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"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

The Aesthetics of Proper Name and Diasporic Identity in Darwish and Said

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Absence

acculturation

ghostliness

identity

name

Palestine

presence

Published in the same year, 1999, Edward Said's Out of Place and Mahmoud Darwish's "Mural" amplify eulogical voices of the dying self. Despite the sombre theme dominating both works as swansongs, Darwish and Said manage to subvert it to transform their works into ghostly texts. In this essay we examine the aesthetics of the proper name and diasporic identities as represented in the aforementioned works, employing Derrida's theory of the ghostliness of the proper name. We argue the names of Darwish and Said are ghostly presences of the absence of their bearers. Both authors, regardless of the overwhelming theme of decay in their works, conjure the apparition of the name to revive their absent presence. While Darwish's use of his name is philosophical, Said's use of his name addresses the social and psychological impact of heterogeneous identity. Thus, in addition to Derrida's doctrine on the aesthetics of proper names, we employ a dialogical model of acculturation developed in cross-cultural psychology to scrutinize the psychological intricacies involved in Said's hyphenated identity, the conflicting voices of Edward and Said and his fluctuating movement between contradictory voices and "I" positions of feeling assimilated, separated and marginalized.

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> Be a friend to your recumbent name. (Darwish 2013, 121)
> All around me were Greenvilles, and Coopers, and Pilleys: starchy little English boys and girls with enviably *authentic* names. (Said 1999, 39, emphasis added)

Darwish's "Mural" and Said's *Out of Place* are ghostly texts that mark the haunting presence of their absent authors. The year 1991 marks the year when Said was diagnosed by "a fatal medical diagnosis" (1999, xi) of leukaemia; late 1999 also marked Darwish's life, as he had a near-death experience which has been autobiographically documented in his poem "Mural". Both Said and Darwish, triggered by their illness, have produced two fundamentally groundbreaking works, namely, *Out of Place* and "Mural", respectively. Despite the melancholic catalyst instigating the composition of both works, an antithetical theme emerges. On the composition of his *Jidariyya* (Mural), Darwish remarks: "When I wrote *Mural*, which relates to my own death, I aimed to explore the theme of death, but rereading it when I had finished, I realized it was a hymn to life" (quoted in Williams 2012, 34). Darwish contends it is "an artistic work, carved or painted and hung on a wall, in the belief that the work can be seen from far and can survive geographically and historically" (quoted in Ghazoul 2012, 42). Said, upon his near-death, triggered by the diagnosis, commenced his autobiographical journey for the purpose of "leav[ing] behind a subjective account of the life I lived in the Arab world, where I was born and spent my formative years, and in the United States, where I went to school, college, and university" (1999, xi). Thus, death or the cancellation of being is the motivation of Said and Darwish's writings, which epitomize their return and their reclamation of Palestine and their names in the form of a literary corpus.

As two thematically connected, elegiac texts, Darwish's "Mural" and Said's *Out of Place* are originated within the alienation, fracturing and multiplicity of the self which is superseded by death. In this essay we argue the names of both authors are the uncanny sites of the displacement or exile of their bearers who bear their names to immortality by creating authorial identities. In turn, the bearers of the names Mahmoud and Said are carried to death by their names. We employ Jacques Derrida's philosophy of the name and its bearer as well as the ghostliness of the name to examine the aesthetics of the proper name and diasporic identities in Said's *Out of Place* and Darwish's "Mural". We contend that the names of both authors encompass the individuals who bear these names, yet are no longer accessible to us in naming them; in a parallel theme, these names play a synecdochic role representing the ghostly ephemerality in the collective identity of Palestine, the subject of their writings. Furthermore, we focus on the concept of acculturation to scrutinize Said's diasporic self, which is multivoiced, as manifested in his hyphenated name and his living with so many incompatible identities as a

Palestinian-Egyptian-Christian-Arab-American. Hermans (2001) argues that "travel, immigration, diaspora, and globalization require a more dynamic conception of the self than is usual in cross-cultural research. Such a self is historical, multivoiced, and dialogical" (25). Said's memoir, *Out of Place*, reveals his fluctuations between multiple "I" positions which show that Said's contested parts of the self are constantly in dialogue with each other, feeling at once assimilated, separated and marginalized.

