



## Bulletin of Advanced English Studies (BAES)

Journal Homepage: <https://www.refaad.com/views/BAES/home.aspx>  
ISSN: 2617-6459 (Online) 2617-6440 (Print)



# Exile and Expatriation in Jabra's (1974) "In the Deserts of Exile" and Wright's (1951) "I Choose Exile"

Rafa Maqbol<sup>a</sup>, Yasmin Obeid<sup>a</sup>, Raya Allaham<sup>a</sup>, Taqwa Zayton<sup>a</sup>, Ekrema Shehab<sup>a\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

**Abstract:** This study compares and stylistically analyzes the theme of exile in Jabra's (1974) "In the Deserts of Exile" and Wright's (1951) "I Choose Exile". It aims to show the different representations of exile in a Palestinian and an American work through discussing four sub-themes present in both works. Among these are the motives of exile and the meaning of different places and colors that are perceived differently in accordance with each writer's setting; all these factors make exile involuntary for Jabra but voluntary for Wright. The study, also, employs Edward Said's contrapuntal, postcolonial, and space and place theories.

**Keywords:** *Involuntary exile; expatriation; postcolonial literature; Edward Said.*

## Introduction:

Some studies (Qabaha 2018, Paramenter 1994) have given a special attention to the theme of exile for its great effects and consequences on different peoples and nations. Therefore, exile as a theme is embodied in many literary works by writers who lived that experience whether they are forced to it or they choose it by their own will. Those who are forced to leave their homeland are called exiles, but those who choose their alien homeland are expatriates. Said (2000) sheds light on the main difference between them; he argues that "exile originated in the age- old practice of banishment. Once banished, the exile lives an anomalous and miserable life, with the stigma of being an outsider. Expatriates voluntarily live in an alien country, usually for personal or social reasons (p. 25)". Therefore, Fabre said that (1993, 44) maintains, shall "move beyond insularity and provincialism and see several literatures and cultures, contrapuntally" so that such differences would be clearly highlighted. The authors of this article see that the two texts, Jabra's "In the Deserts of Exile" and Wright's "I Choose Exile" can be read as autobiographical representations of their authors.

The writers of these works are of different origins. Jabra is a Palestinian author, poet, novelist, painter, translator and literary critic who was born in Bethlehem in 1920. Not yet thirty, he was forced to leave to Iraq following the events of 1948, the year of Al-Nakba or "the catastrophe"; it is an event in which "the Wandering Palestinian having replaced the Wandering Jew". It is ironical that the new wanderers should be driven into the wilderness by the old wanderers themselves" Jabra (1979, 6). Those Israelis who come from a desert drive out many Palestinians into deserts. Therefore, Jabra, a Palestinian forced to leave his home in 1948, expresses, in his writings, subjects of loss, exile, and longing for his homeland as reflected in his poem "In the Deserts of Exile".

\*Corresponding author

Email address: [ikrimas@najah.edu](mailto:ikrimas@najah.edu) (Ekrema Shehab)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31559/baes2020.5.1.2>

Received Date: 21/10/2020

Revised Date: 31/10/2020

Accepted Date: 14/11/2020



With respect to Wright, he was born in 1908 in a plantation in Mississippi. He is an African-American author of, sometimes, controversial novels, short stories, poems, and non-fiction. Much of his literature concerns racial themes, especially those related to the plight of African Americans who suffered discrimination and violence in the South and the North during the late 19th to mid-20th centuries. Racism against the blacks' life in America has its part on Wright, and he eventually moved to Paris in 1946. Thus, he becomes a permanent American expatriate and that experience is well reflected in his essay "I Choose Exile". The authors of this study choose to compare between these texts in particular because "many discussions of expatriation – not to mention a substantial number of expatriates themselves – have overlooked this distinction [between exile and expatriation, and tended to apply the experiences and emotions associated with exile, expulsion from one's homeland, the pathos of homelessness, unquenchable nostalgia – to a phenomenon that has very different coordinates and a very different repertoire of affect" (Winnett 2012, 45 ).

