Resources for Modern Middle East Studies
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The Personal and the Public in Literary Works of the Arab Regions

ISBN 978-4-87974-763-1 C0097

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Published in Japan in March 2021 by the Center for Modern Middle East Studies at the National Museum of Ethnology.
10-1 Senri Expo Park, Suita, Osaka 567-8511
http://www.minpaku.ac.jp/nihu/cmmes/index.html

This study series was supported by NIHU Transdisciplinary Project "Area Studies of the Modern Middle East."

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Preface

This volume concerns the relationships between the personal and the public in poetry, narratives, novels, and journalistic essays composed in the Arab regions. This topic corresponds with the framing theme of the Center for Modern Middle East Studies at the National Museum of Ethnology, Japan. As part of its research endeavors, the Center has been engaged in executing a project titled, "The Transformation of Cultural Resources and the Reconfiguration of the Personal Sphere in the Modern Middle East," since 2016. For an individual, encounters with unknown people, places, and information become a constituent for structuring and shaping the world. The project aims to clarify how communities are formulated from the succession and accumulation of spheres that circulating individuals formulate, and the characteristics of the world that the individuals design from the perspective of preserving cultural resources.

In keeping with the theme of that project, *The Personal and the Public in Literary Works of the Arab Regions* explores and clarifies the relationships between the personal and public spheres as reflected in literary works from Arab regions. Literary works are posited as essential and communal assets that play a role in the formation and reconfigurations of Arab societies and communities. Arabic poetry, narratives, and novels have played a central role in the cultivation and transformation of Arab social norms and structures. Personal encounters with previously unfamiliar people, places, and information via literature help shape people's views of the world in Arab regions. The influence of the formulation of people's views in these regions is also exerted on other regions like Europe and Asia. The volume is designed to cultivate new methods and perspectives for conceptualizing the personal and the public as themes, by depicting social spaces in such a way as to include or exclude pluralistic values. Two research questions that guided the studies of Arabic literary works to be presented here are: 1) Where is the boundary between the personal and the public and how is it drawn? and 2) How does the personal sphere function to help form communities or worldviews? In what ways do these cultural and literary sources reveal a reshaping of the personal sphere in relation to associated communal spheres?

Covering a wide range in geography (the Arab regions, Europe, and Japan) and time (the Abbasid period to the present), this volume offers various perspectives for the formation of ideas on the personal and the public. As shown mainly in the first section of the book, "The Private/Personal and the Public/Political," boundaries between the

personal and the public are found with the flow of literary genres (subgenres) according to the period. With respect to Arabic poetry, for example, in the panegyric ode (*qaṣīdat al-madḥ*), which predominated the genre with its variants starting from the pre-Islamic era to the first half of the twentieth centuries, the introductory part, the *nasīb* (the amatory prelude) tends to express personal emotions and affections, though it can be understood to signify the public sphere both metaphorically and allegorically. In contrast, the concluding part, the *madīḥ* (praise), in which a poet recites a eulogy for the ruler or his patron, demonstrates public and political spheres. In the 1970s, a shift from committed public poetry (*iltizām*) into more intimate personal poetry was seen with a change in the form from Arabic free verse to Arabic prose poems.[1] Traversing the personal and public spheres, a complex interplay was recognized in the Arabic poems of Abbasid, neo-classical, and modern poets. The volume illustrates various examples of how the personal sphere operates in the formation of communities and worldviews, through poetry, a popular song using a poem for its lyrics, a story collection, journalistic writings, and novels. These examples demonstrate that the accumulation and continuation of personal feelings and declarations presented in the literary works had an impact on people who encountered them through reading and listening. The studies reveal that the process of this influence of the personal on the public is often related to ideology, hegemony, colonialism, and nationalism, as well as the relationships between Arab and European countries or the East and the West. The literary works, as cultural assets, play an integral part by generating power to unite/disunite people and dynamism to reform/reshape their communities, through the interaction between the personal/private and the public/political spheres.

In "The Interface of the Private and the Political in Classical and Modern Arabic Poetry," Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych traces a passage of the intersections of the private and the public in the classical and modern poetics of the Arab world. Her analysis extends from tenth century classical poetry to twentieth century modern poetry, in that it covers two classical Arab poets, al-Mutanabbī and Abū Firās al-Ḥāmdānī, and three twentieth century Modern Arab Free Verse poets, Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī, Buland al-Ḥaydarī, and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī. She offers an insightful overall perspective on how the private and public spheres were involved in Arabic poetics through the transformation of the genre, including forms, motifs, and diction. The Abbasid poems demonstrate the subtle polyvalence or ambiguity of the private and the public, the personal and the political. Under the influence of Western imperialism and colonialism, the Free Verse poems indicate various complicated interplays on the blurred boundaries between the

private and the political.