Throughout his literary *oeuvre*, Mahmoud Darwish sustained a profoundly persistent and an ostensibly elusive relationship with his "name". The name is a designation/appellation/characterization of someone or something. However, in this essay, we contend that the name extends beyond the mere denomination of the "who" and the "which" to examine its intricacy in forging the hybrid identity of Mahmoud Darwish and Edward Said who are specters haunting their literary works. Derrida's concepts of ghostliness and proper name are inherent in Darwish and Said's writing of their farewell works that are rife with references to their names. However, to widen the scope of this study and evade eliding the differences between Said and Darwish's ways of referring to their authorial names, we deploy the dialogical method of acculturation so as to reveal Said's hybrid identity and his shuttling between two incompatible identities manifested in his hyphenated name.

In his poem "The Red Indian's Penultimate Speech to the White Man" (2009b), Darwish encapsulates the uncanniness of the name, stating: "Our names are trees of the deity's speech, and birds that soar higher / than the rifle. Do not sever the trees of the name, you comers / from the sea in war" (154). Adam Lipszyc pinpoints that "the now-triple act of revelation, subjection and naming is to be seen as the traumatic interpellation, the seduction by the enigma of the name, which throws us into language, orders us to speak, while making it impossible for us to control the origin" (2018, 4). Lipszyc's fundamental essay investigating the psycho-theological effect of the name propounds that the name is an origination; by framing Darwish's anguish of the name being "sever[ed]" within Lipszyc's paradigm, it occurs that, in Lipszyc's words, "the primal scene of naming" (6) is simply annihilated, hence the distortion of identity.

Out of Place and "Mural" conceive the displaced personas of both Said and Darwish, negating by that their self-presence in the texts that carry their names. However, it is remarkable that the name survives the decomposition of the author in the text. It is worth noting that the name acts as the doppelgänger of both Darwish and Said. Derrida highlights that the name is at once a "sentence of death and survival" (1992, 427). Therefore, it happens that the names of Darwish and Said reveal that the relationship between their corpses, or in Walter Benjamin's words the *Körper* (of Edward and Darwish) and their corpuses becomes possible with the very giving of a signature. The name, thus,

acts, in Platonic terms, as a pharmakon: the ambivalent term synthesizing both "remedy and poison" (Derrida 2004, 75).

To start with "Mural", Darwish opts for displaying his autobiographical account by discursively painting his thanatic journey via a mural; Feryal Ghazoul suggests that the title of *Jidariya* "carries an ambiguous double meaning: as both Mural [by] Mahmoud Darwish and Mural [of] Mahmoud Darwish" (2012, 40). Said's choice carrying manifold, ambiguous geographical connotations and parameters is also embedded with the conflicting state of the pulverized ego, the ego of identity. *Out of Place* could be a protean rendition of "dis" (out of) "place", hence implying the word-"displace".

Both autobiographical works examine a variety of intricate issues, yet the name remains the undying ghostly witness of both. It is notable that Darwish and Said's creation of their authorial identities (via the name) is punctuated by the death of their physical bodies. The mere speech act of remembering Said and Darwish, posthumously, via the name allows both authorial figures a kind of living-on and enactment of the impossible speech act of witnessing one's death. It is true that, in Derrida's words, "I cannot testify to my death – by definition, I cannot say, according to common sense, I should not be able to say: I died or I am dead" (2000, 46), yet Darwish and Said, being witnesses to their own deaths, articulate the "impossible possibility" (Derrida 2000, 46). Said asserts: "I'm not going to die, because so many people want me dead" (Fisk 2003, 3). Darwish declares: "However much you are killed, you will live" (2010, 6).

Dwelling on the specters of identity and denomination, the diasporic state of Palestine and Palestinians evoked in "Mural" encompasses the shredded individual and collective. The poem, in anthropomorphic terms, opens with "'This is your name'" (119) and ends with, "And my name, though I mispronounce it over the coffin, is mine" (162). Parallel to the displacement of the self, the collective self proliferates: the poem first singularizes the persona, "One day I will be what I want to be" (120), yet concludes by turning the singular first-person pronoun "I" into a plural first-person pronoun "we": "One day we will be what we want to be" (122). The persona's constant alteration of the ego results in the triple self-negating concluding words, "I am not mine" (162). These self-annihilating words mirror the paradoxical duplicity of rhetoric employed by Israelis to describe Palestinians as internal refugees in what was their own homeland: present absentees. As Tahrir Hamdi points out, "The poet's attachment to his name in this poem should make the reader recall not only Palestine's loss of space, but also the loss of its name on the map and the names of its villages and towns in 1948" (2017, 249). Darwish's notable dissection of his name in "Mural" further reflects the state of displacement not only in his own ego but in collective ego as well. The traumatic Palestinian experiences of exile, Nakba (1984), Naksa (1967) and repeated expulsions are manifested in the name of