In this paper, examining Jabra's and Wright's conditions as reflected in their works, "In the Deserts of Exile" and "I Choose Exile", respectively, shows the clear difference between what is involuntary exile and expatriation; these conditions are examined through Said's (1993) ideas of counterpoint, postcolonial, and space and place theories.

### Literature Review:

Some studies such as (Qabha 2018, Fabre 1993) have discussed the theme of 'exile' in Jabra's (1974) poem "In the Desert of Exile" and Wright's (1951) essay "I Choose Exile" separately, but never together, which is what this paper aim to do. A few studies such as (Suleiman 1984, Hayward 2001) are conducted on Jabra's work and scholars talk about the motive behind writing such a poem and the significance of the symbol of desert as used in his work. For example, Suleiman (1984) says that Jabra is one of the Palestinians who, after 1948, see themselves as aliens in the countries in which they settled after they had got exiled from their homeland, Palestine. Suleiman says that although Jabra does not suffer materially or live in a refugee camp, he cannot hide that feeling of being exiled; thus, this is clearly reflected in his works as seen in "In the Deserts of Exile"; it is one of the works in which Jabra sees life outside Palestine as a miserable life in the desert where everyone's exiled eyes, as Jabra (1974) says, are filled with "dust and rime". Hayward (2001) also points out that Jabra in his poem feels nostalgia for his lost "green land" as he describes it in his poem in contrast to the deserted land of exile.

With respect to the symbol of desert, Hayward (ibid.) sees desert as an unprotected space marked by loss, destruction, and exile. She gives Jabra's "In the Deserts of Exile" as an example among many works in Arabic in which this image is employed reflecting Jabra's own feeling of loss. In addition, Schulz & Hammer (2003, 43) describe the desert as "a place of death, not of life." They say that even though life is impossible there; this is the space of the Palestinian exile reflecting how much suffering and pain Palestinians face; they give Jabra's work as an example in which such a symbol is employed. Parmenter (1994, 14) also talks about the desert as a symbol of "al- ghurba" (expatriation). She says that for Palestinians, the desert is a "nonplace in which exile exits," and that "exile's thoughts revolve around the land and life left behind" since the desert symbolizes death and want. Parmenter (ibid: 16) says that unlike the Palestinian landscape, which is full of beautiful and fertile images, the desert as an exile is seen as "a space outside place and time which is also empty of both memory and hope."

Wright's "I choose exile" has also been the concern of a number of critics; they mainly comment on Wright's motives for writing this work and the issues of racism and discrimination discussed through it. Firstly, Wright's motives for writing this text are asserted in Fabre's (1993) argument that Wright wants to warn the American people against the illness of their nation. Fabre also asserts that Paris is Wright's best choice because its encounter with the Nazi occupation makes it possible for its people to recognize and appreciate the ability to call for change. Keith (2013) also comments on Wright's work and regards it as a result of the experience of self-exile which he encounters in his homeland.

Secondly, regarding racism and discrimination in Wright's work, McCall (1969) states that Wright forces Americans to come face to face with the question of being black in America and what this experience leaves in the soul of African Americans. He also asserts that Wright's ability to show the world his experience with racism and discrimination is what gives him the creative power to produce great literature such as the work at hand.

### Critical Methodology:

This study uses three critical theories to analyze Jabra's "In the Desert of Exile" and Wright's "I choose exile". These are contrapuntal, postcolonial, and space and place theories.

First, the contrapuntal theory is founded and first established by Edward Said (1993, p.43) who mentions it while defining comparative literature as "a field whose origin and purpose is to move beyond insularity and provincialism and to see several cultures and literatures together, contrapuntally, [...], the [...] aim of comparative literature [was] to get a perspective beyond one's own nation to see some sort of whole." It is, thus, the sense in which we bring two literatures, along with their cultural, historical, and biographical contexts, and look at them 'contrapuntally.' A contrapuntal reading is required in order "to see [the] connection between coronation rituals, [...], that is [to] be able to think through and interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its

particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formation" (ibid,32).

