www.jstor.org/stable/3173505?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
- Cixous, Hélène, and Catherine Clément. *The Newly Born Woman*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986. Print.
- Cixous, Hélène. "The laugh of the Medusa." *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism* (1997): 347-362.
- Coin, Francesca. "on the Condition of the Colonized Woman: the Nervous Condition of Firdaus in Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*" *DEPN*.5-6 (2006).
http://www.unive.it/media/allegato/dep/Recensioni/37_Sadaawi.pdf
- Covino, Deborah C. *Amending the Abject Body: Aesthetic Makeovers in Medicine and Culture*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2004. Internet resource.
- Curti, Lidia. *Female Stories, Female Bodies: Narrative, Identity, and Representation*. Washington Square, N.Y: New York University Press, 1998. Print.
- Daly, Mary. *Gyn/ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1978. Internet resource.

- Dane, G. "Hysteria As Feminist Protest: Dora, Cixous, Acker." *Women's Studies*. 23.3 (1994): 231. Print.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*. Trans., Alisa Hartz. Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2003.
- Dowling, Finuala. *Fay Weldon's Fiction*. Madison [N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998. Print.
- El Saadawi, Nawal and Adele S. Newson. *The Essential Nawal El Saadawi: A Reader*. London: Zed Books, 2010. Print.
- El Saadawi, Nawal. *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor*. London: Saqi Books, 1988. Print
- . *God Dies by the Nile*. London: Zed Books, 2007. Print.
- . *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab world*. London: Zed Books, 2007.
- . *Woman at Point Zero*. London: Zed Books Ltd., 2007. Print
- . *A Daughter of Isis: The Early Life of Nawal El Saadawi*. London: Zed Books, 2009. Internet resource.
- . *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader*. London: Zed Books, 1997. Print
- Emenyonu, Ernest, and Maureen N. Eke. *Emerging Perspectives on Nawal El Saadawi*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2010. Print.
- Engels, Frederick. *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Australia: resistance Books, 2004.
- English, James F. *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2006. Print.
- Faulkner, Rita. "National Allegory: Land and Body in Nawal El Saadawi and Assia Djébar." Diss. University of Illinois , 2005. Print.
- Faulks, Lana. *Fay Weldon*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998. Print.
- Foley, Andrew. "Fay Weldon, Liberal Feminism and the Praxis of Praxis." *Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies* 28.3 (2007): 27-54.
- . *The Imagination of Freedom: Critical Texts and Times in Contemporary Liberalism*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2009. Print.
- Freud, Sigmund, and James Strachey. *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. New York: Basic Books, 1975. Print.
- Freud, Sigmund, and Peter Gay. *The Freud Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989. Print.
- Freud, Sigmund, and Philip Rieff. *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*. New York: Collier, 1963. Print.

- Fwangyil, Gloria Ada "Cradle to Grave: an Analysis of Female Oppression in Nawal El Saadawi's *Woman at Point Zero*." *Afrrev Laligens*. 1 (2) April-July 2012.
- Giglio, Elizabeth L. *Talk Like An Egyptian: Applying the Theory of the Subaltern to the Works of Nawal El Saadawi*. Lynchburg, Va: Lynchburg College, 2005. Print
- Gilbert, Sandra M, and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979. Print.
- Gillis, Stacy, Gillian Howie, and Rebecca Munford. *Third Wave Feminism: A Critical Exploration*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Print
- Gilman, Sander L. *Hysteria Beyond Freud*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. Print.
- Gohar, Saddik. "Empowering the Subaltern in *Woman at Point Zero*." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 17.4 (2016): 174-189.
- González, Marina Cerqueiro. *Fay Weldon's Gendered Satire: a Neo-Gothic Perspective*. Diss. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2010.
- Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 1971. Print.
- Greene, Logan D. *The Discourse of Hysteria: The Topoi of Humility, Physicality, and Authority in Women's Rhetoric*. Lewiston, N.Y: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009. Print.
- Grosz, E A, and Elspeth Probyn. *Sexy Bodies: The Strange Carnalities of Feminism*. London: Routledge, 1995. Internet resource.
- Grosz, E A. *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction*. London: Routledge, 1990. Internet resource.
- . *Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminists*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989. Print.
- . *Volatile bodies: Toward a corporeal feminism*. Indiana University Press, 1994.
- . "The Body of Signification," In *Abjection, Melancholia and Love: The Work of Julia Kristeva*. (J. Fletcher, & A. Benjamin, Eds.) London: Routledge, 1990.
- Hill, Susan. "Novels of Head and Heart" Rev. of *Praxis* by Fay Weldon. *Books and Bookmen*. 24.6 (1979).
- Hunter, Diane " Hysteria, Psychoanalysis, and Feminism: The Case of Anna O ". *Feminist Studies*. 9.3 (Autumn, 1983). 464-488.
- Irigaray, Luce and Helene Vivienne Wenzel " And the One Doesn't Stir Without the Other." *Signs*. 7.1 (1981): 60-67.