"Mahmoud" dissevered letter-by-letter and sound by sound throughout "Mural":

واسمي، إن أخطأتُ لَفْظَ اسمي
بخمسة أَحْرُفٍ أُفُقِيَةِ التكوين لي :
ميمُ/المُتَيَمُ والمُيتَّمُ والمتمّمُ ما مضى
حاء/الحديقةُ والحبيبةُ، حيرتانِ وحسرتان
ميمُ/المُغَامِرُ والمُعَدُّ المُسْتَعِدُّ لموته
الموعود منفيّاً، مريضَ المُشْتَهَى
،واو/الوداعُ، الوردةُ الوسطى
ولاءٌ للولادة أَينما وُجِدَتْ، وَوَعْدُ الوالدين
دال/الدليلُ، الدربُ، دمعةُ
دارةٍ دَرَسَتْ، ودوريّ يُدَلِّلُني ويُدْميني
. ... وهذا الاسمُ لي
(Darwish 2009a, 534–535)

And my name, if I mispronounce my name
With its five horizontal letters is mine:
Mim/of the lovesick, of the orphaned, of what completes what is past
Ha'/of the garden, of the beloved, two puzzles and two agonies
Mim/of the adventurer, ready for his death
the exiled, the promised, the sufferer from desire
Waw/of the farewell, the middle flower
of homage for birth wherever it is found, and parent's promise
Dal/of the guide, of the path, a tear,
of an aura studied, of a sparrow protecting and wounding me/
and this name is mine …
(Abusamra 2018, 59)

Playing linguistically with the five Arabic letters forming his name (*mim, ha, mim, waw* and *dal*), Darwish utilizes the homoeoprophoronic quality of each sound and letter to create a thread of words beginning with the same letter. However, mispronunciation of Darwish's name amounts to a distortion of identity; on this linguistic dilemma, Hamdi outlines, "This part of the poem, however, is left untranslated by even one of Darwish's best translators, Munir Akash, precisely because the English language is not equipped with the linguistic space and repertoire of the Arabic language" (2017, 250). Even when the above lines are translated from Arabic into English, the translation of the proper name falls into the Derridean aporia of untranslatability, opening up spaces for linguistic and cultural loss. A proper name, Derrida (1994) argues in *Specters of Marx*, "appears utterly resistant to translation since, while it remains a basic element or inscription of language, it seems

in its irreplaceability to stand outside the linguistic system of differential-exchangeable values" (230). While the above lines convey an almost perfect denotative sense of Darwish's Arabic masterpiece, there is an inevitable (connotatively phonetic) loss of alliteration that Darwish employs to dissect his name, Mahmoud. Indeed, Darwish is aware of the untranslatability of names and the inevitable distortion they are subject to in the process of translation: "And my name, though I mispronounce it over the coffin, is mine" (162). In *Absent Presence* (2010), designated as "my own funeral speech" (Rooke 2008, 11), written two years prior to his death in 2008, Darwish alludes to a mysterious distortion of his name, noting: "I come across a grave with a marble tombstone: I will not be concerned if one of the letters of my name drops off it, as the letter *ya* dropped unnoticed from my grandfather's name" (3). Abusamra observes that this "ambiguous error" occurred "in Darwish's passport [wherein] the letter *ya* [is] dropped off his grandfather's name, Husayn, which is typed as 'Hasan'" (2018, 60).

It becomes a salient feature in "Mural" that death signposts the name. Death, in other words, is a *sine qua non* of the name. The act of denominating, bearing, receiving and giving the name entails that the bearer is (or will be) necessarily absent. The name is a harbinger of death, bespeaking of the eventual absence of the name bearer. In *The Post Card* Derrida points out that "The name is made to do without the life of the bearer, and is therefore always somewhat the name of someone dead" (1987, 39). Equally pertaining to the uncanniness of death, the signature is haunted by the specter of death as well. In his eulogy for Michel Serviere, Derrida writes: "Before anything else, even before the name, a signature bespeaks the possible death of the one who bears the name" (2000, 136). Bearing a proper name and signing one's own name therefore entails, for Derrida, that one is always already in the memory of one's death.