The second theory, space and place, holds different definitions of each term on its own, and provides a distinction between them. Space is considered as "the [...] sense of having an address, and [place] is about living at that address; sometimes this distinction is pushed further to separate physical place from the phenomenal space in which place is located" (Agnew, 2011, p.318). Thus, we can conclude that place is included within the space dimension, which is more general.

The third theory is post-colonialism. In order to get to post-colonialism, we need to have a quick look at colonialism itself. Said reckons (1993, p.36) that "colonialism", [...] is almost always a consequence of imperialism, [which] is the implanting of settlements on distant territory." Postcolonialism specifically deals with authors and people who live after periods of colonialism, and who always "retrospectively reflected on colonialism [...] to understand the difficulties of the present in newly independent states" (ibid, 45). These theories are used in the analysis of the two texts to highlight the distinction between exile and expatriation.

## Discussion:

### Involuntary Exile in Jabra's "In the Deserts of Exile"

The title of Jabra's poem "In the Deserts of Exile" reveals a lot. It likens exile to a desert; thus, the desert is a key symbol in this poem. The definition of exile and its consequences, especially on Palestinians can be seen through examining the symbol of the desert employed in this poem and in some other Arab writings like Kanafani's (1962) "Men in the Sun", Chedid's (1995) "Landscapes", and Abd Al-Sabour's (1992) "Fragments of a common tale".

Jabra says that war has "unfolded the desert before us [the Palestinians]." Exile as described in this poem reflects literal and figurative meaning of the word desert as employed by the above-mentioned writers. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2017) defines the word desert as an "arid land [...] devoid of life"; it is a "desolate or forbidding area" which implies that it is devoid of warmth, comfort, and hope and is a place of sorrow affected by separation from a loved one; for Palestinians, it is Palestine. The desert is also not friendly, and it has a frightening or threatening appearance. This is exactly what features Jabra's involuntary exile.

Talking about the desert, Jabra mentions the "red thorns", "frost", "dust", "Rocky Mountains", "hunger", and "ceaseless wandering". Every concept of these carries certain significance. For example, thorns represent sorrow, pain, and hardship. They are red, and that reflects how much violence and danger exiles are exposed to; these red thorns, as Jabra says, "bent over corpses left as prey for falcon and crow." The color red could also stand for the exiles' anger since they are away from their homeland, and they are not able to do anything for their love. Jabra says "what then, what are we doing with our love? When our eyes and our mouth are full of frost and dust?" Dust stands for decay and lifelessness, so the exiles are unable to see any glimpse of hope since dust fills their eyes as they keep moving in the desert. Frost is also associated with hardships or death. "Death laughed when it saw/ among the entrails of beasts/ the ribs of men, /and through the guffaws of bullets/ It went dancing a joyous dance/on the heads of weeping women," Jabra says. All these hard conditions stand against them as strong as the rocks of mountains are. Hence, exile is not just a condition of "terminal loss"; it is "like death but without death's ultimate mercy" Said (2000, 76).

Therefore, the desert as a symbol is seen as an unprotected space. It is a dangerous place marked by fear, loss, and exile. Apparently, the desert is a sign of absence and no life. Hebdige (1993, 33) says that the desert as a metaphor is "the place at the end of the world where all meanings and values blow away [...] the place where nothing grows." Thus, there are "valleys writhing in hunger" as Jabra mentions. Both valleys and mountains are mentioned in Jabra's poem, and they represent that there is a kind of continuous moving that leaves exiles unsettled. For Jabra, wandering in a desert is aimless as it offers no chance for any better conditions. He says that they keep "wandering" "among the thorns of the desert, /wandering in Rocky Mountains" "in the tumult of cities beyond deserts and seas" with their "eyes full of dust/ that never clears in our ceaseless wandering."