- Irigaray, Luce, and Margaret Whitford. *The Irigaray Reader*. Cambridge, Mass: Basil Blackwell, 1991. Print.
- Irigaray, Luce. *This Sex Which is Not One*. Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1985b.
- . "women's exile." *Ideology and Consciousness*. vol. 1. (1977): 62-76.
- . *Speculum of the Other Woman*. Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1985a.
- . *Sexes and Genealogies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993. Print.
- Issaka, Charity Azumi. *The Situation of the Woman in a Patriarchal African Society: A Study of Nawal El Saadawi's God Dies by the Nile and Woman at Point Zero*. Diss. Department of English, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, 2010.
- Jaber, Nabilah. "Bargaining with Patriarchy: Gender, Voice and Spatial Development in the Middle East." *Arab Studies Quarterly*. 23.3 (2001): 101.
- Kenyon, Olga. *Women Novelists Today: A Survey of English Writing in the Seventies and Eighties*. New York: The Harvester Press, 1988. Print.
- Khan, Fawzia "Introducing a New Course: Muslim Women in Twentieth-Century Literature." *NWSA*. 9:1 (1997): 88.
- Klement, Kristine. "Feminism Beyond Hysteria: Reading Feminine Ethics" *Psychoanalysis & La Femme*.
<http://www.womenwriters.net/january10/klement.html>
- Krier, Theresa M, and Elizabeth D. Harvey. *Luce Irigaray and Premodern Culture: Thresholds of History*. London: Routledge, 2004. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia, and Leon S. Roudiez. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Revolution in poetic language*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984.
- Krouse, Agate Nesaule. "Feminism and Art in Fay Weldon's Novels." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*. 20.2 (1978): 5-20.
- Kutzbach, K., & Mueller, M. *The abject of desire: The aestheticization of the unaesthetic in contemporary literature and culture*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007.
- Lacan, Jacques. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*. New York: Norton, 1978. Print.
- Logan, Peter M. *Nerves and Narratives: A Cultural History of Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century British Prose*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997. Internet resource.

- Malti-Douglas, Fedwa. *Men, Women, and God(s): Nawal El Saadawi and Arab Feminist Poetics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Internet resource.
- . *Woman's Body, Woman's Word: Gender and Discourse in Arabo-Islamic Writing*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1991. Print.
- Marie Josephine Aruna, A. Patriarchal myths in postmodern feminist fiction: a select study, 2012.
<<http://dspace.pondiuni.edu.in/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1/1778/T05391.pdf?sequence=1>>.
- Martin, Sara. "The Power of Monstrous Women: Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil* (1983), Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984) and Jeanette Winterson's *Sexing the Cherry* (1989)." *Journal of Gender Studies* 8.2 (1999): 193-210.
- Massie, Allan. *The Novel Today: A Critical Guide to the British Novel, 1970-1989*. London: Longman in association with the British Council, 1990. Print.
- Mazrui, Alamin M., and Judith I. Abala. "Sex and Patriarchy: Gender Relations in" *Mawt al-rajul al-wahid'ala al-ard* (God Dies by the Nile)." *Research in African Literatures* (1997): 17-32.
- McAfee, Noëlle. *Julia Kristeva*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Internet resource.
- Mijolla, Alain. *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis= Dictionnaire international De La Psychoanalyse*. Detroit: McMillan Reference USA, 2005. Print
- Mikics, David. *A New Handbook of Literary Terms*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007. Internet resource.
- Millet, Kate. *Sexual Politics*. New York: Ballantine, 1970. Print.
- Mitchell, Juliet. *Mad Men and Medusas: Reclaiming Hysteria*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000. Print.
- . *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1974.
- Mohamed, Hasan Othman . "Features of the Rejected Character in the Egyptian Novel for the Period 1970- 2000 and its Artistic Denotations." Diss. University of Cairo. 2006.
- Mukherjee, Bharati. "Betrayal by Blind Faith." *New York Times* 23 July 1986: 24.
- Myerson, A. "Hysteria As a Weapon in Marital Conflicts." *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*. 10.1 (1915): 1-10. Print.
- Nkealah, Naomi. "The multiple faces of patriarchy: Nawal el-Saadawi's *Two Women in One* as a critique of Muslim culture." *ariel: a review of international english literature* 44.2 (2013): 221-238.

