

**The Effect of Colonialism on the Palestinian Identity through
the Analysis of Adania Shibli's *Minor Detail* (2020)**

"Every people live in their country, but for Palestinians, our country lives
in us." (Sa'ed Atshan's "Our Country Lives in US" 2016:75)

Prepare

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Abstract

This research paper explores the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity through an analysis of Adania Shibli's novel *Minor Detail* (2020). The paper first provides an introduction that highlights the importance of literature in conveying the Palestinian voice and examines the novel's narrative of power, violence, and resistance. The literature review section surveys previous research on the effects of colonialism on Palestinian identity, including Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), Raja Shehadeh's *Palestinian Walks: Reflections on a Vanishing Landscape* (2008), and the work of postcolonial theorists Frantz Fanon and Homi K. Bhabha. Through the analytical application of several post-colonial ideas from secondary sources, the researcher has discovered that post-colonial consequences have a notable impact on the Palestinians' identity, culture, and sense of self. The research aims to examine how colonialism has shaped Palestinian identity and how it is defined in relation to history and culture. The paper concludes by emphasizing the significance of uncovering buried truths and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of oppression.

Keywords: Colonialism, Palestinian Identity, Israeli Occupation, Exile, Displacement.

Introduction

Several academic studies have focused on how colonialism affected Palestinian identity. The Palestinians have continuously resisted with struggle and determination to preserve their identity and cling to their roots since the establishment of the alleged State of Israel. Literature had the greatest impact on conveying the Palestinian voice and discovering the complex relationship between colonialism, identity, and belonging. Writers and poets in the diaspora and the homeland have contributed to this. This essay examines Adania Shibli's novel *Minor Detail* (2020) to examine the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity.

The events leading up to the 1949 death of a Palestinian woman by Israeli soldiers are examined in Shibli's 2020 novel. The complexity of human interaction and the effect of historical events on collective memory are explored in Shibli's novel. The story of a mystery officer who lives in an isolated desert outpost is explored in the novel, which weaves a narrative of power, violence, and resistance. The author shows how forgotten histories can have an impact on subsequent generations by weaving a complex network of meaning that connects the past and present. *Minor Detail* serves as a powerful testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the profound impact of uncovering buried truths. This research aims at examining how colonialism shaped the Palestinian identity and the way they define themselves in relation to their history and culture.

The Impact of Colonialism on Palestinian Identity and Culture: Perspectives from Literature and Postcolonial Theory

The issue of colonialism has been of pure interest to many scholars since the beginning of the human cosmic conflict between peoples. The aspects of colonialism affecting the individual and society, especially its identity and culture, have been widely studied. Academics have been interested in studying the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity and its context from various angles. While others have examined the political and cultural facets of the Palestinian struggle, some have concentrated on the physical and psychological effects of displacement.

Isabella Hammad (2022) talked about Shibli's novelist style, as Shibli pays as much attention to the light illuminating indentations in the sand and the rotation of the sun and stars as to the light illuminating indentations in the soldiers around the camp, as well as to the soap suds falling from the girl's body or the lieutenant's face as he shaves. She also claimed that despite being brief, this piece has the effect of an unpleasant, endless chronicle that is paratactic and devoid of emotional depth. The sensory detail gives the chapter a strong sense of reality. The lieutenant's response to an infected insect bite on his leg that results in an offensive odor and for which he accuses the girl is the closest we get to psychology.

Moreover, Badia Zaidan (2020) wrote that Shibli presented narrative paintings characterized by high scenery and animated visual paintings that were mixed with creativity to make the reader feel the trembling of the soldier's body, the girl's wailing, and the rise and fall of the dog's voice and its movements.

