

**FRAGMENTATION AS AN ALLEGORY OF THE SOMALI NATION IN
NURUDDIN FARAH'S *MAPS***

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of the Degree of Master of Arts in Literature, University of Nairobi**

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DECLARATION

This research report is my original work and has not been presented for examination or the award of a degree at any University.

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DEDICATION

TO MY FAMILY

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to critically analyse whether fragmentation has been employed as an allegory of the Somali nation in Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*. The objectives of this study were to critically evaluate the use of fragmentation of the plot in the novel, to interrogate fragmentation of the character bodies in relation to the Somali nation, and to establish the correlation between fragmented narrative voices and the Somali nation in the novel. The rationale for my study was partly informed by the foregrounding of fragmentation which has been used allegorically in *Maps*. I chose Nuruddin Farah because he has lived in the Somali culture which he has written about thus he has a sharp focus on Somalia's political and social structures, and I selected *Maps* as ideal for study on fragmentation as an allegory of the Somali nation since it is more reflective in terms of presenting images of fragmentation compared to other works of Nuruddin Farah. I limited myself to *Maps* through a close reading to find out how fragmentation has been used as an allegory of the Somali nation. I did a review of works on fragmentation, nationalism and allegory by the same and other writers to form a background for my study. The study employed the postmodern literary theory, psychoanalytic theory and narratology as critical approaches in order to help me interpret data. This study established that the fragmented text is an analogue of a fragmented Somali society which is contrary to the popular belief that the Somalis are unified by their collective identity, that Somali is defined by communal multiplicities which are represented in *Maps* by fragmented narrative voices, and that a fragmented Somali society should be celebrated as a basis of forming a multicultural Somali nation.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

The social and political transformations of Somalia following colonisation and independence are perhaps the most recognisable thematic features of Nuruddin Farah's fictional and non-fictional works. This study focuses on his engagement with the Somali nation in *Maps* through the use of fragmentation as a trope. *Maps*, is an utterance in the discourse of the Somalia nation because it focuses on the territorial conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia and its impact on the Somali society. It explores the link between land, ideology and identity.

Fragmentation in postmodern literary theory is a device involved in rejecting any attempt of portraying a narrative, an idea, or a text as whole. It goes hand in hand with the style or description that writers offer of reality. Writers employ it to portray a world with many ideological differences which are not acknowledged. To celebrate the diversity of these ideologies, the writers come up with texts that are different from the traditional literary conventions. For example, the characters created and their realities appear disconnected. According to Peter Barry postmodernist fragmentation is the use of stylistic devices which deconstruct the traditional, fixed, stable realities. (84) When these devices are employed, they either destabilize the aspects of a text like the plot, the characters or the point of view.

Fragmentation in *Maps* is illustrated by a disjointed plot and uncoordinated narrative voices. There are also images of disjointed bodies of the characters where most of the characters are wounded; have missing body parts or experience psychological fragmentation. Of concern too, is the story of Somalia divided into territories in the pre-colonial period which is also implied by the title '*Maps*'. There is so much focus in fragmented bodies in *Maps* which leads Derek Wright, to say that *Maps* is, 'the first African novel of the body with great mass

of body literature behind it.’ (118) This centrality in the fragmented corporeality in *Maps* therefore, points to a high allegorical significance.

Maps follows the story of Askar from the time of his birth when he is found beside his dead mother in a secluded room. Askar is rescued by Misra an Ethiopian woman who becomes his foster mother. As Askar grows up, war between Somalia and Ethiopia breaks out over the Ogaden region, his home, prompting massive immigrations to safer regions. Askar moves to Mogadiscio to live with his maternal uncle, Hilaal. Already Askar suffers an identity crisis having been orphaned at birth and exiled from his home--Kallafo in Ogaden.

The story of Askar’s emotional crisis is juxtaposed with the story of the struggles of Somalia in a fight for lost territories. As Askar grows up he struggles to understand himself which is informed by his troubled past and the fact that he is an orphan. On the other hand, Somalia is fighting for the unification with all her regions in an ambitious search for a united Somali nation based on the genealogical purity of the Somali people. However, Farah in *Maps* disputes this ideology of a united Somali nation as I will discuss in this project.

Besides *Maps*, Nuruddin Farah has authored other texts; ten novels, a book on nonfiction and numerous critical articles. His oeuvre includes; *Why Die So Soon* (1965), *From a Crooked Rib* (1970), *A Naked Needle* (1976), *Territories* (2000) and *Hiding in Plain Sight* (2014). He has also authored three trilogies. His first trilogy is “Variations on the Theme of An African Dictatorship.” It includes *Sweet and Sour Milk*, (1979) *Sardine* (1981) and *Close Sesame* (1982) It is followed by “Blood in the Sun trilogy” which includes *Maps* (1986) *Gifts* (1993) and *Secrets* (1998) After this trilogy, Nuruddin Farah ventured into nonfiction and wrote *Yesterday, Tomorrow* (2000) which focuses on the plight of the Somali refugees as they try to start a new life under their various guardians. It is based on interviews with Somali refugees. His most recent trilogy includes; *Links* (2004), *Knots* (2007) and *Crossbones* (2011).

For these trilogies, as Red Way Dansenbrock observes, “each novel works extremely well on its own; yet there is a common cluster of themes around which the three novels circulate and to which they consistently return.” (747) This shows that the novels in each trilogy are held together by similar a theme.

By selecting *Maps* I had an opportunity of evaluating the theme of disintegration portrayed in “Blood in the Sun Trilogy” which *Maps* is part of. I will examine how Farah has employed disintegrations in *Maps* to project the vanity of the Somali people claiming a Somali nation based on genealogical purity of the Somali people.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study sought to investigate how Nuruddin Farah utilizes fragmentation as an allegory of the Somali nation in *Maps*. In *Maps* Farah foregrounds fragmentation through the plot, bodily mutilations of the characters, the setting and the fragmented point of view. It was therefore important to study fragmentation to reveal its allegorical significance in *Maps*. Through a study of the plot sequences, characters as allegorical figures, and the multiple points of view this study investigates the way fragmentation is employed as an allegory of the Somali nation in *Maps*.

1.3 Objectives

This study set out to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To identify and then analyze fragmentation of the plot in the novel
- ii. To identify and then analyze fragmentation of the character bodies in relation to the Somali nation
- iii. To establish the correlation between fragmented narrative voices and a fragmented Somali nation in the novel

1.4 Hypotheses

This study was guided by the following assumptions:

- i. Fragmentation is manifested in *Maps*
- ii. Fragmentation has been used as an allegory of the Somali nation in *Maps*

1.5 Justification of the Study

The study of fragmentation was informed by the presence of plot elements in the narrative like dream sequences, memories, flashbacks and flash-forwards, typographical ellipsis and ellipsis. The bodies of the characters are also mutilated; have missing body parts or experience psychological fragmentation. In addition, the narrator position changes from the first-person point of view to the second to the third omniscient. These elements are foregrounded in *Maps*. Therefore, they warranted a probe to reveal their allegorical significance to the Somali nation.

I selected Nuruddin Farah because he is a great writer with an honoured contribution on issues affecting Somalia and Africa at large through his fictional and non-fictional praxis. As a great writer he has won numerous literary awards among them the prestigious Neustadt International Prose for Literature in 1998. In addition, he is a perennial nominee for Nobel Prize for Literature. As Francis Ngaboh Smart says, Nuruddin Farah is “an influential presence in the African and the world literary scene [...] due to his consistently high-quality works and his persistent questioning of some of the assumptions of Somali nation.” (86)

In addition, Nuruddin Farah has lived in the Somali culture that he has written about thus his sharp focus on Somalia’s political and social structures as he tells I. Samatar in an interview, “my great mission in life became one of keeping Somalia alive by continuing to write about it; by turning it into a debate; by making Somalia intelligible to others, including Somalis. With fellow Somalis, my mission has always been to go beyond the superficial, beyond what

everyone knows and into the hidden secrets, into taboos and things that are unsaid because people are afraid to do so.” (91) Nuruddin Farah, can therefore be regarded as a representative of the canon of the Somali nation.

I chose *Maps* for study on fragmentation as an allegory of the Somali nation since it is more reflective in terms of presenting images of fragmentation compared to other works of Nuruddin Farah. These images are important clues in understanding the notion of a fragmented nation as presented in *Maps*. In addition, the very construct of the nation is an important topic presented in *Maps* even though it was written in 1986 after which many novels like *Gifts*, *Secrets*, *Links*, *Knots*, and *Crossbones* were written. *Maps* therefore provides an opportunity to study how the text relates to context and the concepts of the nation at play in the imaginaries of Nuruddin Farah.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The focus of this study was on fragmentation and whether or not it has been employed as an allegory of the Somali nation in *Maps*. I limited myself to this primary text to find out how fragmentation had been used as an allegory of the nation. The study did not include Nuruddin Farah’s other works, but where they are referred to, is for the purpose of complementing my reading and interpretation of *Maps*.

1.7 Literature Review

This literature review helped me to establish gaps for my study. The review focused on *Maps* and other works on fragmentation.

In “The Techniques of Narration and Its Role in the in The Communication of Meaning in Three Novels of Nuruddin Farah,” Kesero Charles Tunai examines various modes of narration and their impact on meaning. The three novels are: *Sardines*, *Maps*, and *Gifts*.

Tunai argues that the many narrative voices employed in the text are useful in probing the protagonist to bring out various ironies against them. These narrative voices interrogate each other interchangeably as they grapple with the issue of identity in the novel. However Tunai did not study these narrative voices and their impact on the development of the characters as fragmented, which is the concern of my study. My observation is that when these narrative voices are used interchangeably, they contribute to development of fragmented characters which are used as allegory of a nation in *Maps*.

The history and destruction of war in Somalia can be traced in all Nuruddin Farah's novels. However, the phenomenon of child soldiers as a threat to the Somali's posterity is reflected only in *Knots* and *Maps*. Kesero Tunai's article titled "Cambara's Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers in Nuruddin Farah's *Knots*: Possibilities and Contradictions," examines the phenomenon of child soldiers and the need to rehabilitate them. *Knots* is the story of Cambara as she struggles to reorient child soldiers in Somali by providing them with a home. She returns to Mogadscio from the USA with a mission to reclaim her family's property from a warlord who occupies it. In her mission she encounters child soldiers and the abuse and misuse they go through in their service to the warlords. Tunai analyses how and why, amidst her own predicament, Cambara rehabilitates the child soldiers by providing them with parental guidance, and alternative activities, life-skills, and narratives, and a place they can call home. He argues that the children need to be valued and loved in a family setting so that their self-worth can be restored since their innocence had been stolen. This way they can enjoy their childhood fully. Tunai's study will enlighten my study since *Maps* also takes a similar position on the plight of children in times of war. Although there are no child soldiers in *Maps*, the phenomenon is insinuated through a letter that Uncle Hilaal writes to Askar expressing his displeasure with Askar's plan to drop out of school to join a militia despite his young age and the fact that Uncle Hilaal had saved him from the destruction of the Ogaden

war. Like SikHair in *Knots* Askar loses his family therefore his Uncle fears he will lose him too if he joins the militia. Tunai's study therefore will provide a veritable platform for my work as I evaluate fragmentation of the characters in *Maps*. However, what Tunai has not looked into is how fragmented characters due to war and the fragmented narrative have been employed in re-imagining a fragmented Somali nation. This is the gap that my study shall seek to fill.

In its form and content *Maps* presents fissures which this study reads as allegories of the Somali nation. The use of metaphors and symbols has been examined in *Crossbones* and *Hiding in Plain Sight* by Lusala, Bramwel Odari in a thesis titled "The use of Allegory in Presentation of Disintegration in Nuruddin Farah's *Hiding in Plain Sight* and *Crossbones*." He examines metaphorical elements like character typology plot structure and style in the two texts. He argues that in *Plain Sight* Nuruddin Farah uses these allegorical elements to demonstrate that civil war has led to the displacement of people from Somalia. The displaced Somalis living in diaspora end up grappling with identity issue as Somalis outside Somali. In *Crossbones* he examines crumbling of the Somalia along the sexual, political, religious and ethnic lines. He argues that the disintegration of the nation has led to false nationalism couched on the rise of global terrorism, illegal businesses and piracy. This work contributes to my work by examining metaphorical elements like character typology, plot structure and affirms my own argument that indeed Nuruddin Farah uses fragmentation as an allegory of the Somali nation. My study has improved on the work of Lusala by bringing the arguments that Farah projects a fragmented Somali society which is contrary to the popular belief that the Somalis are unified by their collective identity, that Somali is defined by communal multiplicities which are represented in *Maps* by fragmented narrative voices, and that a fragmented Somali society should be celebrated as a basis of forming a multicultural Somali nation.

Cobham in an essay titled 'Boundaries of the Nation: Boundaries of the Self: African nationalists Fictions and Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*' tackles the problem of identity in *Maps*. In this essay Cobham examines the various struggles that the characters encounter as they go through an identity crisis in a post-civil war Somalia, a period full of mistrust and trauma. Identity is a major concern in *Maps* and Cobham examines the function of various narrators and how they complement each other in questioning their individual and national position in the past and future of Somali. However, she does not study the fragmentation of the characters as allegory of nation which my study aims to cover.

Apart from this study fragmentation in *Maps* in terms of the plot and the title has been studied by Kelly Hilarie in an article titled: "A Somali Tragedy of Political and Sexual Confusion: A critical analysis of Nuruddin Farah's *Maps*." In this article she argues that Farah in *Maps* departs from the political focus in his previous trilogy "Variations on the Theme of An African Dictatorship and looks at political divisions on the Somali sense of personal identity. In this essay Kelly studies various issues in *Maps*. One of them is the title, which she says that it implies the consequences of the colonialists dividing Somalia into various regions. She also comments at the plot of the novel and calls it 'fascinating' since it does not follow a 'unilineal fashion.' On the style of writing she argues that Farah employs long paragraphs, run on sentences and chains of rhetorical questions which blur communication to readers. She observes that it shows "a lack of discipline on the part of the writer." (8) She is not alone as other critics of Farah have argued that reading Farah is not easy, that he is a writer who has forgotten his readers since his style undermines narration. Here Kelly Hilarie has studied the structure and the style used creating the novel, however she has not examined fragmentation as an allegory of nation which forms the basis of my study.

The scope of Kwame Anthony Appiah in “Focus on Nuruddin Farah,” is on how women are treated remarkably in *Maps* and other works of the author. He argues that the writer does it not because he is a man but for the power of its moral and literary achievement. In addition, he says the writer does it to suggest that a society that treats women, the old and children with contempt cannot have a healthy politics and the poisonous murderous struggles that have overtaken Farah’s Somalia, have their origin in the struggles of family life. Appiah examines how Nuruddin Farah highlights the plight of women, the space they occupy in society and national politics. He observes that despite the marginal position that the women occupy, the nation’s salvation lies in them. Appiah even describes Farah as a “feminist novelist in a part of the world where that’s almost unknown among male writers.” (32) However, the study of Appiah does not cover the various forms of fragmentation in the novel and their allegorical significance which my study aims to cover.

Damaged bodies function as readable traumatic testimonies of gendered and racialized post-colonial violence in Somalia as Michelle Lynn Brown, in “Bleeding for the Mother(land): Reading Testimonial Bodies in Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps*,” She argues that the novel represents traumatic suffering, in images of bodily illness and mutilation. As testimony, the narratives and marked bodies in *Maps* signify social change by suggesting new kind of bodies rather than by reiterating the established alignment of birth and motherhood with the emerging nation. These bodily mutilations show traumatic suffering; however, I will argue in my study that these bodily fragmentations offer an opportunity of presenting the reality of the imposed false boundaries rather than just “suggesting new kind of bodies as she argues.” (136) This imposition, for example, can be seen in *Maps* when Askar is critical over the fragmentation caused by the act of taking a passport photo and says that it is not a true representation of an individual since his other bodily parts cannot be seen from the passport. “And I wondered if it made any sense believing that passport size photographs would help anyone identify a

person? Are we merely faces? I mean are faces the keys to our identity? What a man, like Aw-Adan, with a wooden leg-would you know it from the photograph?" (172) This shows that fragmented bodies do not merely show trauma but they show the realities of multiplicity which cannot be homogenized into a coherent whole.

In her article titled "Dreams and Identity in the novels of Nuruddin Farah" Jacqueline Bardolph examines dreams and identity in the novels *Maps* (1986) and *Gifts* (1992). She states that in the novels dreams take a prominent place in a rather different manner. In *Maps*, indeed the ten chapters plus one 'interlude' are divided into sections. Three sections tell of Askar dreaming and discussing a dream with his foster mother or uncle and six of them consist entirely of a dream sequence of up to five pages with no commentary, introduction or conclusion. The beginnings are very abrupt, the variety of situations of enunciation a clear example of the indeterminacy around the protagonist's identity in the whole text. The dreams, she concludes, fulfill the function of heralding a marvelous future in the line of epic narrative yet they are not completely similar to the well-constructed prophetic dreams as used in the ancient literary traditions. They present some of the elusiveness that is characteristic of real life: they are fragmentary, absurd: their lack of coherence seems to bear the mark of a jigsaw puzzle, of the effort one fails to accomplish on waking up to establish a kind of narrative while remaining true to the experience of the night. They give to question more than to firm interpretation within the world of the novel.

Bardolph's prolific discussion on dreams in *Maps* points to the disjuncture that is caused by unconnected dreams in the plot of the novel. However, her study of dreams does not examine the symbolic function of dreams in *Maps* which my study aims to cover. My observation is that dreams signal fragmentation of individuals internally. Their study aims to understand their allegorical significance since they are presented not only in a fragmentary manner but as fragments of individual psyche of the characters in the novel.

The focus of “Brothers and Sisters in Nuruddin Farah’s Two Trilogies”, by Jacqueline Bardolph is on how the two trilogies are organized on the basis of political and historical themes. The title of the first set of novels, “Variations on the theme of an African Dictatorship”, follows the gradual disillusionment with the regime of Said Bare on the part of those who had set their hopes on the new Somali. More generally it reflects the hopelessness a nation feels in fighting against a tyranny it has helped to create. The titles of the three novels that constitute the second trilogy- *Maps*, *Gifts* and *Secrets*—refer to abstract topics that are explored in various levels in poetic images, and in intimate human relationships as well as in contemporary history. In this trilogy the issues examined are: identity—through blood or language or territory (*Maps*), the receiving of aid (*Gifts*) and the ties of kinship and clan (*Secrets*) have a direct and relevance to Somalia yet they’re also echoed in many conflicts within and outside Africa. The three novels *Maps*, *Gifts* and *Secrets* deal primarily with identity, and each weaves a complex network of images, myths and philosophical reflections and historical examples that induce the reader to think again about accepted wisdom. Therefore, these novels are connected by their content. My study therefore, focuses on the allegorical significance of various forms of fragmentations in *Maps* and not the common theme of identity as discussed by Bardorph.

Patricia Alden and Louis Tremaine in an article “Reinventing Family in the Second Trilogy of Nuruddin Farah,” argues that the three novels have a similarity in that their main character is an orphan. For example, in *Maps*, there is Askar who is adopted by Misra who was herself rejected and then kidnapped as a child. In *Gifts*, Duniya takes in an abandoned baby whom she calls ‘the nameless one’. In *Secrets*, Kalaman learns that he is the product of a gang rape, that his paternity is unknown. Two of these orphans, Kalaman and Askar dominate as the narrators and protagonists while the third only appears briefly and dies mysteriously. Alden and Tremain, conclude that the orphan figure in the trilogy help Nuruddin Farah to develop

questions of identity that have always been at the heart of his work. More so, the figure of the orphan foregrounds these questions precisely because for orphans the customary answers are not available.