Akiko Sumi's study on the motif of death in the Russo-Japanese War links the Egyptian neo-classical poet, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm (1872?–1932), with the Japanese poetess, Akiko Yosano (1878–1942). She explores the Arabic poems "Ghādat al-Yābān" ("A Young Woman of Japan") and "Al-Ḥarb al-Yābāniyyah wa-al-Rūsiyyah" ("The Japanese-Russian War") by Ibrāhīm, and the Japanese new-style poem "Kimi shinitamō kotonakare" ("Beloved, You Must Not Die") and essay, "Hirakibumi" ("An Open Letter") by Yosano. Ibrāhīm's poems display a complex interplay between personal and public voices, whereas Akiko Yosano's poem mainly exemplifies personal expression. By praising Japan, the Egyptian poet indirectly calls on his people to raise their voices against their ruler who was virtually under the control of the British then. With respect to the theme of death in war, Ibrāhīm's personal voice rings out louder in "The Japanese-Russian War" than in "A Young Woman of Japan."

In "The Discourse of Coffee and Coffeehouse in Contemporary Arabic Poetry," Hassan El-Banna Ezz El-Din examines the phenomenal presence of coffee and coffeehouses in contemporary Arabic poetry (1945–present), that is, "the free verse," on the concentration of the poem "An Ancient Poem" by the Iraqi poet Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (1926–1964). His investigation extends to poems with a coffee theme composed by poets from 14 Arab countries. These poems can be categorized into six main discourses: "Coffee of Writing," "Coffeehouse of Creativity," "Coffeehouse of Pretenders," "Coffee/Coffeehouses and Homeland," "Coffeehouse of Lovers," and "Coffee/Coffeehouses and Alienation." He argues that his examination offers insight into the dialectics of the personal and public in contemporary Arabic poetry.

Regarding the song "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" ("A Thousand and One Nights") by the legendary Egyptian singer Umm Kulthūm (1904–1975), Nobuo Mizuno explores the song's melody and lyrics that were composed in the Egyptian colloquial by Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz. He used her live concert CD which contained the first performance of the song that was recorded in Cairo in 1969. According to Mizuno's understanding, the goal of this song is to express the theme of love through the well-known term "alf lēla w-lēla" at the climax of the refrain, and not to tell the story of the *Thousand and One Nights*. The singer succeeded in improving the quality of the new genre of popular Arab music at the time, by invoking the sensual and lovely nights of the *Thousand and One Nights* or the *Arabian Nights* among the Arab people. Relying on the modern Egyptian poem, Umm Kulthūm aroused the poetic sentiment that lurked in the audience's heart.

In another study on the *Arabian Nights*, Tetsuo Nishio, Naoko Okamoto, and

Margaret Sironval focus on Joseph-Charles Victor Mardrus (1868–1949) who translated the *Arabian Nights* into French from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Using the recently acquired personal archives of Mardrus (Mardrus Collection Bequest), they examine his translation of this world-famous story collection. The reception of Mardrus' *Arabian Nights* in Japan and Europe is investigated. The authors argue that *Arabian Nights* should not be considered a tool for European Orientalism, as Edward Said claimed. Rather, it is global literature that seeks to co-create a pluralistic and multi-valued society, playing the role of a bridge between civilizations represented by the West (Europe), the Middle East, and the East (Japan).

Focusing on the poetic ambivalence in the works of Algerian writer, Kateb Yacine (1929–1989), one of the pioneers of Algerian francophone literature, Satoshi Udo explores how the writer considered people as poetic figures of the future nation and as an integral part of his own existential identity. Yacine's works, "Le peuple errant" (1950), *Le cadavre encerclé* (1954), and *Le polygone étoilé* (1966), are examined. Udo sees that the poetic aspects of Yacine's poems and poetic prose are not sufficiently understood, although their political aspects have been substantially studied. "People" in Yacine's poetic works are symbolized as "cadavers" or "vultures" that invoke totemic tribal imagery. By destroying the personal self, they can gain the vision of collectivity. Udo argues that his works demonstrate his ambivalence on his encounter with the horizon of collectivity.