The symbol of desert referring to death or exile is well represented in other literary works. Kanafani (1962), in his novella "Men in the Sun", talks about three Palestinian males who want to leave their homeland seeking work and better opportunities in Kuwait. They have to pass a road through a desert in which they tremble because of its coldness at night and because of the fear and the exhaustion that invaded them along with the desert's heat that finally leads to their death. "He could not tell exactly whether he was trembling because of the desert cold, or from fear, or the exhaustion" (ibid. 34). Kanafani creates many images describing their way and journey of suffering through the desert. "I wonder if life would have been kinder than it is now pointless, pointless. The desert was everywhere" (ibid. 31).

Chedid (1995, 12) also uses similar images describing the harshness of the desert in her poem "Landscapes". She says "I speak of Desert without repose/ Carved by relentless winds/ Torn up from its bowels/ Blinded by sands unsheltered solitary/ Yellow as death/ Wrinkled like parchment Face turned to the sun."

These images indicate the isolation that Man suffers from to the extent that he feels he is away from his community and from himself. "Being "alone" means more than being physically alone, as in a desert. It means a separation from all signs of life" Hayward (2001, 20).

Jabra, in his poem, feels nostalgic to his idealized Palestine, and he starts describing its fertility and prosperity. "March adorns its hills"; he mentions March which is the month of a coming spring and the birth of flowers which wrap mountains and hills with the greenery and prosperity that extend to April and May. "April bursts open in its plains/ with flowers and bride- like blossoms". In these months of repose, exiled Palestinians used to set and sing with feelings of peace and calmness embracing them among their own land, trees, and ripe fields. "May is our rustic song/ which we sing at noon, / in the blue shadows, /among the olive-trees of our valleys/ and in the ripeness of the fields," Jabra says.

Jabra then recalls all the memories and moments he had in his country before he was forced to leave. He remembers his childhood and the landscape of his homeland: "O land of ours where our childhood passed/ like dreams in the shade of the orange-grove," Jabra says. Thus, he is physically in the exile (space), but mentally, he still lives in his homeland Palestine (place). "Place" is identified as "an exemplary kind of place where people feel a sense of attachment and rootedness" Cresswell (2004, 9). Regarding Jabra, his "place" is his homeland Palestine where he feels warm and attached. On the other hand, Relph (1976) defines place lessness (space) as the absence of significance, and this is what Jabra suffers from when he is in the unprotected space of the desert which represents his exile.

Jabra then complains to his lost land about the bitterness of exile where there are many rocks and difficulties. He complains how miserable life has become for all Palestinians wandering from one place to another and having to tread on the thorns which grow in the desert. "Remember us now wandering/ Among the thorns of the desert," Jabra cries.

He contrasts all these features of the beautiful landscape of Palestine with the deserted landscape of exile which is as Parmenter (1994, 15) says "empty of both memory and hope." Jabra describes the catastrophe of Palestinians who were forced to leave their homeland in 1948 to escape being killed. He says:

They crushed the flowers on the hills around us, destroyed the houses over our heads,  
Scattered our torn remains,

Then unfolded the desert before us, with valleys writhing in hunger

And blue shadows shattered into red thorns

Bent over corpses left as prey for falcon and crow.

This shift from homeland into exile creates a shift in the significance of some colors; it is a shift from positive shades into negative ones. For example, the color red is a color of extremes. It could be a symbol of love and freedom. Palestinians who live in Palestine still hope that spring will not be far behind winter's decay. On the other hand, for exiled Palestinians, it is hard to see this red anymore since their "eyes are full of dust," so the desert's red may stand for anger and bloodshed which in turn brings death. It is not that they do not love their love, but it is their ability to do anything for it. "Only the dust hisses in our face. / What then, what are we doing with our love? When our eyes and our mouth are full of frost and dust?" Jabra complains. This hopeless situation manages to occupy the exiles due to the total absence of the green. "They crushed the flowers on the hills around us," Jabra cries.