Wafiqa Al-Masry (2022) stated that the Palestinian writer Adania Shibli was able to circumvent the aesthetic discourse based on details in a brilliant manner in her narration. It reconciled the employment of the 'rational' and objective detailed narration at a slow pace in the first chapter and the personal and emotional detailed narration at a completely different rhythm in the second chapter. This reminds me of the style of journalist Joe Sacco's graphic novel, *Footnotes in Gaza* (2010). Although auxiliary and ephemeral words, the names of both works are meaningful and powerful. The truth can be revealed in a way that no one can know by subtle cues and brief words. Sacco's novel uses footnotes to revive what history has annihilated and what time has obliterated. It refers to two forgotten mass killings by politicians and historians and suggests that the reader must infer and understand from the graphics themselves. "Well, like most footnotes, they dropped to the bottom of history's pages." (P.8) It is familiar to the Palestinians, despite its cruelty and brutality.

Thus, the writers who discussed and analyzed Shibli's novel were limited only to the narrative style and the nature of the events' narration, but they did not go into a deep study of the impact of colonialism on personal identity in particular and its effects on the characters of the novel. Thus, my analytical perspective of the novel "Small Details" will reflect the extent of the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity and culture through an analysis of the events and characters of the novel.

Unveiling Power and Resistance: Analyzing Postcolonial Themes in Adania Shibli's "Minor Detail"

Applying a postcolonial theory framework to Adania Shibli's "Minor Detail" involves analyzing the novel's power dynamics, colonial legacies, identity formation, and resistance. Postcolonial theory seeks to critically analyze the impact of colonialism on societies, cultures, and individuals and to challenge dominant narratives and structures of power. Through this lens, the reader can explore how colonialism shapes the narrative, the portrayal of identities, and the ways in which characters challenge or negotiate power structures. By examining language, representation, and acts of resistance within the novel, a deeper understanding of its postcolonial themes and contributions to the broader discourse can be achieved. Edward Said, Raja Shehadeh, Frantz Fanon, and Homi K. Bhabha have helped to break down binary oppositions established by colonialism and empower people to negotiate a new sense of identity, while also highlighting the need for decolonization of the mind.

For instance, Edward Said's well-known book *Orientalism* (1978) examined the ways in which Western colonization formed and defined the "Orient" as a cultural and political notion, which is then supported by cultural creation. His writings have significantly impacted refuting these assumptions and encouraging a more complex understanding of the connections between East and West.

Similar research was conducted on the relationship between Palestinian identity, memory, and landscape in Raja Shehadeh's (2008) book *Palestinian Walks: Reflections on a Vanishing Landscape*. It is organized around a variety of walks Shehadeh makes throughout Palestine as he considers the effects of the Israeli occupation on the region and its residents. One of the book's main themes is the idea of "sumud," or

steadfastness, which is a fundamental component of Palestinian culture. Shehadeh additionally glances at how literature and art help to preserve Palestinian history and culture. He argues that acknowledging the truth of the situation is necessary for finding a peaceful solution. He also emphasizes the importance of understanding the Palestinian perspective and describes how the occupation has affected the local population and environment.

The work of postcolonial theorists like Frantz Fanon and Homi K. Bhabha has also been crucial in helping us comprehend the complex connection between colonialism and identity. As Satoshi argues in his article "Hybridity and History: A Critical Reflection on Homi K. Bhabha's Post-Historical Thoughts" (2013), By embracing hybridity, Bhabha breaks down the binary oppositions established by colonialism and empowers people to negotiate a new sense of identity. Our grasp of the complexity of identity creation has been enhanced by his concept of hybridity, which acknowledges the mixing of cultures and identities in postcolonial communities. His theories offer insightful perspectives on the complex nature of identity and the consequences of colonial history on people and communities. This statement not only highlights the universality of the human experience but also serves as a stark reminder of the unnecessary barriers constructed by racism.

In contrast, Fanon's assertion that identity is a deeply rooted struggle in colonized societies highlights the need for a shift toward universalism and decolonization of the mind. His work on the psychological impact of colonization and the struggle for liberation has catalyzed anti-colonial and anti-racist movements worldwide. Also, he focused on the psychological impacts of colonialism and asserted that oppressed people must rediscover their authentic cultural roots to resist domination.

This methodological approach allows for a critical analysis of "Minor Detail" that unveils its engagement with colonialism and illuminates the dynamics of power and resistance within the text.