The search for identity is core in Nuruddin Farah's works; however, it does not just start and stop at the orphan characters in *Maps*, *Gifts* and *Secrets* as Alen and Tremain have discussed. Rather it has ramification on the life of the characters imminent in these three novels. The characters lack a 'wholeness' either physically or psychologically which troubles them. For example, in *Maps*, Askar's separation from his parents through their death, Misra's mastectomy and Aw-Adans amputated leg points to a lack of wholeness in these characters which my study aims to explore.

Lisa Rutherford in "Objectification, Fragmentation and Consumption: A Consideration of Feminist's Themes in Margaret Atwood's, *The Edible Woman*," examines the fragmentation and loss of authentic self as an issue affecting women. She argues that women's fragmented identity is assimilated into a cultural agenda and this assimilation can be nonetheless averted or retarded through small acts of resistance. Though Lisa Rutherford focuses on women characters, her study will illuminate mine as I examine fragmentation at individual and societal levels as allegories of a nation in *Maps*.

In "From Fragmentation and Rootlessness: The Development of a Theme in V.S Naipaul's Fiction," Rorindrdat Deodat, examines fragmentation at the society level as presented in the selected novels of Naipaul. He identifies the causes of fragmentation in the society as stemming from failure to identify with a cultural heritage, ignorance, poverty and from the lack of values or goals in Caribbean society which leads to the creation of fragmented personalities. My study will benefit from his study as he examines characters going through a

postcolonial identity crisis. *Maps*, is a postcolonial text having been written in the postcolonial period.

Low Yi Qing in “Fragmentation and Mutability in M.G. Vassanji’s *Book of Secrets*,” examines the structure of the plot of the novel. He argues that the conventions that govern the coherence of the novel are disturbed and unsettled so that the author can reject a stable and a stable and unitary portrayal of totalized reality. He identifies several factors which contribute in rendering incoherence in the body of the narrative like the snippets of poetry, scribbles and musings from journals, research notes, letters, official memoranda and articles from the newspapers. This makes the readers feel like they are reading different authors or hearing different voices. He adds that the sudden switching of content and context in the novel also contributes to fragmentation which gives the reader an uneven perspective that “... unsettles our assumptions about the naturalness of the narrative and knowledge.” (17)

From Low Yi Qing’s work, I see a similarity in the plot between the *Book of Secrets* and *Maps*. The similarity is in the foregrounding fragmentation. However, there are differences in how the fragmentation occurs in both texts. In *Maps* for example, there is a shifting point of view from the first to the second to the third, interrupted time sequence and a lack of ending in the novel which shows the narrative is a fragment. At the end of the novel we are told, it is the start of Misra’s story told by Askar in shifting perspectives. “He was, at one and same time, the plaintiff and the juror. Finally allowing for his different personae to act as a judge, as audience and as witness, Askar told it himself.” (259) My study will therefore focus on these shifting narrative voices, as they are symptomatic of a fragmented character used as an allegory of a nation in *Maps*.

My study on fragmentation in *Maps* also benefited from a study by Joan Chassot who in, “Fragmentation as a Condition and a Strategy; History, Narrative and Resistance in the work

of Michelle Cliff’, explores the meanings and effects of fragmentation in Cliff’s novels; *Abeng* and *No Telephone to Heaven*. First, she identifies fragmentation in plot which is marked by jumping back and forth in time following a circular pattern and refusing closure and resolution at the end. She adds that the several narrative voices contribute to the fragmentation while supplying various kinds of information and offering different perspectives and that the author uses the several narrative voices to subvert the traditional colonial narrative history that presents itself as authoritative and definitive. On the creation of characters that lack ‘wholeness,’ Chassot argues, that Cliff does it to deny credibility to the narrative of the colonialists. The narrative of the colonialists on the Caribbean’s is totalizing, a rigid perspective of all the islands and as she says, “lumping them together as though they share history, customs, white sands and the blue waters indiscriminately.” (64)

The fragmentation of characters, plot, and the shifting narrative voices as examined by Joan Chassot in her study is similarly reflected in *Maps*. However, in my study I will argue that fragmentation in *Maps* is used to describe the violent mapping of the body. One way is through the description of Ogaden wars which mutilated the body of the nation rendering both the family and the nation unstable. Fragmentation also brings the plurality of experiences and perspectives just like the novel is portrayed like the map of its setting (Somalia) which is in pieces. A fragmented nation is therefore dramatized by means of a fragmented text.

Hui Ni examines the narrative pattern of meta-fiction applied in the novel in an article, “Study of Fragmented Structure in *Oracle Night* as a Meta-fiction,” Metafiction is a mode of writing within postmodernism which aims at drawing the attention of the work of art as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. Its focus is on the functionality of the world outside the literary fiction and on the structure of the

narrative which is usually broken by short sections in the novel, short paragraphs, diagrams, numerals, epigraphs and footnotes.

Oracle Night according to Hui Ni, fits these metafiction claims, as it consists many stories warped in each other and with voices competing with each other consequently making the reader lose the sense that indeed it is the work of fiction. My study on fragmentation in *Maps* like Hui Ni's study, explores fragmentation. However, Hui Ni's study focuses on metafictional elements which contribute to fragmentation in *Oracle Night* whilst my study will examine the significance of fragmentation in *Maps* as an allegory of a nation.

Daria Zheltukhina in, "Rhythmicity and Broken Narrative as a means of Portraying Identity Crisis in Erner Brodber's *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home*," identifies the features of the nonlinear narrative which he argues contribute in breaking up of the narrative into pieces. One of them is what he calls 'Problematic Focalization' which he says refer to a number of voices uttered by unidentified characters representing the society. In addition, flashbacks, stream of consciousness, repetitions, utterances, and dialogues not attached to narrative discourse also contribute in breaking up of the plot the novels. In addition, the chapters in the novel are arranged in a broken order—because they do not follow any chronology. Besides, they lack a single narrative line and include time switches and inexplicable facts.

After identifying these factors which cause fragmentation in the novel, Daria Zheltukhina concludes that the broken narrative line brings out a sense of fragmentation on the protagonists of the novels. He argues that it can be seen in one of the major characters named Nelly who is looking for meaning and ways to connect to the society. Daria stops here, after bringing out the relevance of the fragmented plot in portraying the life of the characters. *Maps*, has the same structural form as *Jane and Louisa*. This structural form brings out a

sense of fragmentation on the characters in *Maps* too. Therefore, Zheltukhina's study will illuminate on my study as it focuses on fragmentation as an allegory of a nation in *Maps*.

Bakalarska Prace examines the different levels of fragmentation in plays like *End game*, *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Happy Days* and *Play* in "Fragmentation and Disjointedness in Samuel Beckett's Plays," He looks at concepts of time, identity, reality and language in relation to fragmentation in the four plays. He finds out that these concepts are fragmentary since they cannot be defined adequately without evoking various methods of interpretation. This renders them ambiguous, not whole concepts causing irresolution in the plays. The structure of plays and that of *Maps* is not similar since they belong to different genres. However, *Maps* is similarly marked by fragmentations just like in four plays of Samuel Beckett, mentioned above. My study will therefore benefit from Bakalarska Prace's study especially on the interpretation of the concept of fragmentation as allegorical to a nation.

From the literature review, it is clear that there are many studies on fragmentation in many works of art. However, *Maps* by Nuruddin Farah, has not received much criticism concerning the same. My study aims to fill this critical gap by approaching Farah as a writer who uses fragmentation to highlight ethnic multiplicity of the Somali nation.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study is about fragmentation as an allegory of a nation in *Maps*. I was guided by The Postmodern theory, narratology and psychoanalytic theory. The postmodern theory guided me in the analysis of the concept of fragmentation in *Maps* because the theory is preoccupied with rejecting any attempt of portraying a narrative, an idea, or a system as whole. This is according to Jean Francois Lyotard, who is associated with the rise of this approach after the publication of his text called *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* in 1979. In this book he defines postmodern simply as "an incredulity toward metanarratives" (24). He

argues that there can be no single truth in the world therefore he advocates for small narratives which lack the totality, unity or the wholeness. *Maps* is made up of multiple narratives which defy an attempt at ordering. Thus, Lyotard's views guided me in analysing why Nuruddin Farah gives prominence to 'metanarratives' other than a single narrative in *Maps*.

In postmodernism the term fragmentation goes hand in hand with the style or description that writers offer of reality. Writers employ it to portray a world with many ideological differences that are not acknowledged. To celebrate the diversity of these ideologies, the writers come up with texts that are different from the traditional literary conventions. For example, the characters created and their realities appear disconnected. According to Peter Barry postmodernist fragmentation is the use of stylistic devices which deconstruct the traditional, fixed, stable realities. (84)

Hilda Gairaud Ruiz writes in "Deconstructing Totalitarianism: Fragmenting the Whole in Narrative," that fragmentation "in the past had been linked to a disrupting principle that opposes idea of wholeness or the conformation of a unified and totalitarian system." (11) She argues further that fragmentation has been revised to represent a "heterogeneous, plural, composites of contemporary social and cultural environment, which oppose traditional prevailing monolithic systems of thought." (11) These views about fragmentation that Hilda Gairaud writes about are simply the views of Modernism and Postmodernism. In Modernism, fragmentation is lamented as it is seen as separating what is considered whole whilst in Postmodern fragmentation is seen as representing all ideological differences since there is no universal truth in the world. It is a world full of ideological differences.

Childers is in support of these two views on fragmentation when he writes in *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism* that, "for many especially those

invested in particular forms of essentialism or belief in transcendent forms of aesthetics, morals or political action fragmentation is much lamented. For others especially those who espouse notions of decentering, or indeterminacy “.....Fragmentation is not necessarily in and itself a deleterious state of affairs and can even be celebrated.” (117) This means that where the universal truth is accepted, fragmentation is frowned upon as it challenges a fixed ideological view whilst in postmodern there is a celebration of differences in a social system or a group.

Conceptualization of fragmentation from Modernism and Postmodernism gives a clear perspective of the term. For this study I employed the Postmodern view of fragmentation as a mode of representing contemporary, multiple and diverse perspectives of the world. Besides, all postmodern literary works embrace differences in their style, characterization and themes. As a literary concept fragmentation refers to a postmodern condition which suggests the construction of the text in a nonlinear way. As Michael Calvin McGee argues, texts have disappeared altogether,’ in postmodern art, ‘leaving us with nothing but discursive fragments of contexts.’(3) He argues further that, ‘text construction is now something done more by the consumers than by producers of the discourse’ (3) This means that the readers have to join the fragments to come up with a discourse. This can be seen in *Maps* where the plot is fragmented through segments, allusion, typographical ellipsis, time jumps, dreams, memories and flashbacks.

Postmodern Theory is preoccupied with rejecting any attempt of portraying a narrative, an idea, or a system as whole. According to Lyotard, “grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation” (37). This has led to the evolvement of micro

narratives which bring various meanings to people. At the same time these micro narratives compete for autonomy leading to fragmentation of ideas or thoughts.

Francois Lyotard on grand narratives also argues that all knowledge is narrative, that narratives inform knowledge and that they justify the power relations. He further argues that the grand narratives have no place in a postmodern world as they are oppressive since they place a preference on some narratives over the other. Like Askar tells Uncle Hilaal in *Maps*, “we know what conquerors with written traditions who occupy a land belonging to a people of oral tradition do. We know they impose upon them a law which makes it unlawful to think of themselves as human. The European colonialists have done so...” (179). Therefore, I was guided by these ideas of Lyotard on some narratives being given preference over others leading to evolvment of other ideas to counter them.

Lindah Hutcheon in *A Poetics of Postmodernism* echoes Lyotard by saying that postmodernism rejects any fixed opinion. “Postmodern provisionality and heterogeneity contaminates any neat attempts at unifying coherence.” (17) Postmodern theory therefore, accepts the fragments of the society by acknowledging their existence and at the same time questioning the generally accepted values of society concerning coherence, unity and order. Using these arguments by Hutcheon, I analyzed how the plot in *Maps* denies any attempt at order and narrative closure as a way of celebrating the postmodern fragmentation.

Lewis Barry in an essay titled “Post Modernism and Fiction,” says that in postmodern writing, this can be seen in writers rejecting the wholeness and completion associated with traditional stories with a preference to other ways of structuring the narrative like the use of fragmentation, the use of temporal order, the use of pastiche, the use of vicious circles, the use of paranoia, or the use of looseness of association. (116) This means that fragmentation as one of the elements that postmodernism writing enjoys, is a kind of a narrative mode with

many minor narratives that are incoherent so that the structure of the narrative is broken. For example, *Maps* is made up of fragmented stories which intertwine with broken parental relationships (the case of Askar and his mother Arla), and historical events like the Ogaden War.

Narratology is about the form taken by a narrated story. In my analysis of *Maps* I was concerned with the form of the narrative. I was guided by Gerard Genette's views on narrative time. I explored the use of analepsis, prolepsis and ellipsis in *Maps*. Genette calls prolepsis and analepsis, 'forms of anachronism' while ellipsis falls under what he calls 'duration.' I analysed how these narrative strategies are employed to construct a fragmented narrative structure in *Maps*.

Literary Psychoanalytic theory considers how the text presents the inner workings of the mind of the characters. It is founded on the work of Sigmund Freud who came up with the psychoanalytic theory of personality development. He argued that the personality of an individual is formed from the competition among three frames of mind which he called the Id, Ego and the Superego. The Id is "the part of the mind that determines sexual drives and other unconscious compulsions that urge individuals to unthinking gratification (Kirszner & Mandell, 2055). The superego, "seeks to repress the demands of the id and to prevent gratification of basic physical appetites" (Kirszner & Mandell, 2055) while the ego creates a balance between the two. These concepts are not part of my concern in my analysis of fragmentation in *Maps*. Rather, my concern is on the concept of the Sense of the Self as proposed by Jacques Lacan.

Sense of self means one's perception of oneself. It is the way a person thinks about and views his or her traits, beliefs and purpose within the world. The concept how people perceive themselves and others is important element in identity formation in an individual. Lacan

explores this element of sense of self in his work which is important to explore here. Lacan asserts that between the age six and eighteen months of age, “a child sees his own reflection in the mirror and begins to conceive of itself as separate from the rest of the world” Barry (109) This is the stage he calls the mirror stage. This moment of identification marks the birth of the ‘self’. In addition, the separation of the image seen in the mirror from the real physical individual brings in the feeling of fragmentation. In the light of this mirror stage concept, I examined how it is applicable to Askar in *Maps* as he struggles to identify himself through his growth and development process. Literarily, we see him looking at himself on a mirror tracing out the various changes on his body.

To analyze the various allegories in *Maps* I used the ideas of Stephen Slemon, James Ogude, David Joselit and Bloomfield. The term allegory originates from the Greek word *allos* meaning “other” and *agros* meaning to speak in the agor or “market place”. Combining the two words, allegory in Greek suggests a “speaking other”, creating an interactive polyphony of diverse yet complementary voices and perspective. (Darnill, 2010:62)

Stephen Slemon states that allegory is a kind of writing that involves a “doubling or reduplicating extra-textual materials.” (1988:58) From these definitions we can say that allegory provides a work of art with multiple meanings as it communicates a deeper meaning than just the literal meaning of the text. As David Joselit asserts, allegory is the doubling—indeed the multiplication—of “texts” within and around a work of literature or art [and] such doubling or multiplication necessarily functions as an act of interpretation—a mode of criticism that is built into the work.” (2003:4)

Writers incorporate allegory which according to Bloomfield can take form of “symbols, icons, myth, emblem, image, and sign” (1972:303-4), in their works for different purposes. Allegory can be used to re-enforce and re-instill the values of an existing doctrine, draw

attention to and protest the shortcomings of an existing doctrine and at the same time highlight a possible new doctrine or belief system that could replace the dominant one and allegories can be used to deliver a secondary meaning to the reader of a text. (Oberholzer, 2006:3-5)

Prominent theorists of the nation such as Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm explore different aspects in their analysis of a nation which I will use to understand the term nation. Anderson understands a nation as a mental construct. He says that “nations are imagined political communities.” (9) This is because according to him it is impossible for all members of the nation to know each other therefore individuals imagine that they belong to the same community and they are part of the same nation collectively. Despite this fact they have a strong sense of belonging to a common nation.

The sense of belonging by the members of a nation comes from the materials that they use to create a nation which according to Hobsbawm are “invented traditions”. He calls them invented meaning they are created socially. They are the characteristics which are shared by the whole community which make people believe that they belong to the same nation. These characteristics make a nation different from other nations. He further traces the origin of a nation to “a particular and historically recent period and it relates to the modern territorial state.” (6) A nation therefore, refers to the sharing of similar culture by all members of the society.

Stuart Hall writes; “that which holds the nation together can be regarded as a system of cultural representation and practices which produce and reproduce the meaning of the nation.” (8) A nation is thus a mental construct of a people living in the same geographical location, people who share similar culture, history, and myths. It is a mental construct because the people have a sense of belonging with other people they have never met. The

Somali people meet this criterion usually applied to nationhood. They have a common language, common culture, common historical tradition and a common territory. However, *Maps* presents the Somali society as fragmented despite their assumed collective identity. This study reads the fragmentation in *Maps* as an allegory of a multicultural Somali nation which points out the impossibility of creating a Somali nation state consisting of the Somali ethnic people only.

1.9 Research Methodology

In this study I read and reviewed *Maps* as the primary text. This provided me with a platform for the analysis of fragmentation in the novel. The narratology theory helped me to scrutinize the chronological order of the narrative in *Maps*. The postmodern literary theory helped me to analyze the fragmentation as postmodern device which create a disjuncture in the narrative, the plot and the characters. Psychoanalytic theory was effective in the analysis of the inner construct of the characters.

I also did a library research to get secondary materials and the internet to get scholarly journals. These materials helped me to analyze and evaluate the primary text. By reviewing them they also helped me establish a research gap for this project.

1.10 Definition of Terms

Allegory. This is a narrative fiction in which the agents and actions, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived to make coherent sense on the ‘literal,’ or primary, level of signification, and at the same time to signify a second, correlated order of agents, concepts, and events.” (Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4)

Fragmentation. It means disintegration. Carol Clark D’ Lugo defines a fragmented novel as “a work that is broken into sections, with spaces as gaps or that separate the pieces of prose. These spaces can be blank or filled with a variety of designs.” (X1) As an aspect of

postmodernism, fragmentation refers to interrupted sequence of events, with incomplete character development, dispersing imagery and factual references throughout the work of art. The aim of its employment in a work of art is to depict a chaotic universe that the postmodern world is.

Nation. Benedict Anderson, defines the nation as a fabrication, a bond between people that did not actually exist prior to its own recognition. He states that, “It is an imagined community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”¹. Anderson believes that the nation is imagined because members of this nation don’t know most of their compatriots but still have a communal image; it is built based on recognition of commonality, not the commonality itself.

1.11 CHAPTER OUTLINE

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This chapter introduces my study. It consists of the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypothesis, justification, scope and limitation, literature review, theoretical framework and methodology. These elements form a framework for my study.

CHAPTER TWO

PLOT FRAGMENTATION AS A METAPHOR OF THE SOMALI NATION IN *MAPS*

In this chapter I identified and analysed structural fragmentation in *Maps*. First I put into consideration the facets of plot fragmentation like dreams, memories, flashbacks and flash-forwards, typographical ellipsis, ellipsis, and segmentation of the text. I demonstrated that

Farah uses postmodern fragmentation of the plot to produce an analogue of a fragmented nation. I also established that it provides an insight into the notion of a nation in the novel.

CHAPTER THREE

FRAGMENTED BODIES AS SYMBOLS OF THE SOMALI NATION IN *MAPS*

In this chapter I explored the significance of the fragmented bodies of the characters in *Maps*. I put into consideration the forces that fragment the characters and the map of the Somali Nation as the integral setting of the novel. After tracing these forces, examined their impact on the bodies. Then, I demonstrated that Farah uses postmodern literary art as a means of celebrating fragmentation and its strength in subverting totalization. I also explored the correlation between the fragmented corporeal and the notion of the nation.