Spring in literature usually symbolizes love, hope, youth and growth; thus, symbols from this season often reflect themes of rebirth and renewal; Jabra uses these symbols when he talks about being in Palestine as if he, as a Palestinian living in Palestine, says, "now I know that Spring will come again, / Perhaps to-morrow: however late I've patience/ After this night following on such a day" (Thomas, n.d). Therefore, Jabra describes the Palestinian spring using colorful images. He says, "Our Palestine, green land of ours; / Its flowers as if embroidered of women's gowns;/March adorn sits hills/ With the jewel-like peony and narcissus ;/April bursts openinists plains/ With flowers and bride-like blossoms." Although spring comes every year, it never grows war and the human condition" Hayward (2001, 12). Thus, Jabra becomes hopeless in exile to the extent that he says "my future is a desert/ and my blood [is] its mirage of sand" Adonis (1984, 13).

In Palestine, the exiles used to sing "at noon, / In the blue shadows, / Among the olive trees of our valley/ And in the ripeness of the fields" as Jabrs says. "They sang loudly songs of loyalty where their voices reach the pure blueness" where control and borders have no power" Abulhawa (2015, 20). The sky is there too, in the desert, but what it is not is purity. The dust filling the exiles' eyes blocks those 'blue shadows' from their sight rendering into "red thorns". It is not that they cannot see clearly now, but it is that they cannot see at all; and no, it is not because those thorns pierce their eyes, but it is because their "eyes and mouth are full of frost" now. The frost is cold, and how cold death is! No, not even this; they are left without burials. The harsh truth is that those lovely homeland birds have now turned into predatory creatures "in the deserts of exile". "And blue shadows shattered into red thorns/ Bent over corpses left as prey for falcon and crow," Jabra says.

### **Voluntary Exile in Wright's "I Choose Exile"**

Wright's choice of the title's syntactic structure is very intriguing. The idea of using the first person "I" gives him subjectivity. He is showing us explicitly that he is the one that comes with the decision of moving; he is the one that performs this action, and he is not, in any way, influenced by others. This decision is not imposed on him for he decides to take that course of action. The action of going into exile is an active action that most likely is still occurring. Using the verb "choose" gives us the idea of having options. He has the option to go to France, to



exile, or maybe to any country he wants and the option to stay in his native land, America, but he chooses to move. In the dictionary, the usage of the verb "choose" with an object illustrates a desire or a want; thus, he is implicitly telling us that this choice is his desire. It is what his heart wants. Therefore, an analysis of the title's syntactic structure shows that Wright's exile is a voluntary one. He is leaving by his choice to a place of his choice to look for a better life of his choice and with the choice of going back to his native home still on the table. This voluntary departure from home is defined as expatriation, so Wright is an expatriate.

As Wright's essay can be considered as an autobiographical work, it can serve as a representation of his experience in the American society as an individual and consequently a representation of certain aspects of the American expatriation experience. Wright starts his essay by saying:

I am a native-born American Negro. The first 38 years of my life are spent exclusively on the soil of my native land. But, at the moment of this writing, I live in voluntary exile in France and I like it.

This reflects Wright's attitude towards his native land which reflects part of culture and perhaps structure of the American society in the early 20th century.

This argument leads us back to Wright's life in America as he describes it from Paris. In his essay, Wright starts by narrating the story which initially spurred in him the desire to leave America; it is the story where he intends to purchase "the house of his dreams" but the owner

would not sell it to him because he is a "Negro". As appears clearly in the text, Wright perceives such actions as a violation of the American values of equality and justice, which are, supposedly, essential values of the American consciousness and a part of its constitution, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal" (US 1776).