Analysis of Shibli's *Minor Detail* from the Perspective of Literature and Postcolonial Theory

This paper seeks to build on these existing works by examining the ways in which colonialism has impacted the Palestinian identity through an analysis of Shibli's novel *Minor Detail*. By exploring the themes of memory, history, and identity in the novel, this paper hopes to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity.

Minor Detail is presented by Adania Shibli in a way that is woven with the aesthetics of speech and the accuracy of the details in a precise way that is closer to realistic plots. Shibli's novel is characterized by its unique impact on the reader. The writing style employed here is unconventional in that it accentuates the viciousness and brutality that define Israel's occupation. Additionally, its approach demands that readers pay close attention to detail and recognize the gravity of "the rape."

This novel offers a distinct impression on the topic, as it employs dual narrative perspectives to portray the encounters of two Palestinian females, separated by several years. It consists of two chapters; the time interval between them is nearly five decades. The events of the first chapter took place in 1949, one year after the Nakba, as a brutal extension of the endless occupation crimes against the Palestinian people and the Palestinian territories. The second chapter is about adding colors to the painting, the details of which have been previously determined. A young Palestinian researcher is driven by a sense of responsibility, jealousy, and curiosity to learn the details of an incident that occurred fifty-five years ago on her birthday.

The title shows Adania Shibli's creativity in choosing words, despite the big and sensitive issues in the novel. A profound examination of the connection between political and personal issues can be found in *Minor Detail*. Is choosing the word detail or minor appropriate to discuss the Palestinian issue and the brutality of the Israeli occupation? Anybody who reads the novel will feel that it is not only appropriate but also wonderful. The Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg (1980), in his essay "Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method," has theorized that apparently, marginal details can provide rich points of access to historical truth. So, one should focus on the minor details rather than examining and obsessing over the fundamentals because that is where the defects and errors are.

Shibli relied on Ginzburg's style of relying on marginal details and employing aesthetic linguistic discourse. She relied on mentioning the smallest details, such as the location, the soldiers' routine movements, the officer's movements, the Bedouin girl, the dog, and the Palestinian researcher.

Despite the fact that *Minor Detail* lost one of its main elements, naming the characters. The text's aesthetic narration and grammatical rhetoric overshadowed the reader's sense of losing the characters' titles. When thinking about the novel from the Palestinian point of view, I find that Shibli's failure to mention the names is perhaps evidence of the generality and similarity of the events. Since the alleged Balfour Declaration, Palestinian resistance and freedom struggle have continued until the Palestinian people's blood runs out. Perhaps it is a sign from the writer because these events happen to all Palestinians without exception, so we all bear the same title and defend the same cause.

In conversation with Pakistani novelist Fatima Bhutto, Shibli explains the background to her extraordinary novel as part of the 2020 Edinburgh International Book Festival. Shibli explained why she didn't name the characters in the novel.

I think naming is an act of power that I don't want to practice [...] language exists as a living body with its own agency. There was a section that I hesitated to name because it wasn't. The second part is when she goes to this museum director, she should never have stated what her name is [...] there's the racism based on how you look[...] maybe the name is really also an act of power that disclosing it would play into these dynamics of oppression and indictment of violence.

The only case of loss in the novel was not the names of people, but mainly centered on the names of places. The Palestinian streets, cities, and villages seemed strange to the Palestinian researcher. The state of surprise led her to get lost and lose confidence in herself. She no longer knew anything about her whereabouts except for fantasies in her memory: "My confidence dissipates completely, and I'm no longer sure where I am" (63).