Jaroslav Stetkevych investigates the Egyptian modern public intellectual, Yūsuf Zaydān (b. 1958), who has various personas: librarian, publisher of catalogues on Medieval manuscripts, editor of manuscripts, prize-winning novelist, literary book reviewer, holder of intellectual and literary salons, and observer of his nation and society's behavior and attitudes. He reveals how Yūsuf Zaydān was involved in the personal and public spheres. On the one hand, Zaydān appears to be deeply absorbed in formal academic discipline. On the other hand, he is unabashedly and aggressively public. Zaydān's journalistic essays, especially *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, *Shujūn ʿarabiyyah*, and *Shujūn turāthiyyah*, express dangerous social and political faults in the contemporary Egyptian and Arab contexts. In his novels, such as *ʿAzāzīl* (2008) and *al-Nabaṭī* (2008), he combines the personal and the public in search of an allegory of modern Egyptian self-questioning. Recounting Zaydān's statement in an interview on one of Cairo's main television programs on his counterview of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī, Stetkevych claims that he is a public intellectual and an unquestionable authority.

We would like to thank Dr. Kenji Kuroda at the Center for Modern Middle East Studies at the National Museum of Ethnology, Japan, for his assistance during the editing process. This volume is supported by the center's project titled, "The Transformation of Cultural Resources and the Reconfiguration of the Personal Sphere in the Modern Middle East." A part of this volume is based on papers presented at the international symposium on the same subject held at the center on March 24 and March 25, 2018.

We followed the system of the Library of Congress in transliterating Arabic names, terms, and bibliographical citations, with slight modifications.

Akiko Sumi
Tetsuo Nishio

[1] See the chapter "The Interface of the Private and the Political in Classical and Modern Arabic Poetry" by Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych in this book.

I. The Private/Personal and the Public/Political

1

The Interface of the Private and the Political in Classical and Modern Arabic Poetry

Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych

Abstract

From the perspective of contemporary Western societies, where it has become conventional to draw a line between the private and public spheres, the classical and modern poetics of the Arab world open a window onto the fascinating interplay of the public and private, the personal and political.

In the Classical Arabic tradition of Abbasid court poetry (9th–10th century CE), we find that the poetics of the *nasīb*—the elegiac prelude of the classical ode (*qaṣīdah*)—speak of emotions such as love and loss in the most intimate and affective tones. However, often simultaneously—allegorically, metaphorically, or merely allusively—they refer to stark political realities. Moreover, even in the courtly praise (*madḥ*) section of the *qaṣīdah*, often the tone and expressions used to convey bonds of political allegiance—or their rupture— strike us as highly intimate and emotionally intense.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, the Arab world has experienced the onslaught of Modern Western imperialism, colonialism, and military aggression, as well as the repression and brutality of home-grown authoritarian regimes. Reflecting contemporary political influences, Arab Free Verse poetry has come to exhibit a range of complex interplay between the intimate and personal, on the one hand, and the public and political, on the other. Thus, it challenges the extent to which these two spheres can be distinguished from each other.

This study examines poetry composed by two 10th century Classical Arab poets—al-Mutanabbī and Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī—and three 20th century Modern Arab Free Verse poets—Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī, Buland al-Ḥaydarī, and ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī. Thus, it explores the interplay of the personal and public in Arabic poetry during two distinct and historically significant periods.

Keywords: Public, private, political poetry, Arabic poetry, *qaṣīdah*, Abbasid poetry, Classical Arabic poetry, Free Verse poetry, *al-shiʿr al-ḥurr*, *iltifāt*, commitment, *iltizām*, identity, *huwiyyah*, metapoetry, al-Mutanabbī, Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī, Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī, Buland al-Ḥaydarī, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī

Introduction: The Politics of the Private and Public

In this essay, I hope to use the topic of the symposium—the private sphere and the public sphere—to investigate our dominant conceptions of poetic expression and meaning. I wish to explore how the Arabic poetic tradition can help us interpret our own experience of what we, whether unconsciously or through recent and now extensive theorizations of the subject, of the private and public spheres. The earliest conceptualization of the subject, by Jürgen Habermas, was largely considered a bourgeois model and dates back to the industrial revolution. It conceived of the private sphere as that aspect of social life which afforded the individual a degree of authority, such as at home and/or in the family, not intruded upon by the state or other institutional interventions; whereas, the public referred to the social realm of political participation and the formation of public opinion.[1] This distinction and related ideas on the formation and transformation of the Arab private-public and personal-political spheres with a focus on Arabic poetry have been fruitfully explored in, for example, the Abbasid, Mamluk, and Modern periods.[2] My aim, however, is not to begin with a particular modern or historical conceptualization of the "private" versus "public" sphere. Rather, I apply a more general concept of the "private" and "personal" (referring to personal life and intimate experiences) versus the "political" and "public" (referring to public life that is impacted by the state and its institutions) to a reading of Classical (specifically, Abbasid) and Modern (specifically, Free Verse) Arabic poetry. Let us keep in mind, above all, that I am dealing here with poetry rather than sociology.