The opening of "Mural" sets a macabre scene dovetailing the name within the realm of death. The persona opens the poem reporting a passive conversation that highlights the significance of the name in the construction of one's identity. The nurse instructs the persona: "This is your name, she said / and vanished into a corridor of her whiteness. / This is your name. Learn it by heart and don't dispute with it" (Darwish 2013, 121). The nurse's admonishment reveals that the persona's survival is in his name, as his writing on walls (the mural) is the means for his immortality. Thus, the *Lieb*, using Walter Benjamin's terminology, referring to "embodied spirit" (Lipszyc 2018, 2) of Darwish, transfigures into what Derrida terms the "ghost writer". A "ghost writer", Derrida postulates, is the one "who composes speeches for use by litigants, speeches which he himself does not pronounce, which he does not attend, so to speak, in person, and which produce their effects in his absence" (2004, 73). It is undoubtedly true that Said and Darwish have attended numerous events and recited many of their compositions; therefore,

it seems absurd to claim they are ghost writers. Nonetheless, the name, as outlined earlier, is the writer's doppelgänger. In other words, the name *supplements* the *Leib*'s absence to become the presence of the absent, a spectral denomination, the reciting ghost. Simon Wortham explicates Derrida's perception of the name, noting that "the proper name is the mark by which one is identified, yet it is also that which depropriates me from the outset, since proper name is destined to outlast me, to substitute for me in my absence. Thus, though a separation which is both eventual and original, the proper name announces my absence, my death, from the beginning" (2010, 116–117). "Mural" sentences the persona to a spectral end, casting him to numerous proliferations and splits. He enquires:

- أَتعرفني؟ -
سألتُ الظلَّ قرب السورِ،
فانتبهتْ فتاةُ ترتدي ناراً،
وقالت: هل تُكَلِّمني؟
فقلتُ: أُكَلِّمُ الشَبَحَ القرينَ
فتمتمتْ: مجنونُ ليلى آخرٌ يتفقَّد
الأطلالَ،
وانصرفتْ إلى حانوتها في آخر السُوق
القديمةِ ... .
(Darwish 2009a, 525)

– *Do you know me?* I asked the shadow near the rampart.
A girl dressed in flames saw me, and said: *Are you speaking to me?*
No, I said, *I was talking to a ghost that haunts me.*
Another Majnoon Laila roaming the ruins, she said,
then went into her shop at the end of the Old Souk.
(Darwish 2013, 157)

The allusion to Majnoun Laila, Imru' al-Qays, is an event of the ghostliness of the name. The self, Darwish, is related to another self, Imru' al-Qays, through the loss of the bearer of the name creating by that a spectral *mise-en-abyme*. The proliferation of the ghostly name does not only resound for the individual; these specters resonate with Palestine's deeply traumatic history and traumatized national consciousness, which surface as an interplay between presence and absence.

Despite the pessimistic image of decay opening "Mural", Darwish transforms this artistic piece into a defiant call of reclamation, resistance and return. The reappearance of the "writing" persona, however, does not resurrect Darwish. Instead, he (or it) transfigures into an inscribed reapparition, a state depicted by Derrida as iterability. In *Jacques Derrida's Ghost* David

Appelbaum elucidates iterability by stating: "From the ghost issues a summons to an irreducible experience, an experience that cannot be a redux of another, but whose repetition promises the end of repetition insofar as history is the repetition of the presence of the present" (2009, 65). Therefore, naming, a spectral redeemer, signals the transcendence of mortality and reveals that the name is a supplement to the inevitable absence of the bearer. The persona hence finalizes "Mural" by infusing the past with the future to instigate the iterable "return":

ما كان لي: أَمسي، وما سيكون لي
غَدِيَ البعيدُ، وعودة الروح الشريد
كأنَّ شيئاً لم يَكُنْ
(Darwish 2009a, 535–536)

What was mine: my yesterday.
What will be mine: the distant tomorrow,
and the return of the wandering soul as if nothing had happened
(Darwish 2013, 161)

This theme resonates across Edward Said's works, specifically referring to *Culture and Imperialism*: "One of the first tasks of the culture of resistance was to reclaim, rename, and re-inhabit the land. And with that came a whole set of further assertions, recoveries, and identifications, all of them quite literally grounded on this poetically projected base" (Said 1994, 226). Despite the fact that Said adopts a critical perspective in his writings, meaning that "poeticism" is relatively mitigated in his works, the ghost of the name proliferates in his numerous attempts to display his "many" names: "and having pretended that 'Sigheed' was an American name, I had some of my worst moments in Arabic class" (82). "But I was always glad when Rubendall picked me out of the crowd – 'Ed,' he would say, using my new Americanized name" (241).