The most important details in this text are that the researcher experienced feelings of loss, shock, and dread due to being occupied." I can't tell whether I've taken this road before, as I'd thought at first, or not."(63) "fearing that I may get lost in the folds of a scene which fills me with a great feeling of alienation, seeing all the changes."(65). Therefore, she was no longer able to rely on her mental maps and was forced, during her search for the truth, to use Israeli maps" I look at the Israeli map again."(64). Along with destroying the architectural landmarks of the streets and buildings, the occupation also changed the names of the villages and cities to Hebrew ones" Ben Shemen Interchange, whose original name may have been Beit Susin, named after a nearby village which appears on the map from 1948 and which no longer exists."(64)

Shibli discusses the issue of searching for the truth and hearing the voice of the voiceless, a Bedouin girl who was raped repeatedly by Israeli occupation soldiers in the Negev desert on the Egyptian border. And the Palestinian researcher's sense of responsibility to make her voice heard, has become impossible, because the rape incident occurred on the same day as her birth" It happened on a morning that would coincide, exactly twenty-five years later, with the morning I was born."(52)

Perhaps this minor detail devoid of evidence does not carry enough importance to warrant risking life in order to reveal the truth" And again, a group of soldiers capture a girl, rape her, then kill her... this minor detail, which others might not give a second thought, will stay with me forever."(53). These secondary details, which the Palestinian researcher focuses on and pays exaggerated attention to, such as the filth of the fly and the dust resulting from the explosion, are the best way to reveal the facts." leads me to see the fly shit on a painting and not the painting itself, as the saying goes."(51)

Anthony Cummins (2020) saw that this enthusiasm for revealing the truth stems from a feeling of resentment at hearing the truth from one side. "she's unable to shake off the idea of somehow telling the story from the victim's point of view—a project that leads her to embark on a risky road trip south, through long-razed villages".

Raping a girl after killing her family is a terrible crime, but what is more terrible than that is the artful assault on her and the way it determines her fate. "The only sound was the muffled weeping of a girl who had curled up inside her black clothes like a beetle." (19) "He was presenting them with two options for a vote: either they send the girl to work in the camp's kitchen, or they all have their way with her." (31). The brutality and barbarism of the Israeli occupation, which is represented in the actions and decisions of the officer, is conclusive evidence that rape is nothing to mention in the face of injustice: "He then circled around the girl, unwinding the torn dress from her body, and threw it as far as he could" (24). Celebrating the military achievement of

kidnapping a girl and "hunting her" is a point of weakness that indicates a weakness in an army that lives on the blood of honorable people and gains their alleged freedom through plunder and abuse. "He ordered them to prepare a special meal to celebrate the success of their morning patrol" (29).

The event of rape is not new to the Palestinian people, and I do not mean only the rape of the body, but all the violations it is subjected to. "Even rape. That doesn't only happen during war, but also in everyday life."(52) The occupation confiscated the Palestinians everything they own: memories, emotions, wealth, belongings, land, nationality, family, independence, and even consciousness and cognition.

Over the past decades, colonial practices, violence, persecution, and discriminatory practices have forced Palestinians to leave their lands. This exile had the greatest impact on them and their identity. John Halaka (2022) believes that the cultural amnesia of the Palestinians begins with his acceptance of cultural assimilation in alien societies. But the Palestinian people refuse to accept defeat and cultural adjustment "Survivance is the desire of a people that reject being swept away by ongoing ethnic cleansing"(165) Their sense of identity has been damaged as a result, and they are finding it difficult to stay connected to their past, present, and future.

Survival despite the pain and loss of identity is represented in the personality of the Palestinian researcher who suffers from a psychological disorder, constant fear, and anxiety from the occupation, checkpoints, and barriers because crossing borders has always been a crime for the hateful occupier" I do believe that jumping over borders is fully justifiable in a situation like this, is not it?"(50,51)

The Palestinians became accustomed to the misery and sorrow until it became normal as a result of repeated inhumane crimes, not because they had lost their feelings but rather because the occupation is so horrifying it is beyond comprehension." Nothing struck me as unusual about this either, and I continued on my way."(49) Even in the bombing incident to assassinate the three young men, most of the disturbance was from the dust and not from the bloodshed. "To be more concerned about the dust that was created by the bombing and that landed on their desk than about the killing of the three young men."(51) "Perhaps because there was nothing really unusual about the main details, especially when compared with what happens daily in a place dominated by the roar of occupation and ceaseless killing."(52)

Nevertheless, her desire to work and search for the truth, despite the impossibility of the task, is one of the signs of resistance that cannot be stopped, not only for the researcher but for all Palestinians" Here, some might think that my dedication to work reflects a desire to cling to life, or a love for life despite the occupation's attempts to destroy it"(50)." we have on this earth what makes life worth living."(50) Her words reminded me of the famous sentence of Mahmoud Darwish from 1986: "On this earth, there is that which deserves life."