Discrimination and racism are rooted in American culture as a result of the many years of slavery; societies generally are characterized by an orientation to the past, with a predominant role for custom and habit (Hall, Neitz, & Battani, 2003), and racism is part of the American habit. Wright refers to acts of racism in many situations in his memoir such as the house owner's refusal to sell him the house in New England and the government's refusal to accept his passport. The American culture in which discrimination evolves is very influential for Wright, and most of his works reflect that. In his famous novel "Black Boy", Wright expresses his inability to understand American racism as he says: "I was not leaving the south to forget the south, but so that someday I might understand it".

Wright chooses to move to Paris; the city of Paris is an interesting choice for his expatriation for many reasons. Paris is always a popular destination among American intellectuals for it is known to be 'the city of light' in the sense that it provides them with the freedom they need. Wright chooses a space with great diversity from home. Unlike his homeland, Paris is a place which accepts and contains people of all races; this appears clearly in the story he tells about a French woman who is married to a black man. Paris is also different in the fact that it provides Wright with modern non-traditional space which he desires; this reflects Wright's belonging to a culture of the new. To Wright, Paris is a "city of light" unlike the American cities of darkness and traditionalism. The accepting nature of the people in Paris is a great factor that emphasizes the comfortable state of exile which Wright feels and chooses. Also, Paris is the gathering spot for American expatriates as Wright; therefore, it has some connections with the roots from which he voluntarily detaches himself. The community of the American expatriates in Paris is very large and influential that Wright has the chance to maintain channels of communication with his American contemporaries. Furthermore, it is a bohemian place where people like Wright are capable of demanding their freedom from the constraints of the American tradition; Paris is a rebellion against the limitations of American culture. According to the previously mentioned theory of place and space, Wright moves from the American space to which he does not belong to the French to which he does; Paris is the "place" which allows Wright to feel at home.

Wright's tone throughout the essay is rather positive. Nevertheless, expressions of negative feelings appear when Wright speaks of his native land as he connects it with concepts as "distrust", "violence", "lack of freedom", and "segregation". By contrast, Wright speaks of his exile in a tone of joy which reflects the spirit of an expatriate; he uses expressions as "freedom", "social confidence", and "equality". This positive position towards exile serves as an evident of Wright's satisfaction with his situation.

Wright in "I Choose Exile" starts by saying, "I am a Negro" which gives a hint to the importance of the skin color within his essay; Negro (which means black in Spanish) refers to all people of black skin in a degrading manner unless it is used by a Negro to describe another Negro, (who knows how this becomes acceptable). But as the word in this text refers to the whole nation of African-American, the term "white Americans" refers to their significant others, the other color, white! Unlike the French, the American culture uses colors as a base for racism, discrimination, and stereotypical thinking towards African-Americans.

Wright's essay, in its whole, seems to emphasize strongly the racial discrimination, which is expressed in different spots all over it, and "the crushing burden of anxiety [...] felt as a blackman in America" Epitropoulos & Roudometof (1998, 67). The author never denies that racial discrimination is one of the reasons of being an expatriate. The color of his skin turns his body into a moving cage to his freedom-seeking soul which makes life unbearable. One of the difficulties of having a black skin is "the risk of being branded as Un-American" which is easily imposed on any Negro on that matter. As a black intellect, his chances of having a label upon him are higher than any other normal Negro; "the more [he] climb[ed] up the social ladder had only caused him to

confront racial problems on a larger scale" Hine & McCluskey, (2012, 40), for he is feared due to "the fact that [he] wants the right to hold, without fear of punitive measures, an opinion with which [his] neighbor does not agree"; the neighbor in this context could represent the white American man. He also wants "the right to travel wherever and whenever [he] please[s] [...] the right to express publicly [his] distrust of "collective wisdom" of the people, the right to exercise [his] conscience and intelligence". Thus, we can say that all that an American of African origin aspires to is just mere basic rights that the American federal administration claims to be its sacred values; it calls nations all over the world to embrace them when it in itself fails to fulfill them for its people; this is ironic. Wright has "realized he would never enjoy all his rights as an American citizen" (Hine & McCluskey (2012, 42).