CHAPTER FOUR

FRAGMENTED POINT OF VIEW AS AN ALLEGORY OF THE SOMALI NATION IN *MAPS*

In this chapter I discussed the significance of the shifting narrator positions in the novel. Apart from Askar telling the story from the first, second and the third point of view his identity also changes from that of a plaintiff, to that of a juror, to that of a witness and that of an audience. I explored how these fragmented points of views projects a multi-perspective point of view of a Somali nationalist.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter concludes my study. The findings with regard to the objectives of the study are highlighted. It also recommends an area for further research on the novel.

CHAPTER TWO

PLOT FRAGMENTATION AS A METAPHOR OF THE SOMALI NATION IN *MAPS*

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explore the fragmented plot structure in *Maps*. My argument is that *Maps* is concerned with fragmentation so that it warrants closer attention to reveal its significance. I will first put into consideration the forces that fragment the narrative structure like, segments, allusion, typographical ellipsis, time jumps, dreams, memories and flashbacks. I will look at their impact on the plot after tracing them out. I will demonstrate that Farah uses fragmented postmodern plot to produce an analogue to the fragmented Somali nation. Further I will explore the liberating force of a fragmented narrative structure.

2.2 Fragmentation of the Plot through Segmentation

Maps is fractured into three major parts named; Part One, Part Two and Part Three. The first part is bigger than the second and the third. Apart from the three major parts there are twelve chapters covering over 250 pages. No chapter here is extra-ordinarily comprehensive and the shifts are frequent. The chapters are sometimes long, sometimes short and are segmented further into seventy-five units marked in roman numbers. Between chapter one and chapter two there is an interlude which splinters continuity since it is a boundary that divides the novel into two physically.

The seventy-five segments are used to create this sense of fracturing. They are composed of short sections, some as short as one paragraph while others are as long as a few pages. For example, the fourth segment in the Interlude section is only a paragraph long while the first segment in the third paragraph covers three pages. The average number of the segments in a

chapter is nine while the break between the segments is marked by a space and in roman numbers as well as the disconnection in their narratives. In an overall sense the physical structure of *Maps* lends itself to a feeling of fragmentation even before we read it.

2.3 Fragmentation of the Plot through the Use of Allusion

The process of fragmenting *Maps*' narrative into parts, chapters, segments that are separated by space and numbers allows for the introduction of inter-textual materials like quotations and textual pieces from different sources. These works show that a text is made up of fragments. In addition, the use of fragments from other works allows a blending which subverts the idea that a text can be independent of other texts.

In *Maps* the segments are introduced by quotations from other literary works. For example, the first part is introduced by a quote from *Mutual Friend* by Charles Dickens, "No children for me give me grown-ups." The second part is introduced by a quote by Joseph Conrad;

All is illusion—the words written, the mind at which they are aimed, the truth they are intended to express, the hand that will hold the paper, the eyes that will glance at the lines. Every image floats vaguely in a sea of doubt—and the doubt itself is lost in an explored universe of uncertainty. (139)

The last part of the novel is introduced by a quote from the book of Romans 7:24. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This quote is a lament by the apostle that he is constrained to what he abhorred. It is relevant to the third part of the novel as it alludes to the immutable fate of characters in part three of the novel.

These fragments introduced as quotes at the start of the segments in *Maps* arouse a variety of associations in us therefore disrupting the choice of a single interpretation of the narrative. In addition, they physically fracture the appearance of the text as they are physically arranged in

a parallel configuration in the text. This separation of text is what McHale calls 'glossing' where the given narrative is divided into 'text proper' and the 'gloss.' (192) The gloss refers to the quotations made before the start of the major parts in *Maps* while the text proper is the main narrative. In effect, the relationship between these two parallel texts is brought into question. However, this form of textual fragmentation highlights the physicality of the novel.

Other literary works, historical figures and writers are introduced in *Maps*. The way Farah assumes that we have background knowledge on them and the fact that we might lack some knowledge on them signals fragmentation of the text. *Maps* provides this powerful example of intertextuality by alluding to 'body novelists like Toni Morrison, poets like Eliot and Neruda, body poetesses like Sylvia Plath and Ann Sexton and psychoanalysts like Freud, Jung, Levi-Strauss, Marx and Fraser.' (233) There is also the mention of Otto Rank, Wilhelm Reich, William James and Adler without more information about them. Askar even frets that he 'had to read and know everything these men had written about one's relationship with one's body and mind, sub or unconscious...' (233) Historical figure such as Ernest Bevin, whose portrait is kept as a memento by Karin's husband is mentioned too. Ernest Bevin was a Labour Minister of Britain who in 1946 advocated for the unification of the Somalia territories. His portrait holds importance to Karin's husband since he was fighting for the same cause. However, this information is not relayed to us.

The intertexts mentioned here therefore make *Maps* a work made of fragments. The use of other works allows Farah to evoke an entire postmodern literary tradition that employs narrative complexity. The overall effect is a text in pieces which disrupt any impression of an instantaneous cohesion and instead require us to get involved in piecing the pieces together. It also mirrors the experience of fragmentation by the characters.

Farah uses a montage of materials which cause fragmentation in the narrative. For example, there are disembodied narratives within the main narrative. We encounter one story which even the narrator does not know who is telling it. It is just introduced thus, 'A voice (most probably Hilaal's) telling a story: A man. A woman. A dog. The neighbours don't like the man who either... (187). This narrative goes on but it lacks a connection with the main narrative.

There is also use of letters in the narrative. Some of the letters were written by Askar to Misra while Hilaal wrote one letter to Askar. There are also the journals written by Arla who remains unknown to us and to Askar. However, we come to learn later that Arla was Askar's mother through a letter that Uncle Hilaal writes to him. The inclusion of all these letters and journals in the narrative underscores the fragmented nature of *Maps*.

2.4 Fragmentation of the Plot through Typographic Ellipsis

Through the use of typographical ellipsis, the narrative flow in *Maps* is fragmented. This is achieved during transitions between the chapters and the segments in *Maps* where a blank page appears. For example, Part one of the narrative starts in page three after a blank page which is supposedly page two. In the Interlude part of the novel, there is an empty page before page 125. Similarly, part two of the novel starts after an empty page which could be page 140 and the last part start after two blank pages. These visible gaps highlight the process of selection that is at work in the novel- the selection of what to omit or jump over in the narrative.

2.5 The Liberating Force of a Fragmented Postmodern narrative structure

The division of *Maps* into visible sections of variable length as I have demonstrated above points to one thing; *Maps* lacks a grand overshadowing narrative. Instead it is made up of elfin narratives. The result is a collection of randomly presented non-committal discourses

which defy the strict succession of events thus the fragmentariness in plot. This is because as Hutcheon says, the postmodern narrative, “allows other principles and paradigms to exist concurrently even if they are ex-centric and peripheral.” (58) The sections are the windows through which we see the many frontiers of the narrative: the shifting point of views, the dream sequences, ellipsis, the flashbacks, flash forwards and the fragmentary ending. I will discuss each of these later highlighting how they contribute to the fragmentariness experienced in the narrative.

However, these narrations in whatever form are nothing but separate, possessing an individuality of their own. Each has an incomplete story so that we can take the liberty as readers to read them in any order without losing the essence of the story. If this is the case then the novel defies the conventional beginning of a story. It can be read in any order due to the sequence of its disassociated experiences and observations.

At a first glance, the segments numbered in roman numbers chronologically seem self-directed. But they are not. Instead, they are branded with chaos in their construction. This chaotic condition relates to the incapability of the narrator to arrange the different element of the story coherently. It is a construct of a postmodern novel which tries to question formally all coherent systems. The intermittent presentation of the narrative is not the only cause of disorder in the narrative but also the shifting narrative voice of which Linda Hutcheon says that in the postmodern novel the narrators, “either become disconcertingly multiple and hard to locate.” (11)

Maps is just choppy not only in the structure of the plot but also (and most obviously) in the printed appearance. Such segmentation of the narrative leads to the repetition of the narrative parts and in some instances these parts of the narrative run parallel hence opening up themselves for comparison. A deliberate move by Farah who Derrick Wright in “Zero Zones;

Nuruddin Farah's Fiction," calls 'a thorough going postmodernist,'(2) to create these fragments in order to demonstrate that meaning, reality and understanding can only grow from a holistic consideration of these fragments with the empty spaces in between the narration being filled with the readers imagination. This way what is left unrepresented and unsaid gains relevance just like that which is represented.

In addition, the careful structuring of this novel is an illustration that it does not aim at imposing order which is in tandem with postmodern war against totalization. Instead, understanding of the novel is drawn from its fragments and structure where chaos and disorder meets. The idea that real life does not draw inspiration from linear temporality is also brought out by the argument that human life and experiences occur within multiple contexts. They are not organised neatly but are just processes of occurrence.

2.6 Fragmentation of the Plot Through Narrative Techniques

Fragmentation in a novel is not only indicated by segmentation of chapters and small sections but the breaking of linearity in the narrative; even though the chapters and other segments in the novel are arranged in linear sequence. The use of time jumps or lapses backwards or forwards, change of scenes without following the story line and the use of multiple points of view are also used to subvert linearity of plot. In this section I will therefore explore some of them by reading Nuruddin Farah's *Maps* as a postmodern novel which problematizes nonlinear narrative. My aim will be to prove at the end that narrative linearity is not the only formula for coherence in a novel.

McHale observes that postmodern literature foregrounds structure of the narrative so that it becomes "less the mirror of nature, more an artefact, visibly a made thing. As a corollary then to the artist's paradoxical self-representation, the art work itself comes to be represented as an artwork. The devices of art are laid bare." (182) In true words of McHale, Nuruddin Farah's

Maps in terms of its narrative structure is a complex postmodern narrative structure which leaves a reader frustrated and even lost upon reading the novel for the first time. Linda Hutcheon attests the difficulty of reading a postmodern narrative when she writes in *Poetics of Postmodernism*, that “the reader is often misguided, confused, forced to misinterpret the work and mocked using such devices as open, multiple and false endings.”(59) More confusion in *Maps* is due to different point of views which compete to tell the story and the lack of a chronological order of the narrative which is reflected in the lack of succession in the chapters making them appear like a quilt. This is a fragmented structure which is a symptomatic writing style of postmodernism.

We cannot underestimate just how crafted, ordered and complex *Maps* is, or the extent to which the fragments are framed in the anatomy or the map of the novel. They are so significant that they come to us with perforated holes between them. The novel starts by announcing its deviance from the traditional narrative structure in an epigraph which is borrowed from Socrates that “life begins when you start doubting everything that came before you.” This is a warning that we should view the narrative as a deviation from the norm. The deviance manifests when the novel goes on to subvert the linear conventional narrative structure with a fragmentary narrative as its launching pad. The fragmentary narrative structure shows that the novel does not intend to confine itself to a single profound meaning or style by interrogating the singularity inherent in the traditional narrative structure.

In order to understand how the plot in *Maps* is fragmented, it is important for me to invoke the concept of ‘order in narrative’ by Genette who writes in *Narrative Discourse Essay in Methods* that;

To study the temporal order of narrative is to compare the order of which events or temporal sections are arranged in the narrative

discourse with the order of succession these same events or temporal segments have in the story, to the extent that story order is explicitly indicated by the narrative itself or inferable from one or another indirect clue. (1980:35)

According to Genette, the disparity between the two is considered as anachrony. Through the use of anachrony the narrative jumps back and forth in time breaking the actual present timeline into fragments.

Maps interferes with time so that the narrative jumps back and forth in an illogical and a non-linear fashion. We are even called to its awareness in the novel itself “since we have been going backwards and forwards in time, lets continue doing so....” (144). The text tells us to be aware of shifting time and space. It is what Linda Hutcheon calls in *Narcissistic Narrative*, ‘self reflexivity’ of the postmodern narrative. (1) This means that the postmodern fiction is an inward-looking text. It subverts the chronological order through the use of time jumps to show that the linear arrangement of events is artificial.

The manipulation of time in the narrative in *Maps* is through the use of analepsis, prolepsis and ellipsis. Genette calls prolepsis and analepsis, ‘forms of anachronism’ while ellipsis falls under what he calls ‘duration.’ In *Narrative Discourse Essay in Methods*, Genette defines anachrony as “the various types of discordance between the temporal orders of the story and a narrative.” (40) The discordances he talks about here are prolepsis, (flash forward) which is a reference to an event that would later occur in the narrative and analepsis which is a reference to an earlier event (flashback).

Analepsis is further divided into two; the internal and external. According to Genette, the internal analepsis is a reference to an earlier event in the narrative while the external refers to a reference before the narrative started. Genette writes;

External analepsis by the very fact they are external never at any moment risk interfering with the first narrative, for their only function is to fill out the first narrative by enlightening the reader with one or another “antecedent” (40)

An external analepsis therefore takes the narrative back in time from the current point to recount events which happened before the narrative. The reader therefore has a better understanding of the shadow events which occurred before the narrative started.

2.7 Internal Analepsis in *Maps*

When employed in a narrative, internal analepsis ensures that the narrative sequence is withheld and a complete sequence is provided later. In so doing, linearity in the narrative is broken; time is manipulated deliberately to break the sequence of the narrative. This way a fragmented narrative, a symptom of postmodernism is created. As a postmodern text, *Maps* utilizes this technique in various instances.

At the beginning of chapter one, Askar in contemplative mood goes through a series of thoughts. One is that of ‘a horse dropping its rider...’ (3) We don’t know what to make of this fragment when it appears until it is explained later in chapter four. We learn it is a reference to the story of Misra when she was abducted in a raid as young girl, barely seven years. She rides in a horse together with her abductor, a young warrior who takes her to the south in the vicinity of a place called Jigjiga. Here they are ‘dropped’ into a home of a wealthy man who ‘gives them generous hospitality.’(72) However, the young man dies a day later. This technique as much as it breaks linearity, it is employed to wrap up the meaning.

Another instance is when we are informed in chapter two of an abortion that Misra went through. “...when Misra was helped to abort...when a calendar was brought into the compound and when circles in green were neatly drawn round the safe days and nights. (31)

This narrative is discontinued so that we ask, “Why did she have to undergo an abortion?” However, it is continued in details in chapter three where we are told how it began and ended. It began with Misra’s change in diet where she ‘ate great many sour things.’ Then there was conversation between her and Aw-Adan where the latter refuses responsibility for the pregnancy. That night Misra, with the assistance of Karin and an unnamed woman undergoes an abortion which takes toll on her health for a week. “Misra convalesced for about a week. She was weak.” (53)

One time when Askar wakes up from a dream he encounters an inexplicable incidence of blood on his groin, on the sheet that he had covered himself with and under him too. To his chagrin, Misra told him that he had started menstruating. “You have begun to menstruate.” (110) What follows is a series of questions swirling in Askar’s mind, questions aimed at unravelling the mystery. It is amusing and inexplicable. However, Derek Wright offers a more amusing explication when he says that, “Askar as a result of urinary infection imagines himself to have menstruated.” (122) It is amusing how Wright says that the blood was as a result from urinary infection yet a clear explanation of the event is offered later. It comes as a continuation offered on page 128 by Shahrawello who tells Askar of a rumour abroad that Misra had hung above his head ‘a slaughtered fowl, dripping with blood’ as Askar slept. This intentional postponement in giving an explanation to what had happened; it breaks the continuity of this narrative into two fragments.

Through the use internal analepsis, the story of Misra undergoing a mastectomy is introduced. Firstly, we get wind of it from Askar who in doubt questions himself if he would remember that “Misra had had a breast removed—or rather that Uncle Hilaal said he had been told so.” (160) After this hint is a telling of stories of fragmented bodies carried by newspapers. For example, there is a story of a Nigerian Islamic leader who has the hands of a man who had shoplifted a supermarket amputated. There is also another story of ritual murders in Nigeria;

where the body organs are removed to be used in witchcraft activities aimed at influencing election outcomes in favour of some individuals. Later in chapter nine, we are taken back to the story of Misra in a few details. The doctor tells Hilaal and Salaado that he suspected that Misra had a malignant tumor but he would ascertain it by carrying out a thorough medical examination on her. However, he does not examine her at that time and the story veers off to a plan that Salaado has about taking Misra out to the ocean to swim.

An interruption of the linearity of the plot through internal analepsis is seen where we are introduced to Karin's husband. He is presented as a sick man whose name we are not told. What we have instead is a description of him lying on a mattress. "Invalid, a man who lay on his back all the time, suffering from some spinal complaint you had no name for." (14) After we are snared with this story of Karin's husband, we are taken to the world of Askar, Misra and Uncle Qorrax. We witness Askar and Misra carrying out a post-mortem of the day's events. Mostly it would be about Uncle Qorrax who Askar had nicknamed 'Monster'. They would say that Shahrawello whose 'daily blood-letting of Qorrax was said to have kept him in check' since he had the habit of marrying now and then until Askar lost count. The coming of Shahrawello into Uncle Qorrax's life is compared to that Scherezade of the *Thousand and One Night*. "Until one day a woman you nicknamed Shahrawello arrived on the scene and she stayed (as Sheherezade of the *Thousand and One Night* did)." Scheherezade manages to delay her death by disrupting her captors with more and more stories. Similarly, Shahrawello manages to tame Uncle Qorrax by performing blood-letting on him so that does he not marry again leading to her replacement as the favourite wife.

Later we are given more details of Karin's husband. That he lay on his back so that he could see 'whenever he looked at the ceiling, a portrait of Ernest Bevin.' Much later in chapter five, when Karin's husband dies, we come to know more about him, more so his name. He had been nicknamed Armadio and since he used to say that he had a job to do, Karin used to refer

to him as a “the man with a job to do.”(74) Karin too does not know what kind of a job Armadio does, however, we are told that he was part of a Somali Youth League cell which was fighting for the unification of Somalia. He was caught and locked up in an Ethiopian prison where he was tortured. Hence the reason he lays down complaining of spinal pain.

The story of Askar being taken to learn at the Koranic school run by Aw-Adan has been manipulated through internal analepsis. The story from the beginning on how Askar was taken there, the introductions and the amount of fees paid is withheld intentionally. What we have for the start of this narrative is how Askar failed ‘to trace the alif, ba and ta of Gods words in the flesh of His wisdom.’ (79) Aw-Adan beat him till he defecated on himself. This was the first time, the second time he is beaten; he catches a fever so that he misses school the following day. However, this does not end without Askar declaring that he would kill Aw-Adan. Misra though chips in and helps Askar to learn the alphabet. The story at this point shifts to Misra, on the calendar she was given to help her count and mark the safe days for her to have sex. However, it did not work hence Askar is questioning the cogency of the calendars.

“What is in a calendar? What is in a table giving you the days of the week, the months and the year, be it a year-of-a-Monday, a year of a Tuesday or one beginning with another day of the week, year belonging to the signs of the zodiac which are based neither on the Gregorian system nor on the Julian but whose calendar makes overt reference to the cyclical and menstrual ordeals of a woman—Misra!” (81)

Askar here is questioning the concept of the days of the week, the months, and the years. They are manmade fragments of time that we have framed to systematise our lives. As

Jameson says that time is deconstructed in postmodernism, so does *Maps* try to do by using events more than calendar dates. Jameson argues that, “our daily life, our psychic experience, our cultural languages, is today dominated by categories of space rather than by categories of time as in the preceding period of modernism.” (16) This is manifested in postmodern literature like *Maps* in various ways. One of the ways it is seen is when Askar talks of Misra’s menstrual cycles and how every month is marked by it. Another way is through the narration in terms of the memories. Through these memories Askar can go back into the past to seek answers without the restrictions of time. This idea of deconstructing time is also seen in the “Ode to Nature” recited by Misra where she says that “the history of the earth can be read from its eclipses, that of the sun, from it being partially or completely obscured by the shadow of another body—the earth or the moon. (37)

The concept of time serves to delay the narrative about Askar in a Koranic school because at its end is a continuation of how Askar was admitted to the school. Through a memory, Askar takes us to the day Uncle Qorrax takes him to school. He addresses Aw-Adan, the teacher, thus: “I bring to you, this blessed morning, this here my brother’s only son, whose name is Askar.” At this time Askar is said to be younger than other pupils but since he had no father figure at home, it is important for him to be taken away from ‘bad influence of women’ according to Uncle Qorrax. He also authorises Aw-Adan to punish Askar to his liking. Askar is part bone, part flesh. The flesh is yours and you may punish it to the extent of it letting blood.” After this, Uncle Qorrax seals the deal with Aw-Adan by a handshake. Later he checks on the performance of his children after which he leaves. Barely after he leaves and before Askar finds his bearings than he is caned as we are told in the first fragment. This fragment comes in handy to supplying us with more tidings on why Askar was caned. That partly Uncle Qorrax was to blame for giving Aw-Adan authority to cane Askar and partly Aw-Adan blames it on Askar’s satanic stare.