Geographical distance and political borders are nothing more than fictitious hurdles and obstacles for Palestinian refugees, according to Sa'ed Atshan's explanation in his article, "Our Country Lives in Us." (2016) The Palestinian is deeply anchored in his homeland and loves it, and despite its simplicity, the details of his place and even his

food seem special. "It is where I could order mint tea and my favorite dish of mujaddara with its rice... In these moments I would be transported to Palestine. I could reclaim my own voice and that of the Palestinian people, a people whose spirits can never be crushed."(77)

Dawoud El-Alami made this clear in his article, "Motherland" (2016). For a refugee, adjusting to and adapting to a new society is challenging since a homeland is like a mother who solely has custody of her children, no matter how far away they may be." She was our homeland and wherever she was, was home. Now, in her absence, we are adrift forever."(136) Randa Farah in her article "Darker Shades of Exile"(2016) talked about how difficult it is to live and adjust in a nation where the people view the Palestinians as terrorists and embrace the enemy. In addition, the duality of identity, culture, and feelings leads to the inability of the refugee to determine the identity to which he belongs. "Refugee life histories interweave past recollections together with pressing matters about everyday life." (152)

The Palestinian researcher also struggled to adjust to the changes that the Nakba brought about in the occupied regions." The road I'd been familiar with until a few years ago was narrow and winding, while this one is quite wide and straight."(63) Building and street restoration, infrastructure reconstruction, and development by the occupiers are all seen by outsiders as signs of urbanization and development, but in the view of Palestinians, these actions represent the illegal theft of feelings, the erasure of memories, and the process of obliterating identity." my confidence dissipates completely and I'm no longer sure where I am."(63)

Strangeness and a sense of non-belonging are not just confined to urban appearances, but the Hebrewization of city names also helps to erase identities and instill a new culture and identity for the occupants. A sense of disconnect frequently arises, leaving one feeling isolated and alone. In her enlightening work "Lost to Geography " Mohammad Sakhnini (2022) affirmed how all Palestinians are united in their experience of sorrow and dislocation - regardless if they were forced out of their homes or live abroad. Palestine has come to mean so much more than just a location for us; it encapsulates our heritage and identity at the deepest level. Palestine here is not a land, mountain, desert, valley or sea. It is an idea."(230)

Racism is created more through exile and displacement from one's homeland than a sense of alienation and identity. Racism significantly influences the novel's narrative and the actions of the characters. The Palestinian researcher's experiences on her tour demonstrate the severity of racial prejudice and discrimination. Shibli made clear the gravity of racism and its effects on both the individual and society through the effective use of literary techniques. She uses vivid descriptions and impactful quotes to shed light on the racial tensions throughout the text. One prime example can be found in the protagonist's observation, "a girl who had curled up inside her black clothes like a beetle."(19) This quote reflects subtle discrimination.

In one of his most notable poems, titled *The Waste Land* (1922), T.S. Eliot contemplated the cruel reality that exists within our world. He highlighted how some people lead carefree lives under the sun while others find themselves resigned under

dark shadows. A similar sentiment was depicted by Shibli in her novel "These Are the Lucky Ones," when she referred to those individuals lucky enough to pass through checkpoints without much fuss or delay. Despite having to wait for an unimportant period and having no need to borrow ID cards from their colleagues, they could still move freely between different areas.