It is noticeable in Darwish that the writing self of the author is projected under a kaleidoscopic lens: the persona undergoes constant metamorphosis. The demising, writing *Leib* of Darwish transfigures at times into an inscribed ego incarnated in the deictic first-person pronoun "I". In a number of Darwish's works, the notion of the fractured self recurs frequently. The nature of this fissure is ghostly, as it displays Darwish's splitting into the writing and written "I" as well as the name outliving its bearer. In "Mural" the persona alludes to that split, stating: "We didn't inherit anything except for our two names" (Darwish 2013, 39). In "The Owl's Night", a poem composed by Darwish around 1995, the persona sheds light on a significant idea regarding the birth, or in other words, the inscription, of the self in a manner diverting

the patriarchal order into an event of texuality; the persona notes, "Perhaps / I'll give birth to myself with myself / and choose for my name vertical letters" (Darwish 2006, 22). The reference to vertical letters is in this context an implicit allusion to Darwish's dissection of his name later in "Mural". In "Sequences for Another Time" he declares: "I see myself split in two: / my name / and I … " (Darwish 2006, 186). The zenith of this rift is in Darwish's 2010 autobiographical work *Absent Presence*. The work opens candidly with self-dissemination: "Line by line, I scatter [anthuruka] you before me" (3). It is worth paying attention to the translation of the word *anthuruka* in Arabic, whose primary sense delivers the meaning of scattering. However, the ghostliness of dissemination extends beyond that; Abusamra points out that "This verb commonly denotates a sense of 'scattering'; however, it can also refer to prose, *an-Nathr*, whose root, the verb *Nathara*, is the same as that of 'scattering'" (2018, 60). *Absent Presence* hence functions as a portal which transfigures the writing "I" into a (or the) written "I".

While "Mural" poetically (re)constructs and (re)incarnates Darwish's name as well as the name of Palestine, Said's memoir *Out of Place* amplifies a conflicting voice between his English name, Edward, and his Arabic name, Said. Said notes, "The travails of bearing such a name were compounded by an equally unsettling quandary when it comes to language. I have never known what language I spoke first, Arabic or English, or which one was mine beyond any doubt" (1999, 4). This denominal contrast denotes Said's "unsettled sense of many identities – mostly in conflict with each other" (5). Said argues "the basic split in my life was the one between Arabic, my native language, and English, the language of my education and subsequent expression as a scholar and teacher" (xi). Said claims "it took me about fifty years to become accustomed to, or, more exactly, to feel less uncomfortable with, 'Edward', a foolishly English name yoked forcibly to the unmistakably Arabic family name Said" (3). He explains that "Edward" was picked after the Prince of Wales, "who cut so fine a figure in 1935" (3), whereas the "non-Edward part of myself" (4) was associated with "various uncles and cousins" (3) who shared the name "Said". Within the context of the dialogical approach to acculturation, we contend that Said moves between conflicting voices and "I" positions that are at the crux of his diasporic self.

The "Edward" Said introduced at the beginning of his memoir is the product of the private and public regulations (of schools and home) to which he was subject. Said's "first extended contact with colonial authority" (42) was at Gezira Preparatory School (GPS), where he was forced to "read about meadows, castles, and Kings John, Alfred, and Canute", while being subjected to lessons "in English glory" (39). As a teenager, Said attended Victoria College – "the British Eton in Egypt" (213) – where "the authorities had divided us all into 'houses', which further inculcated the ideology of empire. I was a member of Kitchener House; other houses were Cromer, Frobisher, and

Drake" (181). The faculty at Victoria College was made up of "unfortunate and bedraggled" (184) teachers like Mr. Sugg, Mr. Gatley and Mr. Mundrell, whom Said portrays as "cruel, impersonal, and authoritarian Englishmen" (183). Said depicts himself and his fellow "VC-boys" as "inferiors pitted against a wounded colonial power that was dangerous and capable of inflicting harm on us, even as we seem compelled to study its language and its culture as the dominant one in Egypt" (186). Thus, "Edward" is "a false, even ideological, identity" (91) that adheres to the conventions of Empire. Said explains he "became delinquent" and developed into "the 'Edward' of punishable offenses, laziness, loitering, who was regularly expected to be caught in some specific unlicensed act and punished by being given detentions, or, as I grew older, a violent slap by my teacher" (42).