There is an interruption when Karin starts telling Askar about the new life Misra has in Kallafo. It starts with a revelation that Misra's non-Somali name had a *t* in it at the end so that it becomes Misrat. When she came to live in Somalia, she had dropped the *t* to for her own convenience. However, "she restored the *t* after she fell in love with an Ethiopian security officer." (86) This story is however, rendered a fragment by an introduction of another narrative about Aw-Adan's hatred for Askar. It is a discovery that Askar makes that Aw-Adan hated him since he could see it in the eyes of Aw-Adan as he caned him. He comes up with a solution which is to will Aw-Adan to death. The story of Misra is continued much later in chapter nine. Karin is giving Askar a recap of what happened in Ogaden. Part of it is the change in Misra's name as mentioned in the above fragment. Askar tries to think about the meaning in Misra changing her name and concludes that it stands for betrayal.

2.8 Narrative Fragmentation Through External Analepsis

Genette defines the external analepsis as "a past that preceded the starting point of the first narrative." He goes on to say that 'they function to fill out the first narrative by enlightening the reader on some information that was missing.' (50). External analepsis therefore takes us back to the events that happened before the narrative started. They are indicators of gaps in the time frame of the narrative. Hence, they are used to complete this gap (ellipsis), to explain the past of a character or a given situation. Genette writes that; 'external analepsis by the fact that they are external, never at any moment risk interfering with the first narrative by enlightening the reader on one or another 'antecedent' (50) This means that the retroversion takes place outside completely outside the timespan of the primary narrative causing a gap in narrative succession.

In *Maps* there are constant counterpoints between the past and the present which disrupt the narrative. To start with is a letter which Uncle Hilaal writes to Askar evoking his displeasure

with the change in Askar's life. At the age of fourteen Askar has an ambition of joining the Ogaden war as a fighter rather than continue with his education to which Uncle Hilaal pays lip service. This letter on front highlights the fragmentation of the text while its content offers retroversion outside the primary narrative about Askar in Mogadiscio. For instance, it takes us back to the birth of Askar letting us know that Askar's mother was called Arla and that Askar witnessed his own birth which is quite unusual for a new born. "... you stared at Misra when she found you and Arla my sister..." (21) The birth of Askar took place before the starting point of the narrative in *Maps*. This is a deliberate design of interrupting the narrative to tell us more about Askar's past. It is important noting that the letter is planted early in the narrative when there is less content for us so that it acts as a supplement.

Misra and Askar are at home doing house hold chores in part five of chapter four. However, the next scene opens with the story of Misra's past. The narrative goes back to explain how and why Misra came to live in Kallafo yet she was an Ethiopian born of Oromo woman and Amhara nobleman. She was captured as a young girl by a warrior during a tribal raid in her village in Ethiopia. Fearing for his life in case he is traced, the warrior took her to the vicinity of Jigjiga where she was adopted by a wealthy man. 'She told you, a warrior riding a horse and as he hit his heels against the beast's ribs, the warrior held tightly to a little girl barely seven.' (71) The wealthy man took her for a wife when she was seventeen years old but she murdered him during 'excessive sex' with him and she flew to south—now Kallafo where she is the surrogate mother of Askar. This narrative strand provides us with Misra's past life while it precedes the beginning point of the primary narrative thus breaking the linearity of the narrative.

A stop-and-go-back narration is provided by external analepsis through a reference to historical books and figures which contain information about the narrative. This is a careful design which aligns the reader to wander back in time to process the past events thus getting a

multiple perspective. In *Maps* there is direct reference to a map of the world drawn by Eduard Kremer in 1567. This map showed Africa as ‘smaller than Green Land’ yet it is bigger in reality. (229) This misrepresentation is corrected four hundred years later by Arno Peters who ‘gives more accurate proportions of the continents.’ (229) There is also direct reference to a map of German during a period when German had invaded and conquered much of Europe. “And I remembered seeing a map a German cartographer had drawn as his country invaded and conquered more and more of Europe.” (228) The primary narrative in *Maps* is about the boundaries of Somalia as a nation but the references here about other *Maps* points to events that occurred outside the narrative. They make us stop and ponder over the relevance of boundary markers which are subject to distortion through political and military influence.

The story of Askar’s father is narrated in the fashion of retrospection. First there is the story of how Misra used to feed Askar as a child then we are taken back to Askar’s father. He was a member of a fighter group aiming at liberating Ogaden from the Ethiopian control. “You were told that he had been liberated while fighting for Western Liberation Front.” (9) Askar’s father died before Askar was born and before the start of the narrative in *Maps*. His story therefore precedes the start of the primary narrative while going back to it facilitates the abortion of narrative flow.

Misra had a child but it died. It is before Askar was born. “The child had died a few months before you were born.” (9) Misra is lactating at the moment but she cannot breast feed Askar since he refuses to take her breasts. So Misra feels the pain of losing a child with Askar as a constant reminder especially when she is feeding him from a bottle. Misra’s loss is an external analepsis that fractures the linearity of the narrative since it happens before the beginning point of the narrative at the time when we encounter her.

2.9 Fragmentation of the Narrative Through Prolepsis

Genette classifies as prolepsis ‘any narrative maneuvers that consist of narrating or invoking in advance an event that will take place later.’ (40) Rimmon Kenan says that ‘prolepsis is telling the future before its time’ (50) Genette goes further to state that it is not just ‘foreshadowing’, which prepares the reader for future events, rather prolepsis reaches forward in time. (40) These definitions by Genette and Kenan points to two basic things about prolepsis—that it is a mismatch between sequential orders and an achronological movement, forward in time.

My reading of prolepsis in *Maps* therefore involves not only the presence of the disparity between the sequential orders but also the movement forward in time. It also considers the two kinds of prolepsis. The first kind is where the narrator reveals false information about something and the second where the subsequent narrative reveals a differing account. Therefore, this section of the analysis considers the figure of prolepsis as leading to an explicit break at the narrative level.

Askar is narrating how Misra underwent an abortion that took toll on her only to interrupt this narrative with a shift in time and place to tell us about him witnessing a child crawling and a woman following the child in Uncle Hilaal’s house in Mogadiscio. “Now. Years later. In Mogadiscio. At Hilaal and Salaado’s. And he saw a child crawling –and he could see this from a slight distance....” (53) At the moment Askar is in Kallafo but we are taken a head through this prolepsis to be told about what would happen later in the narrative when Askar travels to Mogadiscio. This prolepsis disrupts the narrative thread while offering us a glimpse into the future.

In chapter five there is a fragment story of the speech delivered by Haile Selassie to the people of Ogaden in 1956 which led to the taking away of the Ogaden Somali children to Ethiopia. “They were sent to different schools, in the non-Somali speaking regions of the

country, so they could lose contact with other Somalis and with one another. Amharic-the language of minority imposed upon a majority.” (88) However, it is cut short by next prolepsis about the circumcision of Askar and it is followed by another which bears a dream that Askar has on a bird holding the foreskin of a boy’s circumcision and the last one is a narrative about the young men preparing for war to liberate Ogaden. The actual circumcision of Askar takes place later in chapter six in the first segment after the interlude. “He was now a man, detached from his mother figure Misra and weaned....” (100).

In another instance, Askar tells Misra that, ‘To live I will have to kill you.’ (57) This prolepsis appears suddenly to announce that Misra will die. It also leads us falsely to expect that her death will have been executed by Askar. Misra too adds weight to our expectation by telling Askar that, ‘Who knows, you might even kill me to make your people’s dream become a tangible reality.’

“Kill” I asked.

“Yes, kill murder. Loot. Rape. In the name of your people. Kill.” (99)

Indeed, when Misra is later found dead and her heart removed. We almost come to a conclusion that Askar killed Misra. However, this expectation is watered down by a revelation that at the disappearance of Misra, neither Askar nor Hilaal has an idea about her whereabouts. They are in the house when Hilaal wonders where Misra is;

“Hilaal was disappointed. Would mentioning code-name “Misra” have lifted Hilaal momentarily out of his depression? Where was Misra anyway? Or how was she? If she were here, who knows, she might have suggested that blood-letting would do Hilaal a lot of good. Askar said, “I hope Misra, too, is all right.”

At the mention of Misra's name, Hilaal stirred involuntarily. Then, "Yes, where the hell is, she?" said Hilaal.

Askar rushed to the toilet before he wet himself." (247)

As seen from the above excerpt, Askar could not have had a hand in the death of Misra since he is not even aware of her whereabouts.

Told through a prophetic prolepsis, is the story of Askar meeting a girl in his fantastical illusions. "A young girl, innocent as her smile, emerged from behind the horses. She looked intimidated.... (135) This fragment interrupts the story of Askar traveling to Mogadiscio while it introduces the logic of the information gap by providing us with uncertainty. At the moment he is travelling in a bus but we see him meeting a girl in an Edenic garden. This is a flash forward to events in Uncle Hilaal's house in Mogadiscio where Askar meets a girl named Riyo who suggestively is his girlfriend.

2.10 Ellipsis: Lost Words as Fragments of the Lost Somali Nation

Genette defines ellipsis as a "non-existent section of the narrative which corresponds to some duration of the story." (93) It is a component of what he calls 'Duration,' which is the relationship between story-time and the discourse time. Rimmon-Kenan writes that "duration is (measured in minutes, hours months and years) and the length of text devoted to it (in lines and pages)". (52) For Genette, the measure of duration in narrative involves the use of constant pace which is the unchanged ratio between the story duration and the length of the text. Constant pace is altered if a small segment of the text is allocated to a long period of the story. This achieves acceleration while deceleration is achieved if a short period of story is allocated to a long segment of the text. The pause is the minimum speed in the narrative and the maximum is the ellipsis. Accelerating the narrative in maximum speed imparts jumps to

what precedes and succeeds it thus breaking it apart. In this segment I will read how ellipsis is used to break the narrative in *Maps*.

The discontinuous narrative in *Maps* revolves around not what it says but what it chooses not to say. For example, the opening of the narrative in *Maps* invites an ellipsis about some events which it does not narrate, thus it puts us in the aftermath of these events. The beginning of the narrative is in the *Medias res* when Askar is eighteen years old. ‘Did anyone ever tell you what you looked like when the woman discovered you that dusk some eighteen years or so ago? No?’ (4) From when Askar is born until he is eighteen years, we are not told about him and this is the time the narrative starts. This explicit ellipsis erases any presumed causal relationship between when Askar is born and when he is eighteen years old.

Even when the narrator takes us back to when and where Askar was born, much is left unsaid. His birth place is in a dark room where he is discovered by a woman called Misra with his mother lying dead beside him. ‘You lay in wait as though in ambush until a woman who wasn’t expecting you existed walked into the dark room in which you had been from the second you were born’ (4) The narrator only places us in the scene of after birth of Askar but we are not told what happened before that. For example, why was Arla, Askar’s mother hiding in that room? Who was she hiding from? These are secrets which Misra told Askar but we are left out.

.... she told you secrets about your parents no one else was ready to tell you. She told you why your mother had been hiding in the room where she had found the two of you and why she died in a quiet secretive way. (7)

Here the narrator is grudging in closing the gap between the present moment and what had happened before the birth of Askar. This implicit ellipsis signals a movement away from causal and effect narration. Therefore, we have fragments.

When Misra tries to breastfeed Askar and he refuses, she is heartbroken. In an explication of this scenario we are told that she had a child who died before Askar was born. However, it is narrated in a concise and elliptical manner. One must leave gaps if they are too brief and this is the case here. For example, we are told that the child was 'fatherless' which is impossible. A child cannot be fatherless. Besides we are not told why it died. This implicit ellipsis serves as self-censorship on the part of Misra which elides her promiscuous life.

While under the care of Misra, Askar wakes up one morning to find blood 'on the sheet he had covered himself with, blood under him too. Most specifically there was blood on his groin.' (110) In a conversation which follows, Misra tells Askar that he had menstruated. How a boy defies biology and menstruates is a lie of omission by Misra. In fact, she knows that Askar did not menstruate, rather the blood was from a slaughtered chicken that she had hung above Askar as he slept. 'Shahrawello had mentioned that a rumour had been spread that Misra had hung above your head, one early dawn, a slaughtered fowl dripping with blood.' (128) This explicit ellipsis as revealed by Shahrawello highlights the selection and elision by Misra on what to say and what to not say which fragments the narrative in *Maps*.

Misra goes missing after she is admitted in the hospital in Mogadiscio for surgery to remove a tumour in one of her breasts. According to Salaado, 'three men unknown to her forced their way to the private ward for which we were paying and they frog-marched her out of the hospital.' (243) We don't know if Misra knew the three men and as Hilaal tells Salaado, 'you haven't enough information to go by' (243) After some days Misra is found dead by the shores of the ocean with her body mutilated and her heart removed. Askar as the narrator here

cannot fill the gaps on what transpired during the six days that Misra was missing because he doesn't know. Only a possible reason why her heart was removed is offered by Uncle Hilaal. He suggests that they performed a ritual murder on her body.' (252) The narrative gap here is as a result of prolepsis which as Genette says is an 'omission of one of the constituent elements of a situation in a period that the narrative does cover.' (52) In effect there is error in chronology of the narrative.

2.11 Dreams as Markers of Fragmentation in the Narrative

Dreams also act as agents of narrative disruption in *Maps*. This highlights why they are foregrounded so much in the novel so that three sections of the twelve chapters tell of Askar dreaming and discussing dreams with Uncle Hilaal and Salaado, and six of the sections consist entirely of a dream sequence of up to five pages. These dreams lack a beginning, clarification or closure. They just appear suddenly in the course of the narrative, a clear example of the indeterminacy in the narrative structure of the novel.

At the start of chapter three we are introduced to Askar running aimlessly. "He didn't know why he was running nor did he know what he was fleeing from." (43) We don't know why he is running either but for a narration of events which run for a whole first section of this chapter. Neither can we tell from the last chapter since the contents of the frame are broken through the Askar 'running away suddenly' hence the lack of transition between the end of chapter two and the start of chapter three. At the end is an abrupt stop marked by, "and Askar awoke", (48) which to our chagrin is a revelation that this has been a dream all along.

A dream fragment that contributes to the creation of an intermittent narrative structure in the novel can be found in chapter six. Askar is travelling to Mogadishu where he would be living with his uncle. Abruptly we are introduced to a scenario where he meets a young girl, more or less his age, nameless, with no country of origin or parents. The meeting up with this girl provides us with an insight on Somalia's past through dialogue between the two. We get to

know that the local name of Mogadiscio is Xamar. Askar's father lived there and all the territories of Somalia were once united. However, the cause of their geographical fragmentation is not explicated since Askar 'resurfaces' from his sleep to shouts of joy by fellow travellers for arriving in Mogadishu. At this moment we come to a realization that this was a just a dream infused unannounced into the narrative.

When a dream is infused into the narrative spontaneously the narrative linearity is broken such as at the start of chapter eleven. No effort is made to inform us that it is a dream at the start and in addition we are thrown into confusion when Askar starts talking of 'eating with relish, a slice of the sky' (224). However, the events surrounding this dream at the moment look far-fetched until later in the chapter that we realize their importance in providing us with a premonition on Misras's death. Askar sees Misra at the sea feeding the fishes with her blood and she tells him that he should know of a plan by some people to kill her. Later Misra is abducted, killed and thrown into the sea. The lack of the introduction, meaning or a clarification on this dream at the moment renders it a fragment which interferes with the linearity of the narrative.

Apart from breaking the linearity of the narrative in *Maps*, these types of invasive dreams on Askar's consciousness are Farah's representation of multiple realities that have their own sets of knowledge systems. For example, in the first dream where Askar is running he encounters "people along the way who had their bodies tattooed with their identities: that is name, nationality and address." (43) To these people, these are unquestionable 'facts' which should be guarded by permanently inscribing them on their bodies. To us, the troubling effect of this dream that Askar had is that we end up wondering what to believe between the dream and the sequence of the narrative. In the narrative sequence, the issue of identity is presented as elusive as seen in Askar always trying to search for his true self unlike in the dream where the characters are aware of themselves. Therefore, the dream here imbues the narrative with the

presence of internal and external visualisation. It is a reflection of the postmodern suspicion of totalizing texts.

The multiplicity of ideas offered in these dreams is what Ihab Hassan in, "Towards a Concept of Postmodernism" calls 'Pluralism'. Together with 'discontinuity', 'randomness' and 'deformation', these terms form what he calls the 'indeterminacies' of postmodernism. (153) In *Maps* this pluralism is provided by reading and interpretation of these dreams which would render them ambiguous and not totalized. They are open to various interpretations since they are amalgamations of facts, feelings, and imaginations which the Askar implores to arrive at the crux of matters his own identity as young boy. By providing the plurality advanced by postmodern writing, these dreams act as a narrative device that is used to trouble the reliability of a linear narrative. Derek Wright argues that Farah uses this postmodern strategy since "it allows very many different competing views to be heard. In the hope that truth will issue from collision of opposing ideas; for truth in Farah's fiction is relative, ambiguous and open ended." (Wright 2004:18) I think Farah does it to let us stitch together the truth from these opposing stands whilst he escapes from possible simplified accusations of being subjective.

Apart from offering multiple perspectives these dreams also present some obscurity in the narrative where interpretation is in any way elusive since they are fragmentary, lack coherence and beg for demystification. For example, Askar engages Uncle Hilaal about the meaning of these dreams, all that remains is more and more questions with no answers rather than a stable interpretation within the novel. The place of these dreams in the narrative is a good pointer in their function in the structure of the plot. And since they are puzzling, disconnected with the narrative they are instrumental in ciphering the text, fragmenting it so that they demand active interpretation from the reader.

2.12 False Narrative Ending as a Marker of Fragmentation in *Maps*

Fictional texts traditionally have a defined beginning, middle and ending. The ending of these texts serves as the resolution of the issues raised in the narration. For example, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, posits a resolution at the end. The death of Okonkwo, who was an ardent advocate against colonialism, can be seen as a revelation that fighting colonialism was defeated.

To the contrary, postmodern texts resist this type of closure. There is a closure by a full stop, a point at which the author stopped writing. They resist the idea of a single ending which obviously would seal the narrative making it a single unit. Since the novel is simply made up of narrative fragments, the uncertainty they create must be highlighted at the “end” too. The importance of this is simply to defy the truth of unity realised by the traditional texts. It is a clear signal that the texts are not unified nor are the readers. The text also defies ‘ending’ since the narrators in the text are themselves seeking a unified stance which means they are fragmented as I will illustrate in my next chapter of this project. Here the lack of unity in the characters informs the lack of ending in a postmodern text.

Since the narrative is made up fragments, the reader is thrown into a frustration by the daunting task of piercing together the fragments in the reading process. However, more frustration is at the ‘end’ since the text does not offer an answer to what happened finally.