- O'Keefe, Juliet. "A Woman at Point Zero." Rev. *Democratiya* 15 (Winter 2008): 123-127. http://www.dissentmagazine.org/democratiya_article/a-woman-at-point-zero
- Oliver, Kelly. *Reading Kristeva: Unraveling the Double-Bind*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993. Internet resource.
- Ouzgane, Lahoucine, and Robert Morrell. *African masculinities: men in Africa from the late nineteenth century to the present*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Palmer, Eustace. *Of War and Women, Oppression and Optimism*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2008.
- Palmer, Paulina. *Contemporary Women's Fiction: Narrative Practice and Feminist Theory*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1989. Print.
- Park, Heon Dug. "Nawal Al- Saadawi and Modern Egyptian Feminist Writing." Diss. The University of Michigan, 1988.
- Rathburn, Fran M. "The Ties that Bind: Breaking the Bonds of Victimization in the Novels of Barbara Pym, Fay Weldon and Margaret Atwood." Diss. University of North Texas, 1995.
- Raymond, Katrine. "When You Go Mad... Somebody Else Comes in: The Archival Hysteric in Twentieth-Century Literature Set in Nineteenth-Century Ontario." Diss. McMaster University (Canada), 2011.
- Reisman, Mara and Fay Weldon. Interview. *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Winter, 2008):pp. 32-49.
- Reisman, Mara. "The Shifting Moral Ground in Fay Weldon's Fiction." *Women's Studies*. 40.5 (2011): 645-671. Print.
- Rich, Adrienne. *Of Women Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1976.
- Rinaldi, Janna. *Intimacy and Violence: Explaining Domestic Abuse in Lesbian Intimate Partnerships*. , 2009. Print.
- Rita Faulkner. *National Allegory: Land and Body in Nawal El Saadawi and Asia Djebar*. Diss. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2005.
- Roberts, Nickie. *Whores in History: Prostitution in Western Society*. London: Harper Collins, 1992. Print.
- Roudiez, Leon. "Introduction". *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Trans. Margaret Waller. NY: Columbia UP, 1984.
- Royer, Diana. *A Critical Study of the Works of Nawal El Saadawi, Egyptian Writer and Activist*. Lewiston, N.Y: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001. Print.
- Sabbah, Fatma A. *Women in the Muslim Unconscious*. Trans. Mary Jo Lakeland. New York: Pergamon Press, 1984.

- Saulnier, Christine. "Feminist Theories" in Coady, Nick, and Peter Lehmann, eds. *Theoretical perspectives for direct social work practice: A generalist-eclectic approach*. Springer Publishing Company, 2008.
- Scull, Andrew. *Hysteria: The Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Print.
- Shihada, Isam M. "The Patriarchal Class System in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*." *Nebula* 4.2 (2007).
- Showalter, Elaine. *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- . *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985. Print.
- Smith, David L. *Psychoanalysis in Focus*. London: SAGE Publications, 2003. Internet resource.
- Smith, Patricia Juliana. "Weldon's the Life and Loves of a She-Devil." *The Explicator* 51.4 (1993): 255-257.
- Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1985. Print.
- Suleiman, Susan R. *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1986. Print.
- Tarabishi, George and Nawal El Saadawi. *Woman against Her Sex: A Critique of Nawal El-Saadawi with a Reply by Nawal El-Saadawi*. London: Saqi Books, 1988. Print.
- Valassopoulos, Anastasia. "'words Written by a Pen Sharp As a Scalpel': Gender and Medical Practice in the Early Fiction of Nawal El Saadawi and Fatmata Conteth." *Research in African Literatures : Official Journal of the African Literature Committee of the African Studies Association of America and the African Literatures Seminar of the Modern Language Association*. 35.1 (2004): 87-107. Print.
- Verhaeghe, Paul. *Does the Woman Exist?: From Freud's Hysteric to Lacan's Feminine*. New York: Other Press, 1999. Print.
- Wald, Christina . *Hysteria, Trauma and Melancholia: Performative Maladies in Contemporary Anglophone Drama*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Weldon, Fay. *Female Friends*. Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1974.
- . *Praxis*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980.
- . *The Cloning of Joanna May*. New York: Fontana-Collins, 1990. Print.
- . *The Life and Loves of a She- Devil*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1985. Print.

Whitford, Margaret. *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine*. London: Routledge, 1991. Print

Yarom, Nitza. *Matrix of Hysteria: Psychoanalysis of the Struggle Between the Sexes as Enacted in the Body*. East Sussex: Routledge, 2005.