As the product of "fearful paternal injunctions" (163), Said projects himself with a muddled nominal identity. Wadie and Hilda's rules and constant criticisms reinforce Said's sense of being divided between a public ("Edward") and a private ("non-Edward") self:

> The extreme and rigid regime of discipline and extracurricular education that my father would create and in which I became imprisoned from the age of nine left me no respite or sense of myself beyond its rules and patterns. And thus I became "Edward", a creation of my parents whose daily travails a quite different but quite dormant inner self was able to observe, though most of the time was powerless to help. (Said 1999, 19)

It can be deduced that behind the "Edward" side of Said's character lies the more elusive "non-Edward" part of his personality, characterized by an "unpredictable will to go on past rules and deadlines that had already been accepted by 'Edward'" (89). Said confesses that underneath Edward's "well-known infirmities and sins" lurked a "real or best self (undefined, free, curious, quick, young, sensitive, even likeable)" (87). While *Out of Place* focuses almost exclusively on "Edward", the product of various rules and regulations, Said's memoir is a defence of his "non-Edward" self: "The underlying motifs for me have been the emergence of a second self buried for a very long time beneath a surface of often expertly acquired and wielded social characteristics belonging to the self my parents tried to construct" (217).

Despite their divergent experiences, Darwish and Said converge within the crucible of the name. While Darwish's diasporic identity and name are linked to the catastrophe of Palestine and Palestinians, "Said's life was wholly shaped by a perpetual commitment to a politics inseparable from Palestinian struggle for self-determination and independence" (Prasad 2016, 6). Darwish's "Mural" opts for the wall, a metonymic reference to the absent–present specter of homeland, as a platform projecting the (re)apparition of the

name (both his name as well as Palestine). *Jidar*(*iyya*) therefore is a trace haunted by the specter of the name. Displacement is not only entrenched in "Mural", Said's sense of out-of-placeness is ingrained in the displacement of Palestinians and Palestine. The political agency of the colonized self, Said, even in the language of the other, Edward, is to un-suppress the politics of Palestine. Displacement, in Said, becomes even manifold as it occurs internally: Said's family appeared, in their seclusion, as "a family determined to make itself into a mock little European group despite the Egyptian and Arab surroundings" (Said 1999, 75). Edward Said's hyphenated name is subject to different voices that question who Edward Said is, making him internalize the feeling of being the other:

> 'What are you?'; 'But Said is an Arab name'; 'You are an American?'; 'You are American without an American name'; … 'You don't look American!'; 'How come you were born in Jerusalem and you live here?'; 'You're an Arab after all, but what kind are you? A protestant?' (Said 1999, 5–6)

Edward Said's antithetical name casts him to the sphere of marginalization and otherness wherein his sense of identity loss, displacement and exile intensifies. Said's polar position reveals a polyphonic trait characterizing his work in a manner amplifying various subject positions moving between different cultures and within different social contexts.

While Darwish confronts existential issues related to being and non-being, presence and absence and makes great play of the fractured and paradoxical nature of his name for the purposes of poetry, his name is very much less of a problem in the real world than Said's Anglo-Arab split. Said uses his names to display different facets of his identity. "For years and depending on the exact circumstances, I would rush past 'Edward' and emphasize 'Said'; at other times, I would do the reverse, or connect these two to each other so quickly that neither would be clear. The one thing I could not tolerate, but very often would have to endure, was the disbelieving, and hence undermining, reaction: Edward? Said?" (1). Said still invokes Arabic language to resist the colonial schools in Cairo:

> Rule 1 stated categorically: 'English is the language of the school. Anyone caught speaking other languages will be severely punished.' So Arabic became our haven, a criminalized discourse where we took refuge from the world of masters and complicit prefects and anglicized older boys who lorded it over us as enforcers of the hierarchy and its rules. Because of Rule 1 we spoke more, rather than less, Arabic, as an act of defiance against what seemed then, and seems even more so now, an arbitrary, ludicrously gratuitous symbol of their power. (Said 1999, 184)