Maps offers this kind of an ending to us. Instead of the story ending in a resolution, it is actually the start of the story or rather a multiple ending. This means the narrative ends in fragments of various perspectives. Lodge in, “Postmodern Fiction” writes:

Endings, the exits of fictions, are particularly significant in this connection. Instead of closed endings, of the traditional novel, in which mystery is explained and fortunes are settled, and instead of

the open endings of the modernist novel, ‘satisfying but not final,’ as Conrad said of Henry James, we get the multiple endings, the false ending, the mock ending or parody ending. (1988:226)

This argument by Lodge better explains the ‘ending’ of *Maps* as a symptomatic postmodern ending. In *Maps* the ending in three perspectives is seen when Askar tells his story and that of Misra in multiple perspectives: as plaintiff, as judge, as audience and as a witness.

“And that was how it began—the story of (Misra/Misrat/Masarat and) Askar. First, he told it plainly and without embellishment, answering the police officer’s questions; then he told it to men in gowns, men resembling ravens with white skulls. And time grew [...] He was at one and same time, the plaintiff and the juror. Finally allowing for his different personae to act as judge, as audience and as witness, Askar told it to himself.” (259)

This ending in *Maps* is in terms of a full stop since the elements of conflict in the story have not been solved. We are to determine what really happened. For example, all that remains after Misra is murdered are questions: Was there a chance of saving Misra? Was she guilty of the crime levelled upon her by her killers? Who killed her? Could it be Askar since he had hinted in a Freudian slip that he would kill her for betraying his people? To all these questions that we ask here, there are no answers available. The truth just like the way the narration of this text lacks chronology, remains outside our grasp.

The lack of closure in *Maps* is a significant tactic adopted by Farah. For him the important aspect of this novel was not to explain what had happened but to leave it open to various interpretations. According to Linda Hutcheon in *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, “the nineteenth century structures of narrative closure (death, marriage; neat conclusions) are undermined by

those postmodern epilogues that foreground how as writers and readers, we make closure.” (117) This lack of closure is what David Lodge calls, “labyrinths without closure,” in reference to the postmodern plots. (226)

Having said that *Maps* ends in a multiple perspective way, it is important to note that it also leaves us the readers in dilemma or chaos since we are not led to linear conclusion. The chaos created can be seen in the shifting personalities of Askar as he is narrating his story and that of Misra as I illustrated earlier above. However, this ‘ending’ ensures that we don’t get a singular reality which would be totalizing. In *Geopolitical Aesthetics*, Jameson writes that the “longing” for a formal totality characterizes a modernist and that this “monadic closure” is something about which the postmodern text would care less. (163) This better explains why in *Maps* there is that longing for a formal totality but it is denied by a multiple perspective closure.

It is important to note that the ending in *Maps* just like in any other literary texts, can be used to shed light on the sense of the novel as whole. Since it is difficult to remember every petite detail in the text, the ending comes in handy in shaping the sense of the novel by the reader. Torgovnick in “Closure in The Novel”, highlights the importance of studying how a novel ends when she says that,

To study the closure and the shape of fictions we begin with the endings, but evaluate its success as part of an artistic whole, as a final element in a particular structure of words and meanings. The discussion of closure includes the discussion of aesthetics shape, verbal, metaphorical, gestural and other formal patterns...To approach fictional by a way of closure is not then at all narrow, endings, closures reveal the essences of novels with particular clarity; to study

closure is to recreate and re-experience fiction with an unusual vividness. (6-7)

What Torgovnick says here boils down to one thing; fictional endings are subject to context of the narrative which they appear since the ending is part of the structure of the novel.

In *Maps* the ending just like the structure of the body is fragmented. It is not a single narrative but multiple narratives which Askar tells as he testifies on the death of Misra as I discussed earlier. This kind of ending is explained by Linda Hutcheon, when she says in *The Politics of Postmodernism*, that the concept of narrative “end,” suggest both “teleology and closure,” which postmodernists consider as a mode of “totalizing” representation. (62) The significance of a fragmented ending in *Maps* is to bring in the postmodern suspicion of a totalizing single narrative and to denaturize any notion that there is a single story or truth. There are, in fact, stories and possible truths. And like Jeanette Winterson writes in in her novel, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruits*, “.....when someone tells me what they heard or saw, I believe them, and I believe their friend who also saw, but not in the same way and I can put these accounts together and I will not have a seamless wonder but a sandwich laced with a mustered of my own.” (93) Truth is unreachable due to diversity of opinions and interpretations.

2.13 Summary

In this chapter I have discussed about plot fragmentation in *Maps*. I have demonstrated how Farah employs fragmentation of the plot in *Maps* through narrative techniques, ellipsis, dreams, typographic ellipsis, allusion, segmentation of the text, and a fragmented ending of the narrative. The fragmented plot in *Maps* allows for confusion since the interpretation of the narrative is left out to the readers. With seventy-five segments which differ in time and perspective we are left to piece them together to make out the meaning from them.

A fragmented plot in *Maps* is a significant device adopted by Farah. For him the important feature of this novel was to disregard linearity in favour of fragments. This mirrors the disintegrations experienced by the characters. The disintegrations projected by the plot and the characters therefore dispute the ideology of Somali nation based on homogeneity of the Somali genealogically.

CHAPTER THREE

FRAGMENTED BODIES AS SYMBOLS OF THE SOMALI NATION IN *MAPS*

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall identify and analyse instances of fragmented bodies in *Maps*. I suggest that *Maps* is concerned with images of fragmented bodies of the characters rather than the conventional character development. Most of the characters are wounded; have missing body parts or experience psychological fragmentation. Of concern too, is the story of Somalia divided into territories through pre-colonial map making. There is a sharp focus on bodies in *Maps* which leads Derek Wright, to write that *Maps* is, ‘the first African novel of the body with great mass of body literature behind it.’ (118) This centrality in the fragmented corporeality in *Maps* therefore, warrants closer attention to reveal its importance in the narrative.

Fragmentation means the reduction of the whole to its incomplete and different parts or components. Fragmentation of characters therefore means the portrayal of characters’ physical bodies, their personality, their social life and their language as lacking unity. They are broken apart into diverse and chaotic complexes. *Maps* explores fragmentation of characters in a significant way. When characters are not drawn in the outline as fragmented, they are drawn as fragmented internally. In the physical condition of the characters, fragmentation is evident in the missing body parts while internal fragmentation manifests as lack of coherence in identity formation of the characters. The trouble with identity is in the psyche of the characters. The experiences of the past, immediate and random, jumbled in the narration portray the fragmentation of the characters internally. These facts provide us with a background with which we can approach *Maps* as a ground where Farah projects fractures

evident in the Somali national identity and the fragmentation which follows the remapping of the cartography.

3.2 Allegory of a Fragmented Setting in *Maps*: Somali, a Nation of Many Borders

To understand the idea of fragmentation of the setting in *Maps* it is important to understand the history of Somalia since it is the integral setting of *Maps*. The setting in *Maps* is important as it grounds the predicament of the characters in the narrative. Like in most countries, colonisation in Somalia is a major force that shaped the history and politics of Somalia society. The Somali society is made up of six clans and before colonisation they were scattered across the Somaliland, wandering with their livestock in search of pasture. In *Understanding Somalia and Somaliland*, Lewis explains that the Somali “were a nation not a state. Although they possessed the cultural prerequisite for statehood, the six major divisions of the nation did not combine together to confront the world nor did they regularly act as stable or autonomous political units within the Somali political system.” (27) This means that the political organisation of the Somali was fragmented along clan lines.

At the scramble for Africa the colonial powers competing for the Horn of Africa divided the region into five regions which came to be represented by the five-pointed star on the Somali flag. The regions are; the North Eastern part of Kenya, Djibouti, British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland and the Ogaden region. Only two regions of these five would merge in 1960 at independence under president Aden Abdullah Osman. The two are the British Somaliland and the Italian Somaliland. This meant that Somali region was now fragmented into four territories. This is what the title of the novel *Maps* captures.

After independence, according to Clarke and Gosende in an essay, “Somalia: Can a Collapsed State Reconstitute Itself?” ‘the government proved to be experimental, inefficient, corrupt and incapable of creating any kind of national political culture.’ (133) This corruption

by the political class ate on the meagre resources and hindered cohesion that was much needed in the newly independent Somali state. Not long into independence, the country was led into endless wars and chaos after President Ali Sharmake was assassinated and in a bloodless military coup Siyad Barre took over. Under Siyad Barre, Somali saw the first conflict over the Ogaden region with Ethiopia in 1977-1978 as an attempt to realise the dream of unification of the greater Somalia. However, the Somali forces enjoyed victory momentarily for they were humiliated in a defeat by Ethiopian soldiers with the help of Soviet forces killing their dream of unification eventually. The consequences of this war were devastating with the major being displacement of a big number of people from Ogaden. With subsequent conflicts after this war, the regime of Siyad Barre lost the centre and finally fragmentation of Somali Republic happened.

The Ogaden war was started by the action of the British withdrawing their empire from the Horn of Africa and in the process bequeathing Ethiopia the region of Ogaden which Somalia felt was rightfully its territory. The politics of cold war fuelled this conflict further and a war broke out causing a lot of suffering. *Maps* captures this troubled history of conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia over the Ogaden region.

The fight over the region of Ogaden by Somalia and Ethiopia is an attempt to follow the path of a nation which continues the colonial legacy of territorialisation and occupation. In an attempt to gain power over territories, the colonial powers mapped these territories out. The power struggles over these territories by various forces caused the shifting of the borders many times. Such is the case of the Ogaden region which lacks stability due to shifting borders and the constant wars which consequently disrupts the continuity of the history of the region. In *Maps*, the issue of cartography stems from the colonial history of invading and drawing arbitrary borders in Africa. This altered the knowledge about Africa consequently making it impossible to create a coherent narrative about Africa. This can be seen in *Maps*

when Askar shows his discontent with how the Germans manipulated truth by redesigning *Maps* of places they colonised. “Germans had no “truthful” right to reassign territories, redesign *Maps* just because they overran these lands and subjected the inhabitants to their tyrannical regimentation...” (228)

To shed more light on this, Uncle Hilaal tells Askar how the colonialists manipulated truth through cartography:

“And did you know that Eduard Kremer, who was the drawer of the 1567 map, introduced numerous distortions, thereby altering our notion of the world and its size did you? Africa, in Kremer’s Map, is smaller than Green land. These *Maps* which bear in mind the European prejudices, are the *Maps* we used at school when I was young and, I am afraid to say, are still being reprinted year after year and used in schools in Africa.” (228)

This quote by Uncle Hilaal shows us the arbitrary and unreliable side of the history of Africa. It is questioning the unreliability of the history of Africa that has been passed to us. It also questions the ideology of a nation based on borders.

Ogaden region is defined by its unreliable past marked by drawing of arbitrary borders, political mayhem, and lack of a coherent historical narrative. Even when people want to forget and continue with their lives, they are disrupted by the unburied memories as one man travelling together with Askar testifies: “...these are corpses that should be buried in in the tomb of history but that are not; corpses that at any rate will be undug every century or so” (129) This testimony is an indication that the effects of this war are felt many years by more and more narratives keeping on popping up in terms of memories.

Through the story of Askar as a fragmented character, *Maps* illustrates the disillusionment of a Somalia nation. The call for a united Somali nation was meant to replace the grand narrative of colonialism but *Maps* brings forth its destructiveness brought by territorial war. Thus, the idea of a nation has lost the clout of bringing meaning from the destruction of colonialism. The intermittent narrative in the novel is in tandem with the fragmentation of Somalia and the characters like Askar who suffers identity crisis as seen in this excerpt.

“You are a question to yourself. It is true. You have become a question to all those who meet you, those who know you, those who have any dealings with you.” (3)

In another incidence he wonders whether he is alive;

At times when your uncle speaks about you in your presence, referring to you in the third person and on occasion even taking liberty of speaking on your behalf, you wonder if your existence is readily differentiable from creatures of fiction (3)

At one point he compares himself to an African country; “like a bewildered African nation passing questions to its efficient leadership, I kept asking where are we going?” (84) This fragmented character of Askar symbolise the loss of a coherent nationalist narrative that would produce meaning and enable identification.

The geographical fragmentation of characters is reflected by immigrants who moved into Somalia from Ethiopia after the war for Ogaden broke out. These characters lose their homes hence are fragmented geographically. Represented by Karin, Misra, Askar, and Cusman, these immigrants further have no ability of speaking the Somali language hence integration into the Somali society is challenging to them. As a result, there are many languages spoken in Somalia simultaneously as opposed to the grand narrative that the Somalis as people

sharing the same geographical location and common language. Presence of multiple languages spoken simultaneously leads to a feeling that those that can speak pure Somali fortify their identity as Somalis in the ambitious nationalistic ideology that the protagonist, Askar has. It is supported by Uncle Hilaal who says that, “you are either a Somali or you aren’t” which is a statement he uses to classify the Somalis and the non-Somalis by the geographical region they hail from. Those from other regions of the greater Somali cannot be accorded full Somali status and he calls them “unpersons”. (175) Farah here seems to suggest that the grand narrative of cultural and linguistic homogeneity of the Somalis is not existent.

The Somali nation Farah posits is made up of many different people with different experiences, histories and languages. He does this by having Uncle Hilaal’s house allegorize a Somalia that accommodates multiplicity of cultures and languages other than a ‘totalizing’ single Somalia language. In this house, there is Uncle Hilaal and Salaado. Their home symbolizes Somalia as a country. There is Askar, who as an orphan becomes their surrogate son which symbolizes Somalia uniting with the troubled orphaned multifarious region of Ogaden. There is Misra who is an Ethiopian woman displaced geographically by wars until she finds herself in Mogadiscio and there is Cusman who is a Somalia from Tanzania. In this house their different experiences, histories and languages exist together with neither privileged over the other. This reinforces the concept of fragmentation and multiplicity in the Somali Nation.

The Ogaden region which is the birth place of Askar lacks a biological parentage. Ogaden was hived off from Somalia and placed under the administrative parentage of Ethiopia just like Askar is placed under care of an Ethiopian woman after his parents died. Ogaden is therefore a mental construct of the postcolonial cartographers rather than a natural construct. It can be likened to what Askar says about himself as not a child but a ‘creature of fiction.’

(3) What this means is that the *Maps* defining Ogaden are not the real so that the Ogaden just

like Askar can only be defined by the adoptive parents' identities. Therefore, Farah sustains the images of severed ties between parents and children by replacing Askar's biological parents with the guardians. His guardians are five in number (Misra, Qorrax, Aw-Adan, Uncle Hilaal and Salaado) just like the five territories of Somalia severed from each other during cartography all of them exhibit bodily fragmentations. This symbolizes the disintegration of Somalia society.

The idea that the integration of all the regions of Somalia would form one great nation is presented in *Maps* as ironical. It was based on mythical notion that the Somalis share a common language, ethnicity, religion and culture despite the fact that they live across different five regions. However, the merging of these regions so as to form a nation goes against the view above that the Somalis are homogenous. They don't need a common map to unite them!

3.3 Incestuous Marriages as a Metaphor of a Disintegrated Somali Nation

The Somali society through incestuous marriages refuses integration with other societies in Somalia to form one whole community. Like Misra tells Askar, "the fabric of the Somali society was basically incestuous and you had a glimpse into the mind of a Somali if you knew to whom he or she was related by blood or by marriage." (26) Incest is meant to promote the hegemony of Somali genealogy while preventing integration with people of other ethnicities in Somali.

In *Maps*, incest is seen when Abdullah, the wealthy man who had adopted Misra as a young girl takes fancy in her and forces her to become his wife. From a daughter, she now becomes his wife and Abdullah changes from being her father to her husband. Farah here offers incest as a symbol of female body invasion which can be compared to the invasion of the Somalia as a nation by various colonial powers.

As a surrogate mother to Askar, Misra impresses upon the young boy incestuous feelings by sleeping with him on the same bed despite Uncle Qorrax insisting that she let the boy be taken up by somebody else. She even offers sex to Uncle Qorrax so that she can be allowed to keep Askar to herself. At night when Uncle Qorrax or Aw-Adan has sex with Misra, Askar gets to know about it and gets so envious and jealous that he says, “I would cry more furiously and would wet myself in the enraged frenzy of a pervasive self-expression...” (41)

The envious feeling of committing incest with Misra are so pervading so that at one instance Askar says that ‘I would find myself somewhere between her opened legs this time as though I was a third leg.’ (24) The third leg here refers to the wooden leg that Aw-Adan would remove before he had sex with Misra as Askar observes; “I remember how fast the third leg (the wooden leg that is) was dropped and how fast another between his legs came to raise its head, jerkily, slowly and nervously...” (32) In addition, during these sexual orgies between Misra and Aw-Adan ‘the whole place drowned in the sighing endearments of Misra who called him “my man, my man, my man” (32) These are the same words that she uses to call Askar which consequently involves Askar into this incestuous act.

Incestuous echoes in this narrative express an ethnocentric image of the Somali society and its refusal to embrace multiplicity potentially provided by the neighbouring people. It also demonstrates the lack of political will by leaders of Somali who abuse their power by exploiting their subjects. Farah seems to suggest that by abusing their subjects, the leaders are committing figurative incest, consequently leading to divisions based on ethnicity.

3.4 Language of Characters as a Marker of Fragmentation

Language forms an important aspect of ethnic identity formation. It is therefore important to see how the Somali language is portrayed in *Maps* as fragmented contributing to the fragmentation of characters. In *Maps*, the ceremony of *mingis* which is held as a ritual to exorcise demons from a possessed person is not held in Somali language which shows that multiple languages are spoken in Somalia. “Silence. And the voice of the master of *mingis* ceremony singing right in the heart of Mogadiscio in a language definitely not Somali” — Hilaal says, “This act alone deserved a body of study and research work. The masters and mistresses of these ceremonies chant in languages that the spirits understand—and that language is not Somali. It is Boran.” (212) This shows that the Somali language is not adequate to contain a multicultural society. Farah alerts us to the difference and diversity of postmodernism against the metanarrative of a homogenous Somali language used to legitimise the formation of the Somali nation.

Linguistically, the Somalis are fragmented contrary to the notion of linguistic homogeneity advanced by people like Hilaal. Uncle Hilaal tells Askar that, “the Somali are homogeneous people; they are homogenous culturally speaking and speak the same language wherever they may be found.” (174) However, this is contrary as the Somali language varies depending on the region the speaker hails from as can be seen in Cusmaan who hails from Tanzania and speaks a different Somali compared to that of Somalis in Mogadiscio. Derrick Wright writes in “Parenting the Nation” that when Cusmaan is not speaking Swahili, “he uses a bastardised form of Somali.” (182) Uncle Hilaal goes further to clarify to Askar that there exist differences in the Somalis living in different territories of the greater Somalia. He tells him, “The Somalia in Ogaden, the Somali in Kenya, both because they lack what makes the self-strong and whole, are unpersons.” (175) These words by Uncle Hilaal show that linguistically and culturally, the Somalis are disintegrated.

The criteria that Uncle Hilaal uses to classify one as a Somali or not (the ability to speak the Somali language) does not benefit the real description of Somali society. In Mogadishu and Ogaden there are various languages spoken, instead of Somali as the self-sufficient language. There is Amharic, Oromo, and Arabic spoken alongside the Somali language. These languages bring in the multiplicity of culture rather than a totalizing single Somali language. Farah views the use of a homogenous language as a grand narrative that does not provide the relativity of postmodernism. According to Francois Lyotard, “the grand narrative should be done away with in preference to the plurality of mini-narratives that compete with each other replacing the totalitarianism of grand narrative.” (2) Uncle Hilaal further tells Askar; A Somali, said Uncle Hilaal, is a man; woman or child whose mother tongue is Somali. Here, mother tongue is very important. Not what one looks like [.....] (174)

However, this is not true since Misra, who has Ethiopian origins is not regarded as a Somali despite her good mastery of the Somali language. She is an Oromo woman living in Ogaden region which is predominantly occupied by Somalis. Although she is an Oromo woman, she speaks Amharic which is the official language in Ethiopia. Misra is significant in representing foreign occupation of Ogaden region showing that despite the fight for control of Ogaden by Somalia, it is a multicultural area not made up of only Somalis. She escapes from Ethiopia where she had been enslaved by an older man who had made her his concubine but rescues herself by killing the man in an excessive sexual orgy. Her position in the occupation of Ogaden has a double connotation. On one hand she is the guardian of the Ogaden region through her role in adopting and taking care of Askar who is a Somali child. On the other hand, she is the one being guarded through being taken over sexually by Uncle Qorrax.