Moreover, the imaginary borders separating the Palestinian territories and the temporal and spatial barriers established by the Israeli occupation are the biggest evidence of racism. A person becomes a stranger in his homeland, and the color of the card determines the places he can cross and roam. From the moment the Palestinian researcher borrowed her colleague's blue identity card and rent a car with a yellow number plate in order to be able to cross the borders and barriers, comparisons began in terms of living, privileges, facilities, and even suffering." And I don't see what would prevent me either, except for my identity card."(54)

In her article "Stranger to My Own Story" (2022), Jean Makdisi indicated that the feeling of alienation is not limited to expatriates and displaced persons but also to refugees within the borders of the homeland. "In the diaspora, others, with even less choice, are imprisoned outside their land in refugee camps, within borders drawn up by force." (244) She added, however, that to be a Palestinian of any kind is to carry a terrible, ongoing history of political, social, and cultural injustice and to be unceasingly preoccupied with this particular collection of old grievances. Being Palestinian is a strongly felt sense of personal loss and estrangement, not just a national experience.

Despite the many paradoxes that the researcher felt, such as the sound of the explosion when a person is close to him and his feeling when he only hears its sound from afar, as if it did not happen, crossing the barriers, feeling safe even for a brief moment, even the bathing water was different. "Warm water rushes over my body with force so abundant and powerful that it reminds me I'm not in Ramallah." (83) But, despite their evil intentions, colonialism and occupation failed to divide the Palestinian people by merely assigning them to two distinct colours "lend me her blue identity card, since we're all brothers and sisters in the end"(55)

In addition, racism, which is represented in these social and economic differences, exacerbates ethnic tensions between Palestinians. In the novel, Shibli depicts the relationship between racism, poverty, and differences in a complex way and simulates the conditions of life in Palestinian reality. Checkpoints, freedom of movement, street vendors, and by describing daily life the novel illustrates the inescapable cycle of poverty and the oppressive forces of racism, which ultimately contribute to a fractured sense of self for those who live at the intersection of these challenges.

The author touched on many manifestations of realistic grief experienced by the Palestinian in his land as a stranger, even though we are the owners of the land. Recycling all things without exception drew my attention to the bitter reality that we live in. "It appears that she plans to keep using it until there's not a clean spot left"(59). It is not possible for us to live and continue to secure a livelihood without taking stock of and planning all our current and future steps. "Empty cans of food sit on balconies

and stairways in houses, sprouting plants of various kinds, or sit on hobs with boiling water inside." (58). In addition to sowing struggle's seed, responsibility, and argument for living in young people's hearts " Large numbers of children trying to sell me things" (58) and depriving them of the most basic childhood rights, "play", in order to help secure a livelihood; "it's the summer holiday." (59)

Shibli's narration continues to give importance to small details as the focus of events, such as linking all the movements of the Palestinian researcher to chewing gum. " The last one is a little girl with tousled hair, a brown face, and mucus running from her nose, who is selling chewing gum."(58). The role of chewing gum provides a nuanced exploration of the ways in which seemingly insignificant objects can carry a great deal of weight in the construction of personal and cultural identities. Through the lens of the gum, Shibli highlights the complex interplay of power and marginalization in postcolonial societies, where seemingly minor details can have significant meaning. Through the postcolonial theory, this fixation on a mundane object speaks to larger themes of power, control, and the struggle for agency in the face of colonial oppression. By examining the significance of this object, Shibli sheds light on the broader ways in which cultural and historical context shapes our understanding of identity.

Moreover, the contradiction of feelings for all characters in the novel causes controversy and an emotional crisis. The central character is torn between conflicting emotions that drive the narrative forward. Through the characters' inner turmoil, the novel explores themes of identity, heritage, and trauma that they have experienced. The contrast that the author presents through the two different perspectives in the novel—the detailed account of a brutal rape incident and a seemingly irrelevant sympathy story—and the experiences of both the oppressed and the oppressors brilliantly capture the complexity of human emotion. Furthermore, Shibli's lyrical writing style and metaphorical language add a layer of depth to the novel.

The emotions of fear, impulsivity, eagerness, security, violence, possessiveness, and empathy are mixed together. The feeling of fear is palpable throughout the novel, with Shibli's expert use of language and vivid descriptions making it almost tangible for the reader. From the fear of being caught by the authorities to the fear of failure and humiliation, this novel shows us the multifaceted nature of fear in a conflict zone.