The choices of Negroes are to be made carefully and thoughtfully, for nothing is easier than to label a Negro "guilty". One of the examples on this is when Wright talks about the narrator's longing to live in the "rolling landscape", the rural life. Wright tells us how the city life allows the Negroes to assimilate through a "semi-anonymity" identity. Yet, he "harbors a yearning for a landscape" which "wisely behoove[d] [him] to choose with care, for [...] most American landscapes have been robbed of [their] innocence." As a Negro, his options of moving to the countryside are limited, for "to go south, then, was unthinkable" while the West Coast had not intrigued the interest of Wright making him wonder "Where, then, could a Negro go?" The answer is the place where the abolitionists emerged, that is New England!

The American culture has played a role to cause one "to be conscious of one's racial identity"; thus, it has also played a major role in forming the identity of American Negro though "a complex set of tension-charged responses which, in self-defense" make sure to keep the Negro "alive in him at all times." It has played the role of making the "white racial climate" the "normal thing in the life of an American Negro that he should not be to upset about." Such truth and racial discrimination cause Wright to be fed up with America and to choose to "leave the land of [his] birth, [his] home, [his] relatives, [his] friends" to "defeat the culture that shaped [him]" and go to France, a land free of racial segregation. However, we should always keep in mind Wright's point of view on racism mentioned in his book "The Color Curtain: A Report on Bandung Conference". He says, "the only way to eliminate racism is to eliminate imperialism. The structure of imperialism means racism; the two are one thing. Racism is an instrument of the West" (Wright, 1956).

Another major theme that is discussed in Wright's work, "I Choose Exile" is freedom. The whole essay can be said to talk about freedom in the sense of what Wright believes it is. Within this essay, he admits to us that the reason behind his choice to be expatriated and to move from America is the longing for Freedom; he says, "I live in exile because I love freedom." We can assume that this 'love' for freedom is due to his desire to escape from "racial discrimination" for " he's a Negro and feels better in France.

### **Conclusion:**

This paper differentiates between exile and expatriation through studying two representative works of each concept: Jabra's "In the Deserts of Exile" and Wright's "I Choose Exile"; it also employs Edward Said's contrapuntal, postcolonial, and space and place theories. The authors of this article show with ample examples that exile is involuntary and expatriation is voluntary. These examples are related to the motives of exile, each writer's perception of freedom, places, and colors based on their exile's circumstance.

For Jabra, occupation is what leads him to exile while the main reason behind Wright's expatriation is the many shapes of racism. Jabra suffers from occupation which began in 1948 forcing many Palestinians to leave their country. Regarding Wright, racism against the blacks in America generates the desire inside him to leave and seek a better life.

To be forced to leave your country, the place where you are born, have grown up, and live, is a far cry from freedom and choice. Jabra faces bitterness and loss in exile, so the concept of freedom for him means fulfilling his dream of returning from exile and staying in his homeland, Palestine. For Wright, he finds his freedom in exile where he chooses to live. Thus, Paris is associated with freedom and for him to be free is to choose where to live where one can obtain their rights.

Apparently, one does not choose to go to a place that lacks life; this is evidence that Jabra as a Palestinian is forced to leave to the desert which represents his exile while Wright feels happy to move to the city, and it is not any city; it is Paris, the city of lights. According to Jabra, he mentions how harsh exile is by describing its conditions symbolized by the desert. For example, he refers to the "red thorns" and the "dust" which reflect pain, sorrow, and lifelessness. On the other hand, the life Wright finds as an expatriate satisfies him with the freedom he wants. Therefore, Paris as an exile is a state of comfort for Wright.

Exile changes Jabra's life into a miserable one, unlike Wright, whose life becomes better. Thus, what Jabra sees in exile is negative while all what Wright sees there is positive. For example, Wright in Paris does not see the negative meanings of the color black anymore; all those negative meanings that are associated with Negroes, crime, guilt and racial discrimination in America fade away as he becomes an expatriate.

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