Like Askar and the Ogaden region, Misra is orphaned at a young age. She is then misplaced from her home by a warrior who takes her to the south after a successful raid on their village in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia she is forced to speak Amharic which is the official language in

Ethiopia despite the Oromo's being the majority in Ethiopia. In Ogaden she has to speak in Somali which is the dominant language. She lives fragmentarily through a number of cultures: Oromo, Somalia and Amharic. Always, she has some missing parts of herself in these cultures so that she is not a unitary being.

As a representative of all these cultures Misra cannot be defined by one geographical area. She is emblematic of the cultural hybridity in Ogaden, hence her name exists in three languages. In Somali her name 'Misra' is an incomplete version of 'Misrat' which is an Oromo name. The origin of her name is Arabic. "...Misra is the Arabic name for 'Egypt' and the Somalis prefer it to their own corrupted form 'Massar', which also gives you the Somali word for 'headscarf.' (185) She has no single identity due to the fluid nature of her name. Misra's name means the 'foundation of the earth' as Askar explains. This has a connotation of a neutral ground that no one can claim its absolute ownership since it is occupied by diverse nationalities.

Uncle Hilaal defines a Somali as "a man, woman or child whose mother tongue is Somali." However, Misra's ability to articulate herself in fluent Somali does not qualify her for a Somali citizenship. This is demonstrated by Askar doubting if Misra will fit to be in Mogadiscio as Somali. "Is or will Misra be an unperson—if she comes to Mogadiscio?" (175) In another instance he is asking, "What must we do about Misra when she calls tomorrow?" (181). These doubts express the truth that Misra does not qualify for a Somali identity card and that she is fragmented despite the Somali-speaking criteria that Hilaal uses to categorise one as a Somali because of her Oromo origin.

3.5 Bodies of Fragmented Characters as an Allegory of Somaliness

The physical appearance of one's body is the basic assertion of our identity. Often times we are judged based on the basic features of our bodies and how we look like. In Farah's *Maps*

characters are easily identified as physically fragmented which is a way of Farah pointing out that Somali people are not whole but fragmented. He challenges the common notion that the Somali people are homogenous people by painting so many pictures of fractured bodies of his characters.

Fragmentation of characters is symptomatic of how a group of people struggles to pursue homogeneity of the Somalia society as a nation, thus imprinting the traces of this struggle on the bodies of the people. Imprinting here stands for the invasion, severing, impressing and fragmenting. Furthermore, fragmented bodies of the characters in *Maps* have been made to coincide with the disintegration of the idealised Somali national identity. Farah here suggests the splitting of the body hegemony and the powerlessness to effect any repair which leads to the awakening that the fragmentation of Somali society should be celebrated.

The splitting of the bodies of characters in comparison to the land mass can be seen in the stories of Askar and the Ogaden region. The birth of Askar which occurs during the war of Ogaden is also the loss of his mother at his birth. Some months before he was born, Askar's father had died in prison. "[...] your father who had died a few months before your birth in mysterious circumstances, in a prison for his ideals." (7) The death of his father and mother leaves Askar orphaned. In like manner, the Ogaden region is 'orphaned' when it is hived from the larger Somali and placed under Ethiopia's administration.

With the death of his father, Askar is adopted by Misra, an Oromo woman just like Ogaden is placed under the administration of Ethiopia. The juxtaposing of Ogaden's story and that of Askar in an allegorical equivalence foregrounds the idea of a fragmented Somali society, where they have been cut off from inhabiting same landmass. The biological father of Askar called Xamar is a Somali of Ogaden region, Askar too grows up in Ogaden under Misra's apron strings and later he goes to live with his uncle Hilaal and Salaado in Mogadiscio. He

comes out as having many influences; Somali--through living in Ogaden, Ethiopian—through living with Misra and westernised, through living with Uncle Hilaal and Salaado in Mogadiscio. These influences determine his multiple personality condition while they point out the physical fragmentation in form of the borders that he has to cross as he travels.

Askar always questions his birth which is portrayed as unusual. For example, he questions whether his mother had time to nurse him before she died or whether the blood marks found round his neck at his birth was a sign that his mother attempted to strangle him to death. “You wore on your head a hat of blood which made you look like a masked crown. And around your neck were finger-stains, perhaps your mothers.” (Nobody knows to this day whether she tried to kill you or no). (4) I suggest that this scenario of Askar questioning his birth allegorises a post-colonial nation that has been born out of struggles of colonialism while the incidence of Askar bearing blood marks around his neck allegorizes the attempt to hinder the coming to birth of Somalia Nation. The struggle for the Somalia nation to come to birth is hindered by handing over the region of Ogaden to Ethiopia. In a similar manner Askar is taken up by Misra for nurturing.

Askar allegorizes the Ogaden region while Misra allegorizes Ethiopia. Askar bonds strongly with Misra despite the fact that she is not his real mother. On the other hand, he bonds with Uncle Hilaal and Salaado who are his blood relatives living in Mogadiscio. This symbolises the relationship between Ethiopia and Ogaden as a mother and a child while Uncle Hilaal and Salaado represent the Somalia region. The allegory of the nation can be read from likening Misra who is a woman with land. It is further brought out by having Askar be adopted by Misra just like Ethiopia adopts the Ogaden region from Somalia.

Circumcision of Askar as ritual that would make him a ‘perfect man,’ concerns an irreversible form of severing his part of his body. It also marks his physical separation from

Misra. “What we must do one of these days is to have you circumcised, have you purified.”(89) This circumcision ‘makes him a man’ and he begins to compare his Somali adult maleness against the previous relationship between him and Misra.

What mattered, he told himself, was that now he was at last a man, that he was totally detached from his mother figure Misra, and weaned. In the process of looking for a substitute, he had found another –Somalia his mother country. (100)

He is given a calendar and a map after circumcision, which he uses to measure the distance and time between him and Misra. “Uncle had presented him with, just as he traced, on another mental chart, the uncoverable distance between Misra and himself.” (101) Before he was circumcised, Askar was inseparable from Misra but now they are apart. According to Jean Pierre Durix, “this particular map helps Askar to measure how much independence he has achieved and bear in mind what his origins are.” (4) His independence however, marks his fragmentation from Misra.

At uncle Qorrax’s compound, Askar lives a fragmented life together with Misra. He tells us; “my uncle decided to earmark a fenced mud with its separate entrance for our own use.... we had a life to live and a compound which was all our own Misra and I.” (28) Therefore, Askar does not have that physical interaction with his family members. He allows no interactions with anyone else but Misra and Karin. “Only Misra was allowed to enter my freehold space, the freehold territory which I had acquired for myself.” (29)

Askar gets separated from Misra physically the day he travels to Mogadiscio. His being in Mogadiscio opens his mind on issues affecting Somali and the Ogaden war. The distance between Askar in Mogadiscio and Misra in Kallafo is important for Askar to measure symbolically the progress of the Somalia army in Ogaden. Just like the Somalia military aims

at getting rid of Ethiopian influence on Ogaden so does Askar feel of getting rid of Misra. He has found another mother in Somalia, his country in place of Misra.

Physically, Misra is a fragmented character. When she calls on Askar at Mogadiscio, she is diagnosed with breast cancer. "... the tumour in Misra's left breast was malignant and that the breast would have to be removed. (198) Breast cancer is very frightening and it can lead to death if it is not arrested early. Therefore, it is devastating news and since 'no one told her this,' Salaado has to inform Askar about it in Italian so that Misra 'couldn't follow'. She is then admitted in hospital where her left breast is removed. As a mother, a breast is an important part of a body for maternal and sexual appearance. Not only the appearance but also it serves as an accessory reproductive organ. Therefore, Misra has to contend with this loss of an important part of her femininity.

Uncle Hilaal and Salaado as foster parents of Askar, are representative of the fragmented Somalia republic seeking to complete itself by taking in the motherless child of Ogaden. They are fragmented themselves by the lack of a child in their marriage so the coming of Askar to Mogadiscio to live with Hilaal and Salaado plays the role of bringing them to a wholeness. It is seen in Hilaal telling Askar, "We have you now and we have no need for babies of our own flesh and blood." (151) Physically, they are also fragmented. Salaado had hysterectomy as Hilaal describes it to Askar. "A most obligatory, painful operation for Salaado. You probably won't know what ovaries are. That's what the doctors removed." (150) Hilaal too has undergone vasectomy out of his will. It is a preventive measure against siring children out of wedlock since he is under pressure from his parents to get another wife who can bear him children. Besides he knows that 'it is not all that simple, to be truthful.' (151)

Aw-Adan who is Askar's Koranic teacher has his leg amputated although we are not informed of how it came to be. He uses a wooden leg to walk. He is a foster parent of Askar in the sense that he provides spiritual nourishment to the young boy and teaches him how to write too. Askar is introduced to Aw-Adan by his Uncle, Qorrax who paid for his tuition. "I bring to you, this blessed morning, this here my brother's son, whose name is Askar." (84) Aw-Adan's body with a missing leg is metaphorical of the Somali Nation without the Ogaden region which was hived off and placed under Ethiopia.

In *Maps*, fragmented bodies are spaces where love among friends becomes fractured. Karin and Misra while living in Kallafo and before the war broke up were very good friends. They would help each other out as neighbours and good friends. One time when Misra is suffering from menstrual pain, she places Askar under the care of Karin. To Karin, Askar was like a grandchild and she took care of him with passion. Likewise, 'when Karin was indisposed, Misra looked after the old man'- Karin's husband. (17) Among the three is a tight bond of friendship. Even to Askar, Karin, is so close so that she indulges him 'in a way which didn't meet Misra's patent of approval.' (17) For example, she explains to Askar in details the process of menstrual cycle. "It brings with it lots of pain and suffering [...] only women of certain age have their periods, women between the ages of twelve and let's say fifty. Not men. And definitely not boys." Therefore, through Karin Askar gets to understand the pains that women go through and he is empathetic with Misra as his mother.

However, the friendship among the three friends (Askar, Karin, Misra) disintegrates after allegations that Misra was a traitor. Misra was accused of betraying the Somali forces yet her accusers did not have the facts about what happened. No one knows the truth. Karin, Misra's long-time friend brings this story of betrayal to Askar believing it to be true. She tells Askar how Misra had a relationship with an Ethiopian soldier which suggestively led her to betray the Somalis. "Misra had fallen in love with a man from the enemy camp and she had

betrayed.” (184) Misra is therefore labelled a traitor and Askar, Karin and the whole community turn against her. She is in pain that Askar of all the people can doubt her and, in the process, strain their relationship. “You could sense that she had moved into that undefined space between smile and a cry” (220) Askar too is angry at Misra and believes that she betrayed the Somali soldiers. His ‘cosmos has been made to disintegrate and Misra has betrayed.’ (180) The fragmented, emotional and the physical states of Misra, Askar and Karin reflects a totalizing force of believing in only one side of a story. One of the conspicuous traits of postmodern literature is the flaunting of multiplicity of truths. The idea that the truth is one is extinct. There can be more than one truth and truth can be relative. The danger of one truth here tears them apart despite their close relationship. At the same time, it reflects the contemporary anxieties, the insecurities, and the non-belongingness to the country by the fragmented Somali society.

To make the picture of physical fragmentation of the characters complete, I shall talk about Uncle Qorrax. He is Askar’s paternal uncle and his guardian in Kallafo after his parents died. Uncle Qorrax has very many wives since he has the habit of divorcing and marrying ‘a big number of them that you lost count of how many there were at any given time’ (13) To ensure that he does not get married again, and as measure of safe guarding her position as his last wife, Shahrawello lances the fingers of Uncle Qorrax to exact blood for a ritual. This way he stays married to her and does not bring in another wife. Shahrawello is a nickname which Askar accords Uncle Qorrax’s wife whom he compares to Sheherezade of the *Thousand and One Night*. “Until one day a woman you nicknamed Shahrawello arrived on the scene and she stayed (as Sheherezade of the *Thousand and One Night* did).” (13) In this allusion to *Thousand and One Night*, Scheherezade manages to delay her death by disrupting her captors with more and more stories. Similarly, Shahrawello manages to tame Uncle Qorrax by performing blood-letting on him thus she becomes indispensable.

The procedure of bloodletting on Uncle Qorrax is significant in keeping him occupied and detached from the daily happenings of his household. Hence, he does not beat his wives or his children. Instead Shahrawello made him lie on the mat on the floor and as people said, so that ‘she could humiliate him’ as she carried on with the procedure:

Flames, tumblers used razor blades—she gave him the works.
Lethargic and drained of blood, he would remain on his back, at the
same spot for hours. From then on, he beat his wives less often. From
then on, he bullied his children less frequently. And this was the
amazing thing. (107)

For Shahrawello, she wins through this fragmentation done on Uncle Qorrax by ensuring that her status as his wife is maintained. For Qorrax, these cuts done by Shahrawello leaves him in a fragmented form which projects how the changes to the bodies and the ideologies of the characters are an emblem of the changes effected on the cartography of the Somali Nation.

Misra is alarmed by the accusation that she betrayed the Somali forces fighting in Mogadiscio. When she is admitted in hospital, she is worried that the nurse attending to her “might report on her or poison her food or mix wrongly but deliberately (although it might appear innocently) all her medicines so she would take them and die of the poisonous mixture.” (219) Furthermore, she is suspicious that the woman she sees the nurse talking amicably to, is a relative of ‘a man admitted in an adjacent ward, a man without his manhood for a bomb had blown off his testicles’ in the war for Ogaden. (219) She feels so insecure in the hospital that she asks Askar to be vigilant and fight for her if need arises.

Indeed, Misra is abducted from the hospital, goes missing for several days until her body is found on the shores with her heart taken out in a manner suggesting a ritual murder. Hilaal tells Askar;

The heart was missing. For example [.....] we suspect they performed a ritual murder on her body, perhaps we are wrong. We haven't the evidence. But the removal her heart took place before she was tossed into the ocean—already dead. That is if we take our suspicions very seriously. (252)

This quote well illustrates the fragmentation meted on Misra's body. The heart is an important part of in a human's body being associated with life and love, since it pumps blood in the body. No wonder Hilaal and Salaado suspect foul play in Misra's murder as ritual oriented from that act of removing her heart. Michelle Lynn brown in "Bleeding for the Mother (Land)," looks at this death of Misra as a "metaphor for Somalia's long struggle for rebirth as a healthy postcolonial nation." (127) This is true for a narrative that show bodily destabilised selves, however for Misra, she in addition symbolises a fragmented Somali society that cannot be brought to unity merely by *Maps*. The dismembered body of Misra just like that of the Somali nation can only be a heartless body, an object.

The bodily truncations of Misra are emblematic of the dismemberment and the fragmentation of the Horn of Africa. To dismember the mother is to dismember the nation. Jean Piere Durix in "Re-Mapping Motherland," says "the mother figure and the motherland are superimposed in a metaphorical pattern of fragmentation and mutilation." (4) The Somali people lack the unity through truncations of their geographical map and through hybridity of culture provided by foreigners like Misra. Therefore, as a fragmented character Misra does not represent the idealistic picture of Somalia but the real picture of Somalia people which she paradoxically embodies with the plurality of her single fragmented body. However, this hybridity from various ethnicities living together is under threat of destruction by a war fuelled by nationalistic ideologies. This can be seen in forewarning Misra gives Askar, who harbours these nationalistic ideas; "one day," she prophesied, speaking into that void of a future in

which she hoped we could meet again, “you will identify yourself with your people and identify me out of your community. Who knows, you might even kill me to make your peoples dream become a tangible reality.” (99) It comes to pass as seen in two dream sequences where Askar sees a soldier standing over a wounded woman with a blood-stained knife then imagines himself as a fish feeding on Misra’s blood. These two dreams, although they are fragments, are evidence that Askar had a hand in Misra’s death and mutilation consequently killing the hybridity of ethnicity in Ogaden.

In addition, Misra embodies the image of the Ogaden region that she is putatively said to have betrayed. The heart of Ogaden is torn out by war just like her heart is removed and her body mutilated at her death. Through her death Farah seems to posit figuratively that war is destructive and tears the fabric of unity in a country in an irreparable way. The intended defenders of Ogaden are raping the Ogaden through war just like Misra is raped by her attackers who accuse her of betrayal.

Misra just like the fragmented *Maps* of the Horn of Africa which she symbolically embodies, is fragmented in terms of her identity. On one hand she is the heroic mother of Askar. Heroic, for bringing him up yet he is not her real child. In addition, the mutilation she suffers before her death and her being thrown into the ocean to be washed away signifies a victimised nation. On the other hand, she is labelled a betrayer and an enemy of the nation. At this point it is not clear what she stands for in reality since these equivocating descriptions all define her.

In an insidious process of loss and pain, Askar, his foster parents and other characters have suffered bodily fragmentations. Through these bodily truncations, Farah has symbolically provided us with an insight to the rifts and cracks within the Somali subjects therefore, invoking the larger picture of a society that is broken rather than whole. The images of

fragmented characters subvert the idea of unity or homogeneity of the Somalis. They call into question the conventionally constructed assumptions about the Somali subjects as homogenous. Where the geographical fracturing is concerned, the question of whether the fractures can be repossessed and controlled is put into question. In postmodern fiction, that which is conventional is subverted as Linda Hutcheon puts it that postmodern texts, “denaturize some of the dominant features of our ways of life.” (2) In Nuruddin Farah’s *Maps*, fragmented bodies serve to subvert the idea of homogeneity of the Somali society.

3.6 The Fragmented Family as Metaphor of the Somali Nation

The family is the basic model of a nation. It is therefore important to explore how it has been portrayed as fragmented in *Maps* and its significance. Several families have been brought out as disintegrated. They include; Askar’s, Hilaal’s, Misra’s Karin’s, and Qorrax’s.

Uncle Hilaal and Salaado are comfortable with their life as a family although their marriage lacks children. They help each other with chores regardless of what people think of them. For example, Uncle Hilaal cooks while Salaado drives the car. However, they remain unacceptable to the people who talk behind their back since;

Society doesn’t approve of a man who loves a woman who doesn’t bear him children, a woman who doesn’t cook his food, mind his home wash his under things. A woman who sits behind the wheel of a car driving when the man is the passenger. (151)

Not only is Uncle Hilaal unacceptable to the people but also to his family members who end up cutting ties with him. He is a castaway as he tells Askar; “My relations have boycotted me on account of my obstinate position. So, whenever you see someone visit us, you can be sure that this person is either a good friend of ours or a relation of Salaados.” (151) Therefore, they end up fragmented from the society and their family due to their unacceptable lifestyle.

The relationship between Armadio and Karin is one of detachment and fragmentation although they are a man and a wife. Between them is a big gap, an age difference of many years for 'she married him when very young.' (74) The marriage process itself breaks away from the conventional Somali marriage ceremony. It was casual and business-like. 'He came one morning and made a down payment for her' (74) and he disappeared, disconnecting physically from her. He comes, picks her on his shoulders and takes her away with him without formalities, weddings and parental blessings. He didn't like the formalities and he was secretive too since he does not give his real name even to Karin. He only gave his nickname as Armadio and he said very little. Fragmentation is here therefore defined by the space of silence between them in their relationship.