Despite celebrating his mother tongue in the colonial school in Cairo, Said suppresses his Arabic voice upon his arrival in the United States:

> Nationality, background, real origins, and past actions all seemed to be the sources of my problem … So beginning in America I resolved to live as if I were a simple, transparent soul and not to speak about my family or origins except as required, and then very sparingly. To become, in other words, like the others as anonymous as possible. The split between 'Edward' (or, as I was soon to become, 'Said'), my public outer self, and the loose irresponsible fantasy-ridden churning metamorphoses of my private, inner life was very marked. (Said 1999, 137)

The concept of acculturation assumes that immigrants can achieve a blend that entails "becoming effective in the new culture and remaining competent in his or her culture of origin" (LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton 1998, 148). However, Said's *Out of Place* reveals that he comes to terms with his diasporic identity as "Edward Said", in the "form of all kinds of strange combinations moving about, not necessarily forward, sometimes against each other, contrapuntally yet without one central theme" (1999, 295).

Concluding remarks

It is true that the name is the nexus joining Darwish and Said. Nevertheless, revising the specter of the name in both works proves its ephemerality. The name in Darwish transcends to become an independent entity, a spectral supplement. In his 2004 diwan *Don't Apologize for What You Have Done*, Darwish addresses his already detached name in his poem "As for me, I tell my name", noting:

> أمَّا أَنا، فأقولُ لاسْمي: دَعْكَ منِّي
> وابتعدْ عنِّي، فإني ضقتُ منذ نطقتُ
> واتَّسَعَتْ صفاتُك! خذ صفاتِكَ وامتحنْ
> غيري … حملتُك حين كنا قادرَينْ على
> عبور النهر مُتَّحدين ((أَنت أنا))، ولم
> أَخْتَرْكَ يا ظلِّي السلوقيَّ الوفيَّ، آختارك
> الآباء كي يتفاءلوا بالبحث عن معنى .
> ولم يتساءلوا عمَّا سيحدُثُ للمُسَمَّى عندما
> يقسو عليه الاسمُ، أَو يُمْلي عليه
> كلامَهُ فيصير تابعَهُ … فأين أَنا؟
> (Darwish 2009a, 79)

> As for me, I tell my name: leave me,
> Abandon me. I became tight since I spoke,
> when your traits expanded! Take your traits and test

someone else … I carried you when we were able to
cross the river united ((You I)). And I did not
pick you, my shadow, my loyal hound. The forefathers
picked you to be optimistic when searching for a meaning.
They did not wonder about what will happen for the named when
the name is cruel to him, or when the name dictates
his speech, so that he becomes its follower … where am I?
(Darwish 2004, 75, our translation)

In his *Book of Imaginary Beings*, Jorge Luis Borges displays a rich plethora of the numerous significations of the Double. In most cultures, Borges contends, the Double entails imminent death. He adds, "To meet oneself is … ominous" (1974, 51). Darwish's rupture with his own name meticulously adopts Borges' example of the Scottish *wraith*, a word standing "for an apparition thought to be seen by a person in his exact image just before death" (1974, 51). Death, in this context, does not necessarily comply with Borges' "ominous" perspective on encountering one's double. Death, of the *Körper* of Darwish, becomes the means for the recurrence of the immortal ghost of the name, Mahmoud Darwish.

Conversely, throughout his memoir, Said constantly voices a hesitant tone in his name. In a remarkable note, Said recounts a conversation with his Arabic teacher wherein he downplays his innate skill in his mother language, Arabic, "as if emphasizing the lurking Arab quality in my name, which I had laboriously tried to scale down to the prevailing norms of American pronunciation" (Said 1999, 83).

Even though Said and Darwish opt for divergent routes in moulding the spectral bust of the name in their works, it, referring here to the name, never fails to conduct a séance with the dead, Mahmoud and Edward. *Tibaq* (Antithesis), an eulogoic poem composed by Darwish commemorating the death of his friend Edward Said, is a poem wherein the names of both Edward and Mahmoud converge to give birth to the spectral name: "I have two names meeting and parting" (Darwish, "Antithesis", our translation).

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