From the beginning of the novel, feelings of fear dominate the events, as the leader and his fear of the Bedouin herds and the Arab gatherings, as well as the sting of the insect and his festering wound. And the rape gesture and the brutality and barbarity of the soldiers with her from the moment they caught her until they killed her "The girl was wailing as she ran away, then she fell to the sand before the sound of the gunshot was heard."(43). The feeling of fear also revolves around the events experienced by the Palestinian researcher and her fear of barriers and checkpoints " It's the barrier of fear, fashioned from fear of the barrier. The checkpoint."(56). And even her name "And my name? I reply with the first non-Arab name that comes to mind."(74) The psyche of both the occupiers and the occupied reveals the many ways in which fear can control and dominate interactions between the two groups.

The experiences of both the Palestinian and Israeli people, shed light on the difficult realities of living in a seam. The right to own property, forced displacement, and exile to regain the land reminds me of the bloody Palestinian wound following the declaration of the Balfour Declaration in 1917 regarding the return of the Palestinian land to the oppressed Israeli people: "A land without a people for a people without a land." In the novel, Shibli raises this issue through the actions and words of the military officer while encouraging his soldiers during the war and educating them about the importance of the Negev desert to them: " We cannot stand to see our people unable to return to our homeland." (29)," instead of waiting for him to appear, for 'If someone comes to kill you, rise and kill him first.'"(29)

Furthermore, the role of America in asserting Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories cannot be overlooked. Despite international condemnation of Israel's actions, the United States has consistently supported the Israeli government, providing military aid and political cover " The label explains that this is an example of a US-made submachine gun, developed in 1918 by John T. Thompson, thus the name Tommy" (69). The Palestinian people's right to self-determination have been denied by this assistance, which has contributed to the conflict's continuation. The way in which terror is portrayed in *Minor Detail* is an important reminder of the human cost of the political choices made by those in positions of authority. This aid also reinforces the false narrative that Israel is defending itself while ignoring the devastating impact on Palestinian lives.

Shibli explores the historical and cultural roots of the conflict and sheds light on the different perspectives that can be found on living in a land that is historically contested. The occupation policy of linking the names of the settlements to historical names confirms the exploitative occupation view by documenting the ownership of the Palestinian land for them. "Nirim was founded in an area called Dangour, named after a wealthy Jewish Egyptian who had acquired some land in that part of the Negev in the late Thirties." (74)

In addition, Israel frequently bases its claims of ancestral ties to the region on falsities. Israel justifies its occupation as necessary for national security, self-defense, and the advancement of the region and its civilization "Our creativity and innovation will be tested once we succeed in turning the Negev into a flourishing, civilized region and a thriving center of learning, development, and culture." (30). Also, colonialism views Palestinian culture as backwardness and a lack of awareness of modern civilization as a form of occupation and intellectual colonization. " Replies [...]when Arabs are suspicious about a girl's behavior, they kill her and throw her body in a well. Such a shame, he adds, that they have such customs." (77)

Nevertheless, this defense ignores the severe suffering and displacement that happened as a result for Palestinians. Their absolute assertion of ownership of the land and their historical and religious affiliation to Palestine and the Negev desert reminded me of the myth of the victorious people and their claim that they are Allah's chosen people.

Dr. Hussein Muhammad's 2022 piece titled "How the Jews Paved the Way for the Occupation of Palestine" raises a valid point worth exploring respectfully. His position centers on how Jewish people have asserted a false link to Allah's (peace be upon him) prophets and used it as justification for their alleged inheritance of both property and symbolic religious messaging connected with such figures—a contention he considers spurious since there is no actual association between modern-day members of Jewish faith groups and their antecedents from scriptural texts. Muslims who practiced Islam made up the Jews of the Torah. There is no doctrinal connection between modern Jews and the aforementioned prophets of Allah because they revere the Talmud instead.