Physically Karin is separated from Armadio when he goes away now and then. To add to the silence, he does not say where he disappears to. He only says, "I have a job to do". (74) One time he disappears for so long but after giving Karin some instructions to execute if he fails to come back before the rains. She was to sell the house and buy a small one. Also, she was to take children to school with the money he had left with her and send them to Mogadishu where, 'it was safe to be a Somali, and be proud of it, and where they would join cells from which to launch spearheads to open the way for a united Somalia.'(75) This, she does, for Armadio to come back eventually suffering from a spinal condition obtained in Ethiopian cells. He was a member of a cell of WLF which was fighting for Somali irredentism. He does not say much but he has a picture of Ernest Bevin which he hangs above his head where he could see it as he lies on the mattress all the time. He dies later, separating from Karin this time not physically but forever. His death is peaceful but with a stain of blood appearing and remaining on his mouth. This can be seen as a metaphor of the pain, the difficulty and the torture that the Somali people go through by leaving behind the dreams of the unification of all the Somali regions.

Uncle Qorrax is fragmented from his family and the society through his pursuit of self-interests. This is when the Ogaden region is taken over by the Ethiopian Forces through the help of Soviet Forces and a new Ethiopian governor is appointed. He starts warming up to the new governor, befriending him so that he is regarded as ‘a traitor’ as Karin tells Askar, “He is very chummy with the newly appointed governor, he is often with him. A traitor, no doubt about it. He always was.” (183) Apart from being disowned by the society for betraying them, he is further disconnected from his family through the death of his three sons and through the death of Shahrawello who Karin says, ‘she died, poor thing leaving behind her a pool of blood, no more. She cut her throat.’ (183) The act of betraying the community leads to the loss of his family. Farah here presents fragmentation of the characters as stemming from war which strongly represents the collective fragmentation experienced in the pursuit for Somali unification.

3.7 A Character’s Sense of Self as Fragmented

In the light of the mirror stage concept in Lacanian psychoanalysis and the various ways it has been incorporated in *Maps*, the concept of fragmented sense of self is important for this discussion. In *Maps* this concept is applicable to Askar. As he struggles to identify himself through his growth and development process, he cannot help but look for these changes in the mirror.

You felt there was something unfinished about you as though you had made yourself in such haste you had roughened your features unnecessarily. You had the feeling, however that your face fitted you extraordinarily and the identity of your newer self? It was like a dot in the distance which assumed features you could identify now becoming a man, now a woman—or even the animal, your perceptions of the

new self-altering with the distance or the nearness of the spot of consciousness. Then the mirror vanished from right in front of you and the wall which had been there replaced it. (63)

As I observed above that the mirror stage is the moment of self-recognition, Askar's engagement with the mirror is important for self-recognition. He is split at recognising himself through the mirror and longs for the Lacanian moment of identification in which he is able to identify himself as an assertive individual rather than an animal. Farah here uses the mirror to as a way of pointing out the fractured sense of self of Askar, as a symptom of displacement and fragmentation of the postcolonial Somalia subjects.

Apart from the mirror stage concept that portrays Askar as fractured, he straddles across other boundaries which define him as a multiple character. Through menstruation he crosses the boundary of his sex as a male. This happens on the morning that he wakes up and finds blood on his groin. On querying about it from Misra she tells him that, "you have begun to menstruate." (110) He also crosses the ontological boundary when he is presented as a child and at the same time as an unusual child, an epic child. This can be seen in a letter that Uncle Hilaal writes to him where he acknowledges that the birth of Askar was unusual since he, "stared at Misra when she found you and Arla my sister..." (21) He goes further to compare him to Sunjata and Mwendo who are heroes in African epics. [.....] "do you share your temperaments with the likes of Sunjata and or Mwendo, both being characters in African epics?" [.....] "Are you or are you not an epic child of the modern times?" (22) Askar is here presented as a multiple character since he can occupy various world territories.

The menstruation that Askar undergoes is symptomatic of the fusion between him and his adoptive mother Misra. It is in support of Misra and in response to Askar she wonders whether it would last. "The question is: will you have the monthly curse as we women do or

will yours be as rare as the male fowl's egg?" (110) This incidence underlines Askar's doubt about his own gender. Askar corresponds to Misra's map just like the Somali map corresponds to the map of greater Somali. However, these are just mental constructs.

Apart from the overwhelming physical present of Misra in Askar's life which is the cause of his 'menstruation,' Askar also has a feeling that there is a woman inside him. "... she "lived" in him who had survived her, she who claimed to be his guide when everyone else failed him." (110) The woman is Askar's mother who he feels a psychological continuity and connectedness. Askar lacks the single unified consciousness while his bodily continuity and unity is intact. It is similar to what F. Moolla in "The Individual, the Novel and the Idea of Home" observes about Askar as representing "the individual or disengaged disembodied self." He is fragmented psychologically by the feeling of his mother living inside him.

Askar's identity perception is fragmented. He sees within himself very many Askars. "for a long time, yourselves argued with one another. Each offering counter arguments..." (58) he is referred here as 'yourselves' which foregrounds his confusion on who he is. He doubts everything. Even he doubts whether his real father was Xamar, who died in the war for Ogaden, or it is uncle Qorrax. He suspects uncle Qorrax to have raped his mother so that he was born.

After being issued with an identity card, Askar, questions the ability of the passport picture to capture the identity of an individual fully. One cannot tell all the details of an individual from just looking at a passport photo since it reflects only a fragment of an individual's body. Askar wonders, "Are we merely faces? I mean are faces the keys to our identity? What of a man like Aw-Adan, with a wooden leg—would you know it from a photograph?" (172) Askar is even cynical when receiving the identity card from Uncle Hilaal. He says, from the way he gives it to me you could see, you would have thought he was entrusting me a brand-

new life” (171) He is unable to come to terms with the new identity which has no representation of Misra in it. His past with Misra and his present in Mogadiscio both contribute to the formation of his identity and puts him at a crossroad in being loyal to Misra or Somalia. He is interested in truth represented in a paper bearing his identity, the reality of his body, his rapport with Misra and his country Somalia. All these fragments make him.

Askar, was severed from a unified natural Somali experience through his birth. Hence, he is ambitious to find unity in himself by pursuing a homogenous Somali nation. This means doing away with Misra. However, he is too attached to her even when she is assassinated, he falls sick. He does not attend her burial since he cannot bear witness as the connection with Misra is destroyed despite his strong ambition of one cultural identity. Therefore, the intricate bond between Askar and Misra underscores the plurality of Somali society. Farah therefore questions the rationale of having boundaries based on ethnicity. Boundaries are metanarratives which according to Lynda Hutcheon are “existing orthodoxies” which postmodernism puts into question. Like Jacqueline Bardorff argues, Farah “refuses to privilege either nation or the ethnicity.” (2) Askar therefore, has to accept one fragmented Somalia society which he himself symbolises.

3.8 Allegory of the Mother as a Fragmented Nation

In *Maps* motherhood through characters is presented as fragmented from the grand narrative that motherhood is biological. As postmodernists assert, the grand narrative is dead as it cannot contain us all. Lyotard calls it “an incredulity towards metanarratives” (24). In *Maps* the grand narrative of motherhood is fractured by having Misra adopt Askar whom she finds alone beside his dead mother, Arla. This is despite the fact that she is an Ethiopian while Askar is of Somali origin. Later he is adopted by Uncle Hilaal and Salaado who do it to save Askar from the dangers of the war in Ogaden.

Motherhood is also fractured and disconnected from the biological model through Uncle Hilaal who acts as a 'mother' to Askar, Salaado and Misra. To Askar and Misra, Hilaal is their de facto mother by adopting them. This is despite the fact that Misra is the foster mother of Askar ever since he was a small boy. Uncle Hilaal adopts Misra so that he can facilitate her citizenship in Somalia and to save her from the effects of Ogaden war. Thus, he is the mother figure of them all as their host in Mogadishu. The second adoption of Askar by Uncle Hilaal though can be compared to the return of the Ogaden region Somalia which is the primary concern of many Somalis like Askar who view Somali without Ogaden as a mutilated motherland. Thus, Askar draws the map of Somalia and marks the Ogaden region as "Western Somalia." (227) He feels that it is part of Somalia rather than Ethiopia. Farah's representation of these many adoptions projects the fragmentation of Somali nation through subsequent adoption of her territories by her neighbouring states. It is also a representation of the Somali society as fragmented contrary to the notion of its solidarity through common genealogy.

Misra's sexual relationship is presented as fragmented. She has sex liaisons with many men so that she does not settle with any of them. Therefore, none of these men can claim ownership of her for himself alone. She is a symbol of neutrality like the piece of land of Ogaden that is inhabited by people of various ethnicities. As a slave of Uncle Qorrax, she has a way with him sexually several times. He used to visit her at night and 'knock on the small window of our room after midnight and Misra would get out of bed and wash and prepare for a second knock. At times she would open the door and he would enter and make love to her on the floor or she would follow him to another place.' (40) Before she came to Uncle Qorrax's house hold, she had been taken in by an old man as concubine in Ethiopia but she killed him before she fled to Ogaden. At the same time, she is in a sexual relationship with Aw-Adan who was her teacher and Askar's teacher as well. Misra guards this secret from the

two men well that only Askar knows about it. When Askar meets them at Aw-Adan's Koranic school, he says, "... I knew that I knew something about both of them—things that neither knew about the other." (84) Apart from these men, she is into a sexual relationship with another man from Ethiopia. He is a "dashing, handsome, young Ethiopian officer in charge of security." (184) Misra's sexual liaisons with all these men, is symptomatic of various ethnicities occupying the Somali Nation where none can claim the region to themselves alone. Somali nation is a shared entity.

Despite her sexual liaisons with various men, Misra does not 'come to birth' to her own real child. She fails through numerous forced abortions that she undergoes in the hands of Aw-Adan and Uncle Qorrax. When she begets a child, it dies at a tender age despite it being "fatherless" too. We are told:

She had had a fatherless child herself and the child had died a few months before you were born. She was sad and she had to feed you on a bottle; she was sad she couldn't suckle you, offer you her own milk, her soul. Her own child had only been eighteen months when he died and she had only weaned him. (9)

This quote shows that part of Misra is broken up by the death of her child. Despite getting full custody of Askar, she does not come to unification as a mother. Apart from being broken by this death of her child, she cannot give all of herself into raising Askar who is not her real child. Like when she tries to breast feed him, he 'would turn away and refuse to be suckled and she would cry and cry and be miserable.' (9) This indicates that her adoptive mother role to Askar does not bring unification and fulfilment to her as it would if he were her real child.

It not only the death of her child, at eighteen months, that denies Misra the unification as a mother but the several abortions she undergoes from the sexual escapades with Uncle Qorrax.

“They made her take concoctions which among other things included the broth of roots and shrubs which were known to have abortifacient powers.” (53) Neither Aw-Adan nor Uncle Qorrax wants to take responsibility so Misra is made to abort. Aw-Adan threatens that he won’t marry Misra while Uncle Qorrax brings a calendar to Misra so that she can keep count on her safe days to have sex with him. “... a calendar was brought into the compound and when circles in green were neatly drawn round the safe days and nights.” (31) Thus, the abortion ensures that Misra does not become a mother to her own child.

3.9 Summary

Farah uses fragmented characters not merely on a fanciful impulse. He uses this strategy to promote a multiple view into the Somali subject instead of the single solid view. Through a postmodernist structure he manages to shape his work in a way that raises the plight of the Somali subject as one that is fragmented rather than unified. The postmodern art provides spaces where the fragments do not become whole; hence they are able to find meaning on their own. It is unlike the ‘Greater Somali’ ideology which wants to consume the fragments in order to create a totalizing, homogenous nation. In fragmented bodies, the ‘whole’ does not swallow the parts into itself but embraces fragmentation.

These images of fragmentation speak not only of a disjointed self but of a broken postmodern society that cannot be corrected by conventional assumptions of homogenous identity. Bodies in postmodern fiction are spaces of resistance and where they come out as broken, they suggest the resistance to totalizing ideologies and narratives. In *Maps* they resist the totalizing narrative of a homogenous Somali state. This is why Askar does not try to impose a structure on his story at the end. He tells it without a prescribed form or shape ‘allowing for his different personae to act as judge, as audience and as witness.’(259)

In *Maps* Farah emphasises on the postmodern way of embracing multiplicity through the recreation of narratives from metaphors of fragmented bodies of the characters as I discussed above. This underscores the diverse cultural experiences in Somalia as opposed to the mythical notion of homogeneity in Somali culture. The fragmented bodies of the characters tell the realities of the nation just like Moolla says in “The Individual the Novel and the Idea of Home,” ‘the fate of the protagonist is linked to the fate of the nation.’ (143) The reality of Somalia is the fractions of its society. The disintegrations in this society coincide with a fragmented geographical area. *Maps* therefore celebrate an adoption of a multinational state instead of adopting the ideal of a Somali nation-state which would preserve the domination of the Somali folk over other ethnic minorities.

CHAPTER FOUR

A FRAGMENTED POINT OF VIEW IN *MAPS* AS AN ALLEGORY OF SOMALI NATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is about the fragmented narrator point of view in *Maps*. The point of view in *Maps* is fragmented. It changes from the first, to the second limited position, to third person omniscient. I will first identify the narrator in *Maps*. Secondly, I will trace how the story is told using the three points of views and thirdly I will establish a correlation between the fragmented point view and the fragmented narrator. I will then demonstrate that the narrator is fragmented because he is unable to come to terms with what already exists as a disintegrated Somali Nation. I will also demonstrate how the shifting narrative voices bring the plurality of truths by providing a fragmented narrative which is contesting the totalization of the Somali Nation.

4.2 Askar: The Face of a Disintegrated Narrator in *Maps*

In *Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative*, Manfred Jahn defines the narrator as the “speaker or the ‘voice’ of the narrative discourse as the agent who establishes communicative contact with an addressee (the ‘narratee’), who manages the exposition, who decides what is to be told, how it is to be told (especially from the point of view, and in what sequence) and what is to be left out.” (3.1.1) According to Chatman, ‘narrators can be defined according to the narrative level they belong, their participation in the stories, the degree of perceptibility of their roles and their reliability.’ (213) These are the levels that Kenan calls ‘heterodiegetic’ and ‘homodiegetic.’ However, these terms were suggested earlier by Genette.

Homodiegetic narrator, Kennan explains, refers to a character in the story. As a participant in the narrative the narrator is identified as the I-protagonist- the first-person narrator. However as Keen argues, ‘the use of the pronoun alone does not make a first-person narration. Instead the first person narration or self-narration, indicate those narratives in which the narrator is also a character where the narrator and characters coexist in the story world and the narrator refers to himself or herself as I.’ (36) Heterodiegetic narrator refers to a narrator outside the story’s level of action like a third person narrator.

According to the above definitions, I can therefore assert that the narrator is the voice of the narrative. An author makes a choice on the voice to use in the narrative. In *Maps*, Farah uses a combination of the first, the second and the third narrative voices alternating chapter by chapter in a controlled pattern. For example; chapter one, four, seven, and ten are told using the ‘You’ narrative voice; chapter two, five, eight and eleven are narrated using the ‘I’ narrative voice; chapter three, six, nine and twelve are narrated using the ‘He’ narrative voice. In the interlude segment all the three narrative voices are used. These voices however belong to one character—Askar as seen at the end of the narrative. Askar is thus, the homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrator in *Maps*.

4.3 Voices of a Nation: First and Second Narrative Voices in *Maps*

As I have asserted above, the story in *Maps* is told by Askar, who is the protagonist, in three different narrative voices. These different voices take turn to tell the same story--the story of Askar and Misra who is his foster mother. It is after Misra is murdered by unknown people and Askar is arrested on suspicion of having taken part in her death. On being interrogated by the police officers, Askar gives an account of his story and Misra. He tells it again in court as testimony and lastly, he tells it to himself.

And that is how it began—the story of (Misra/Misrat/ Masarat and) Askar. First, he told it plainly and without embellishment, answering the police officer’s questions; then he told it to men in gowns, men resembling ravens with white skulls [...] in the process, he became the defendant. He was at one and the same time, the plaintiff and the juror. Finally, allowing for his different personae to act as a judge, as audience and as witness, Askar told it to himself. (259)

In this story that Askar tells, the different narrative voices interrogate each other bringing out an identity crisis which he faces as the narrator.

Fragmentation of the narrative voices into the second person, first person and third person narrative voice is prompted by the charges of Misra’s murder levelled against Askar. As a conventional wisdom, he has to persuade the jury that he is innocent. But since he is a suspect, the first-person narrative voice loses credibility to us and the judge, thus it has to be aided by the second, and the third narrative voice. In the end we have a puddle of contradicting narrative voices as they testify for and against Askar. However, the judge needs them to arrive at a judicious ruling.

The telling and retelling of this narrative ensues as Askar’s voice shifts continually from the second, first and third person. Ironically, there are no findings at the end, no judgement either but interrogations. It is not an investigation on murder as it seems at face value but an inquiry on the identity of Askar at an individual level. Askar suffers identity crisis throughout the narrative so that even when he is arrested by the officers at the end of the novel, they are unsure of what name to call him as seen when they ask him about his name. ‘Which of you, “answers to the name Askar?”’ This question suggests that not only are the officers unsure of his name but Askar too does not know who he is. If they were sure they would have asked,

‘who is Askar?’ In fact, we are even told that he answered them ‘since there was no time to indulge in metaphysical evasions, no time to consider the rhetorical aspects of one’s answering to a name.’ (258) This signals an identity under interrogation.

The narrative voice ‘You’ starts this conversation in the novel bringing out the inner depth of Askar’s identity crisis. Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, argues that ‘the efforts to use the second person have never been successful, but it is astonishing to see how little real difference this choice makes’ (150) One of the differences this second narrative voice makes in *Maps*, is that it draws us into slight sense of detachment while revealing to us the complexity that defines Askar’s identity crisis. ‘Yes. You are a question to yourself. It is true. You have become a question to all those who meet you, those who know you, those who have dealings with you’ (3) The ‘You’ here addresses the Askar, who is the protagonist in the narrative and by calling him ‘a question to himself’ we are called in to a forewarning, that we should not trust what the ‘I’ narrative voice says about himself. For example, when Askar thinks that his birth was unusual so he is an epic child, we should not trust him according to the ‘you’ narrative voice. A person who is an enigma to himself cannot really tell a reliable story about himself. This puts the ‘You’ narrative voice into a contradiction with the ‘I’.

There is a counterpoint between the ‘You’ narrative voice and the ‘I’ narrative voice throwing us into a dilemma on the voice that is in control and which voice to trust as telling truth. For example, when the You tells Askar, ‘To Misra you existed first and foremost in the weird stare ; you were, to her, your eyes, which once they found her , focussed on her guilt—herself. (7) This is the time that Misra found Askar shortly after he was born and the first thing that she noticed about Askar was his ‘weird stare’ according to the ‘You’ narrative voice. However, Askar in the first narrative voice disputes that he existed to Misra in his stare. ‘Misra never said to me that I existed for only in my look. What she said was that she could see in my stare an itch of intelligence—that’s all.’ (23) In addition, this stare according

to the 'I' narrative voice, pleased Misra as 'I could meet death face to face and I could outstare the archangel of death.' (23) This contradicts the 'you' narrative voice which says that the weird stare saw Misra as, 'miserable woman, with no child and no friends. (7) These two voices ventures into the same issue but they don't agree suggesting the postmodern thinking like Hutcheon puts it across that, 'there are only truths in plural and never one truth.' (109) In retrospect, we are forced to reassess the flexibility of the perception and interrogate the reliability of the truths presented by the two narrative voices.