In addition, encouraging phrases, external discourse, and internal monologues to motivate argumentation and struggle were prevalent in the characters of the novel. Shibli's use of encouraging phrases had the effect of raising the human spirit in times of conflict. The Palestinian researcher continued to motivate herself to progress and take risks in the journey of searching for the truth. The Israeli soldiers also, despite their repressive and negative roles, showed cooperation, stamina, and perseverance in order to continue the struggle.

Shibli's repeated use of the phrase "Man, not the tank, shall prevail" had the most influential role on the psychological context of the novel, as this phrase summarizes the climax around which the novel is centered, which is that resistance is not related to capabilities, equipment, and heavy weapons, but to man, his fighting spirit, and his psychological readiness to fight and continue. The resilience of the human spirit to resist persecution and injustice is the focus of victory in wars and the defeat of obstacles and adversities. This phrase represents the continuous struggle between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Perhaps it was repeated in the novel in areas occupied by the Israelis, but I could not attribute it to one of the two sides of the conflict. In my opinion, the phrase can be attributed to both. The Israeli army officer used every opportunity to remind the soldiers of their significance and the importance of reclaiming the land from the Palestinians and to encourage them to continue. As a Palestinian reader, I see that it is attributed to us and that the human spirit is more important than equipment in war. In the end, human beings are the ones who can bring about change and shape destiny. The issue is not related to numbers and equipment but rather to the homeland.

In the history of the Palestinian people, its events were filled with steadfastness and facing adversity, and that came from feeling motivated by resistance, patriotism, and determination to obtain dignity and linking it to preserving the land. Therefore, I see the old woman in the novel as a symbol of the Palestinian people, whose bloody past is linked to the present and shapes its future. Al-Masri commented on the old woman, saying that there is doubt about the reality of her appearance and whether it was real or just the fantasies of the Palestinian researcher and a mere ghost referring to the dead Bedouin girl.

However, I am unable to fully concur with her on this issue because the elderly woman has already revealed the entire plot and the most important aspect of the novel

that we must not miss. It is the inevitable fate of the Palestinians, the oppressive reality that is unavoidable, and the permanent and bloody conflict. It also represents occupied territory and the horrible rape of people's lives, property, and freedoms. Literally, it stands in for the injustices committed by the Israeli occupation.

Finally, the last thing Shibli concluded her piece with was the open ending. Shibli invites readers by attracting their attention and arousing their curiosity to think, interpret, and reflect. In my opinion, it is a painful end to all predictions. All of the conditions and incidences in the novel suggest that the winds are blowing contrary to how the Palestinian researcher's ship would like them to "And suddenly, something like a sharp flame pierces my hand, then my chest, followed by the distant sound of gunshots"(93) Were the shots warning in the air, and was she able to remedy the matter and state that she is a researcher and a tourist who does not know what places she is forbidden to cross, or did they arrest her, or was she injured and martyred?

I repeatedly thought that if she had asked the old woman about the event and was not afraid of the consequences, perhaps she would have known the facts and moved forward on her way to Ramallah. Perhaps everything would have changed, or was she from the beginning that she should not have fought this battle or cared about these details that might have cost her life? But there is nothing that changes reality and the inevitable fate. In the end and for all possibilities, the fate of the Palestinian researcher represents the inevitable fate of the Palestinians for decades. I always say that we live in a present that is bound by the past forever.

Conclusion

Adania Shibli's novel *Minor Detail* provides a unique perspective on the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity. It explores themes of memory, history, and identity in a way that contributes to the ongoing discourse on the impact of colonialism on Palestinian identity. Shibli's use of minor details and aesthetic linguistic discourse, saturated with accurate descriptions, immerses the reader in a unique sensory state, allowing them to experience the brutality and barbarity of the Israeli occupation. The study emphasizes how brutally the occupation is carried out, depriving Palestinians of their belongings, memories, prosperity, nationality, freedom, and even their cognitive abilities. It also highlights the difficulties Palestinian refugees confront as they attempt to adapt to a new society while preserving their sense of self and ties to their native culture. *Minor Detail* is an insightful and stirring novel that challenges readers to think about the human costs of political choices and to explore the complexity of conflict and identity in the Middle East.

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