Through the 'I' narrative voice, Askar shows that he is confused by the uncertainty surrounding his existence, hence he returns to the story of his birth to tie everything together. He tells the story of his birth with a claim that he 'was present at his birth.' Although he is narrating about his experiences, which he must remember least, his narration about his birth is subjective and unreliable because it is not possible for him to remember whatever happened when he was that young. For example, he says;

.... I know no birth like mine. The hour of my birth, the zodiac reading, the place of birth, the position of the stars, my mother's death after she had given birth to me my father's dying a day before I as born—do each contribute, in small ways, towards turning the act of my birth into a unique event? (24)

As seen in the excerpt Askar considers himself an unusual kid due to the mystery surrounding his birth. The first-person narration brings us closer to Askar after the distance experienced in the second narrative voice, at the start of the narrative, through the innocence and the unknowingness of childhood surrounding his narration in the first-person narrative voice. However, this first narrative voice is the unreliable narration of events and the fragmentation of the narrative. It is in line with what Rimmon-kenan says that, 'the narrator's limited

knowledge, his personal involvement and his problematic value scheme' are the main causes of unreliability. (100) In this respect, the first narrative voice is biased in presenting facts which problematizes the very likelihood of realizing a single and reliable truth.

Farah has to deliberately alternate the first-person narrative voice with the second person narrative voice to sabotage the credibility of the 'I' narrative voice. For example, the 'You' start questioning the uncertainty in the account that the 'I' gives concerning his birth.

'All is doubt. Are you or are you not an epic child of the modern times? Do we know what the weather was like the moment you were born? Yes, we do. Your mother in her scrawls, tells us that the sky was dark with clouds and that a heavy storm broke on her head as she fainted with the pains of labour.... But you didn't take shorter than a month to be conceived and born, or seven hundred years....no eclipse of the moon or the sun. (22)

Here Farah weaves in the second person narrative voice to distort the validity of the claims that that the 'I' made. For example, the 'I' talks of the position of the stars in the sky at his birth as seen in the excerpt while the 'You' talks of a dark sky and a heavy storm. In reality, there cannot be stars in the sky while there is a storm and vice versa. This builds on to the dispute between the two narrative voices that Askar is an epic child. For the case of the death of his mother and father, it is true and it brings equal amount of evidence whilst for the other events the evidence is lacking. Consequently, the truth remains uncertain in line with what Hutcheon says that, 'that the real exist (and existed) but our understanding of it is always conditioned by discourses, by our different ways of talking about it.' (157) Farah here presents the versatility of truth by presenting it from two points of views.

Bare descriptions by the first narrative voice leave the validity of the testimonies up to own opinions. This is because of the limitation shrouded by the young age of Askar and unknowingness of the events hence we get information as fragments only. As Manfred Jahn explains, the first-person narrative voices face certain limitations:

Epistemologically..., first-person narrators are restricted to ordinary human limitations...they cannot be in two place at the same time, they don't know what will happen in the future, they cannot (under ordinary circumstance) narrate the story of their own death, and they can never know for certain what other characters think or thought (the 'other minds' problem). (3.3.2.)

This kind of limitation can be seen when Askar is trying further to join the dots about his birth. "I was dirty, yes; I was nameless, yes; but I existed the second she touched me. Did I stare at her? I do not know" (25) Here we find how the first narrative voice limits the possibility of knowing the truth. Askar as the first-person narrator can only rely on what he hears from others, like Misra who was there before him. He can only be certain of what he sees and hears first hand. At the end we do not know whether to trust Misra or not. Thus, the first narrative voice remains fragmented.

The shift from the second narrative voice to the first narrative voice in *Maps* is aimed at providing answers raised by the 'You' narrative voice in the first place. The 'You' narrative voice questions the 'I' with an expectation for a rejoinder either disputing or affirming the allegations. For example, the 'You' tells how Askar valued bodily contact with Misra;

When agitated you stretched out your hands in front of you like a blind man in search of landmarks and if you touched someone other

than Misra, you burst instantly into the wildest and most furious convulsive cry. (6)

When the narrative voice shifts to the first narrative voice, Askar affirms this telling us about the warmth between his body and Misra's. "... touching, oozing, and sweating together—I naked and she not—and the rubbing together of the bodies producing itch irritations ..." (78) Through this interrogation, a definable distinction between the first voice and the second voice is established—one is questioning while the other is answering. In addition, it helps to establish the position of the first-person narrative voice from the answers it gives.

A similar interrogation between the first and the second narrative voice is seen when the issue of Askar's eyes is brought up by the 'You' narrative voice which alleges that Askar has an unusual stare. At his birth Askar is said to have seen Misra as a miserable woman through his weird stare while Aw-Adan described it as 'wicked and satanic.' Misra calls it 'adulted' (11) in defence of Askar. The first narrative voice comes in to confirm this and adds that it caused trouble to Askar with Aw-Adan. This happens when Askar is taken to Aw-Adan's Koranic school by Uncle Qorrax. Before he even settles, Askar earns Aw-Adan's rage for that 'satanic stare of yours' (82) and he suggests to Askar that he should 'dim it.' (82) Different characters have a different view about the weird stare that Askar has. According to Aw-Adan, it is evil, while to Misra it helped her to know that Askar was alive the first time she met him. To Askar it is symptomatic of an epic child that he is. Therefore, the narrative voices are fragmented in painting a clear picture to us about Askar's stare.

4.4 Narrating the Nation: The Fragmented Third Narrative Voice in *Maps*

As a matter of arrangement of chapters in *Maps*, the third person narrative voice follows the first-person narrative voice and it is alternated by the second narrative voice. It does not come in between in the arrangement only but it is also a go-between the two other competing

voices. With the objectivity of the third person omniscience it comes out as reliable because it does not contradict the 'You' and 'I' narrative voices. In *Maps* the third person narrative voice is represented by the pronoun 'He' throughout.

The third person narrative voice in *Maps*, acts as another validation of split personality of Askar as the narrator like the first and the Second narrative voice. Therefore, it speaks for Askar when he is not able to speak for himself giving us insights into his emotions and his desires understanding himself. One way is through the omniscient narrator telling us about Askar when he is asleep and dreaming.

And he was running and running, he was breathing hard and running.
But he didn't know why he was running, nor did he know what he was
fleeing from. He run, blind with fright; he ran senselessly. And he
couldn't define the purpose of his running –but neither could he stop
[...] may you be awoken in peace. (48)

Askar cannot speak for himself here since he is asleep but the third person omniscient narrative voice introduces to us the internal associative logic of dreams and fantasies of his life. It also raises serious questions about the reliability of the dreams and fantasies as compared to the realities raised by the first and the second narrative voice. The third person narrative voice is therefore fragmented from the first and the second narrative voice when it presents the surreal while the other two presents the realities.

When the third narrative voice is not presenting dreams in *Maps* it recounts the most intricate issues which cannot be left to the speculating, 'You' and the subjective 'I'. For example, it recounts the abduction, murder and the burial of Misra. 'Her body was prepared for burial and Askar was not present. They buried Misra and he was not at the funeral. That night he was taken ill...' (250) The third narrative voice here is fragmented from the second and the

first on the level of objectivity. No way could the first voice recount the abduction, murder and burial of Misra since it is assumed that Askar is partly involved. The assumption stems from the logic that Askar is committed to the ideology of a united Somali nation and the allegations that Misra betrayed the Somali soldiers leading to their massacre by the Ethiopian forces.

The third narrative voice carries the political narrative strand as opposed to the second and the first narrative voice. ‘And yes, there was much talk about Somalia, a country that was referred as “mother” in a tone suggesting a getting together and Ogaden/child separated from her.’ (101) In another instance illustrating political narrative, Askar is seen talking ‘knowledgeably, enthusiastically about the liberation war which his people were waging against Misra’s people’ (97) These politics involve the nationalistic struggle for the Somalis living in the Ogaden region. Through the support of the Soviets the Somalis capture the Ogaden but it not long the Ethiopians recapture the Ogaden pitying the citizens of both nationalities living together again each other. The Somalis living in Ogaden feel orphaned by being separated from the Somali mainland. The political issues in *Maps* are so intricate, thus they can only be recounted by third narrative voice which is capable, as Keen says, of providing the tagging of spoken discourse that exists outside the central character’s perspective” (Keen, 38).

When the third narrative voice is not presenting intrinsic issues in *Maps* it is demonstrating the change of events that took place between the years that Askar was born and the time he is seventeen years in Uncle Hilaal’s house, in Mogadiscio. His birth is narrated by the first and second narrative voice but a shift to third narrative voice is realised to recount events when Askar is 17 years old after he has travelled from Kallafo to Mogadiscio. “Awake and washed, shaven and seventeen years old, he now stood behind a window in a house in Mogadiscio— Uncle Hilaal’s house. (48) A lot on his childhood is left out but this switch in narrative voice

can be viewed as Askar's failure to establish his own identity between the years of his birth and the time he is a teenager. So by claiming objectivity in recounting Askar's narrative here, the third narrative voice displaces Askar's subjective 'I' narrative voice making establishment of the validity of the narrative impossible as we are faced with a fragment caused by a shift between the two narrative voices.

4.5 Fragmented Narrative Voices and the Fragmented Narrator: A Correlation

In *Maps*, Farah criticises the spirit of a united nation which culminates into a war between Somalia and Ethiopia over the ownership and control of the Ogaden region. The result of this war among other things is the displacement of people and rising animosity among the communities of the two nations living in Ogaden. A case in point is Askar who is torn between being loyal to Somalia nationality spirit and being loyal to Misra, his foster mother who is of Ethiopian nationality. Misra although she is the surrogate mother to Askar, as an Ethiopian she is considered an enemy by the Somali national loyalist. This makes Askar come across as a split personality. No wonder we see him saying, "somehow I felt, I knew I had to betray one of them. I had to betray either Misra who had been like a mother to me, or my mother country." (172)

As further illustration that the personality of Askar as the narrator is splintered, is seen in an instance when his various selves are arguing.

You began debating with the egos of which you were compounded, and, detaching itself from other selves there stood before you, substantial as a shadow [...] For a long time, yourselves argued with one another, each offering counter arguments to the suggestions already submitted by the others. (60)

From the above I can assert that the fragmented personality of Askar has a correlation with the fragmented narrative voices. The split personality of Askar is replicated in the narrative voices which keep shifting from the second to the first to the third person. Thus, the structure of the narrative remains in fragments as long as the personality of Askar remains splintered.

If we look at the multiple narrative voices suggested through dreams, memories and fantasies in the third person narrative voice we see a disturbed mind incapable of coherent thoughts. No wonder Askar is torn between supporting his foster mother or the antagonising nationalistic spirit of Somalia.

What complicates the formation of a coherent personality in Askar is the guilt of having to kill Misra and carry on with his nationalistic ambitions although he confesses to her, 'To live, I will have to kill you.' (59) And when Misra is finally found murdered, he is so disturbed that he cannot conjure up his memory to good effect about her as we can see him asking, who was Misra? A woman or more than a woman? (243) Askar fails to remember his past which suggest a serious disunity in his personality which similarly we witness in the in the narrative voices.

4.6 Fragmented Narrative Voices as Contesting Totalization of the Somali Nation

Totalization is a term Francois Lyotard uses in his book, *The Postmodern Condition; A report on Knowledge*, to describe 'grand narratives' or 'meta-narratives'. The concept of grand narratives refers to all those conceptions which try to understand history. Waugh in Postmodern says the grand narratives are 'theories which claim to account for all aspects of human existence.' (5) With the setting in postmodernism, according to Lyotard, people no longer believe in these philosophies since they are oppressive (totalizing). They are totalizing because they do not accommodate other ideologies. Totalization therefore means encompassing without allowing space for more.

Lyotard calls for the breaking up of the grand narratives into little narratives giving them a voice. However, he says some authors would fear the breaking up of the old conventions of literature which is commonly shared hence they would reject the idea of disintegrating the grand narratives. “This breaking up of the grand narratives [...] leads to what some authors analyze in terms of the dissolution of the social bond and the disintegration of social aggregates into a mass of individual atoms thrown into the absurdity of Brownian motion” (15). The postmodern writers undermine the grand narrative thus creating new space for pluralism and differences in voices in their novels. This plurality according to Janet Paterson is the central characteristic of the postmodern novel as she puts it;

The act of enunciation is not only characterized by putting into place of a narrative ‘I’ but by a plurality of narrative voices. These voices maybe in half, doubled fragmented. These voices rarely produce a unified discourse. They refuse on contrary to admit a single vision and single authority and they subvert all notions of control, of domination.

(240)

In *Maps*, Farah manages to subvert the totality of using a single narrative voice by employing multiple narrative voices in shifting positions. This is intended to provide a more objective podium as opposed to using let’s say the first narrative voice only. The first-person narrative voice gives the reader an impression of a more authentic story by letting in the reader into emotions and vivid description leading to a lack of objectivity. For example, when Askar is recounting events leading to his birth his recollection is suspicious. It invites some bias which is contested by the second narrative voice. He talks of being present at his birth and claims to have witnessed it to which the second narrative voice tells brings into question by asserting, ‘If you were to believe that you “stared” at Misra when she found you and Arla my sister, then you were at least a day old. For sight my dear Askar is a door which does not

open instantly in the new born.’ (21) In another instance Askar admits his bias as the first person narrator by saying, ‘I’ll admit that many things are confused in my memory’ (42) Acknowledgment of the bias of the narrators as a totalizing inclination is put into consideration in *Maps* through the use of multiple narrative voices hence the competition of different accounts of truth among them.

The multiple narrative voices in *Maps* contest the formation of a unified character that is the single source of meaning as the protagonist. Culler explains the concept of the ‘self’ in postmodernism as one that is ‘dissolved’ because ‘its functions are taken by a variety of interpersonal systems that operate through it’. (28) The ‘interpersonal systems’ in *Maps* are the multiple narrative voices which undermine authority of forming a unified self in Askar. Further the narrative voices undermine the total authority of the Askar as the narrator thus we are faced with the impossibility of a cohesive story. We therefore have to treat all the narrative voices as equally valid as they serve the purpose of contesting the grand totalizing monolithic narrations that situate all the events within their own context.

The shifting narrative voices from ‘You’ to ‘I’ to ‘He’ cause non-linearity in the narrative. Here, *Maps* indubitably questions the conventional telling of a narrative and history in a linear form. It is a grand narrative. The narrative is mapped out through a process of recollection, dreams and postulation, jumbled in alternating narrative voices. There are gaps in the recollections but they are ‘filled’ with ingenious creations which are left conspicuously uncluttered revealing the absence of a monolithic truth. For example, the invention of Misra as the betrayer of the Somali cause, is a postulation by Askar to cover up the humiliating defeat of Somali forces by Ethiopian forces under the help of the Soviets. In another account we get to know that the Somali soldiers were defeated by Ethiopians because the Ethiopians had the help of the Soviets. *Maps*, takes us to the impossibility of knowing the real truth through the use of multiple competing narrative voices.

Another example is the abduction, torture and the murder of Misra is left glaringly open to speculation by multiple narrative voices belonging to Askar. No conclusion is reached but what do we expect when the testimony is given by the man who probably had a hand killing her? He can only give a testimony filtering, editing where he sees it fit and taking us back and forth for his convenience, perhaps to confuse us and the judge so that he can escape justice. In a different thinking, this is the only way *Maps* suggest to us that any narrative or history needs to be presented as multiple rather than cohesive and linear.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter I have demonstrated how Nuruddin Farah has employed the first person, the second person limited and the third person omniscient point of views. By using the first-person narrative voice, Nuruddin Farah has demonstrated the subjectivity in which we can read the novel. Askar's first person narration is subjective since much of what he narrates is based on events which happened before his birth as narrated to him by Misra or personal experiences which he has no authority to narrate since he was too young at that time.

The second point of view in *Maps* contradicts the first point of view but it also involves the audience by talking to them. This way the opinions and the decisions of the reader are influenced. This is why it is instrumental in narrating the birth of Askar. The reader is submerged into the story and develops a sense of empathy on Askar when his mother dies during his birth leaving him unattended. It also comes out fragmented when it is used to ask questions whose answers are left to the reader.

The third person point of view allows us to delve into multiple characters in the narrative. Therefore, we have a chance to relate the characters thoughts with what is actually happening. We can obtain objectivity by making a judgement from the characters' opinions and facts as presented in the narrative. However, this voice is fragmented from the unreliable

narrator since he cannot use it. Otherwise it would be the author telling lies and not the third person omniscient narrator. This is why it provides an objective angle in *Maps* since the narrator includes historical facts that took place like the Ogaden war. It also carries the political narrative strand of the Somali Nation. These are issues which cannot be left to the first-person point of view which is subjective.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATION

This study sought to identify how fragmentation has been employed in the plot, the characters and the point of view in *Maps*. It also analyzed and investigated whether fragmentation was employed to project a fragmented Somali nation. It employed the narratology with a focus on the order of narrative as spelt out by Genette to examine how the narrative in *Maps* is crafted. The postmodern literary theory was also instrumental in helping me to analyze the fragmentation as postmodern device which create a disjuncture in the narrative, the plot and the characters. Psychoanalytic theory was effective in the analysis of the inner construct of the characters.

The study consists of four chapters; the first chapter introduces the study, the second chapter deals the fragmentation of the plot, chapter three deals with fragmentation of the characters and the setting and chapter four deals with the fragmented narrative voices. Chapter four also establishes the correlation between a fragmented point of view and a fragmented narrator.

In the second chapter I identified and analysed the fragmentation of the plot in the novel. I established that the narrative structure of *Maps* exposes gaps in such a way that the text comes out as fragmented. It points to a deviation from the established form of the novel, an accepted model traditionally, which follows the rules strictly so that the novel is easily identifiable from a poem, or drama. One of the rules of a conventional novel is a linear skeletal structural planning which promotes a unity and continuity of form. This implies respect for custom and convention and on a structural level, affinity with established forms. *Maps* counteract this principle with its concern with openness to brokenness so that it conveys meaning not only with content but form and shape. It is a postmodern novel which does not allow for any authoritatively defined point of reference. Fragmentation in *Maps* therefore mirrors the disunity evident in the geographical division of the Somali Nation into

five administrative units by the colonialists whilst at the same time it is a technique with which to break from canonical techniques. Therefore, there is a relationship between the fragmentation of the text and the fragmentation of Somali nation.

In a similar manner characters in *Maps* as physically fragmented as I analysed in the third chapter of this study. I established that the fragmentation of the characters' bodies in *Maps* has a correlation with Somali nation. Fragmentation is an allegorical technique that Nuruddin Farah uses in *Maps* to point out that the Somalia people are not whole but fragmented. He challenges the common notion that the Somali people are homogenous people by painting so many pictures of fractured bodies of his characters. This research has therefore shown that by Nuruddin Farah employing fragmentation in *Maps*; he contests the notion of a united Somali nation as fixed and confined to sharing similar culture, language, religion, history and geopolitical borders. He advocates for the formation of a multi-ethnic Somali nation that ignores the workings of ethnic identity.

Maps subverts the totality of using a single narrative voice by employing multiple narrative voices in shifting positions as I analyzed in the fourth chapter of this study. The shifting narrator position is intended to provide a more objective podium as opposed to using let's say the first narrative voice only. It also reveals a narrator who is so fragmented that he cannot conjure up a unified story. Through the use of three points of views in *Maps* Nuruddin Farah managed to convey a deeper understanding of the Somali nation through the use of the postmodern technic of fragmentation. Somali is defined by communal multiplicities which are represented in *Maps* by fragmented narrative voices. Each voice is competing with the others to tell the story of Somalia and all of them bring the multi-perspective way of looking at the Somalia Nation. Telling the story of Somalia in a single point of view would be totalizing because Somalia is multi-ethnic society far from the belief that they are united by a common language, religion, region, and cultural heritage.

Since this study was limited to critical analysis of fragmentation to reveal its allegorical importance in *Maps*, I suggest that future studies to focus upon *Maps* as bildungsroman novel. This is because *Maps* is ‘a novel of formation’ which focuses on the psychological and moral growth of its main character, Askar, from the time of his birth to his adulthood. It would be worth studying how Nuruddin Farah uses a young boy as the main character and one of the narrators who looks for answers to his questions through different experiences as he grows up and his conflict with the society.

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