In the 20th century, and largely until now in the West, poetic taste and readings were largely formed by the aesthetics of Romanticism. Unlike Classicism, it championed the unmediated expression of personal emotion or the exploration of one's thoughts, personal perceptions or ideas, and the irrepressible eruption of private passion. Public poetry or poetry on politics, rulers, or regimes was broadly condemned as propaganda or "occasional poetry" born of opportunism—professional rhyming for public ceremony and financial gain. In other words, the private/personal and the public/political were two distinct spheres, and the proper place for poetry was the former. The Modernists, beginning with T. S. Eliot, took a somewhat different stance. There we can at least see a rejection of the spontaneous solipsism of the Romantics in favor of the Modernist recognition of the interplay of the individual and tradition on the one hand and the objective distancing of the objective correlative, abstraction, etc., on the other. There remains, however, in Anglo-American poetry, a clear withdrawal of the individual from public participation, except, perhaps, in the rejectionist sense of, for example, Allen Ginsberg. Sartrean commitment found little place in Western poetry, and indeed, Sartre

takes the concept of commitment to be the prerogative of prose and finds poetry unsuited for it.[3]

When we turn to the canonical Arabic poetic tradition, we find a preoccupation with critical literary issues considerably different from those of the West. The classical tradition, from the pre-Islamic era to through the High Abbasid "Golden Age" (6th–13th centuries CE), gave pride of place to the panegyric ode (*qaṣīdat al-madḥ*), that is, the poem of praise to a patron or ruler. To be declared a master-poet (*faḥl*, lit. 'stallion') required the mastery of this or related public, praise-or-blame based themes: boast, elegy, satire, proclaimed at court or similar settings and evaluated for its performative effectiveness. Poetry was public, political, and highly competitive—often a blood-sport. However, poets were masterful at presenting the highly politicized issues of the Muslim ruler's legitimacy and authority in a poetic idiom that was extremely affective, emotional, and seemingly personal—as is obvious in much court panegyric, and even more so in invective or satire. Likewise, the introductory section of the ode (*nasīb*) was, by poetic convention, a highly impassioned, intimate, and affectively toned first-person lament over a failed love-affair—whether conveyed through a nostalgic description of the ruins of her former encampment or of the mistress herself. In other words, poetic convention, not personal emotion, dictated a distinctly "private" or "personal" opening passage.

The Post-Classical period (13th–19th centuries CE) witnessed the gradual development of a more inner-directed poetry. This poetic trend was reflected in the lyrical Sufi *ghazal*, short lyrical forms of all types (*maqṭūʿah*), and, in particular, devotional poetry in praise of the Prophet (*madīḥ nabawī*). The latter, although they shared the form, motifs, and structure of the courtly panegyric, were often directed to more intimate and spiritual ends, particularly petitioning the Prophet for intercession on Judgment Day. Although such devotional poetry, like court panegyric, is based on a ritual exchange of poem for prize, the currency was now spiritual rather than material. Hence, such poetry was spared condemnation as trade in verse. The poetic tradition of the Post-Classical period, for more than a century the object of derision and neglect—as being the inferior product of an age of decline, is now the object of renewed and positive study. Moreover, it is to this period that we should look for a more personal poetry of wit, sentiment, and short lyric unencumbered by courtly performative imperatives.[4]

The Neo-Classical poetic movement, spanning the mid-19th century to the late-19th century, began as a self-critical response to Western imperial incursions and domination of the Arab world. This is the point at which the preceding centuries of non-Arab rule (by Mongols, Turks, Tatars, Mamluks, and Ottomans) were blamed for the

"decline" of Arabic poetry and culture. The Post-Classical inward turn—to private, Sufi, or devotional poetry—was seen, not in the positive light of Western Romanticism but rather as a sign of cultural decadence and decline. What the Neo-Classical poets and men of letters celebrated, rather, was, above all, the muscular, triumphalist poetry of the High Abbasid period, which they identified as the golden age of arts, sciences, and political and military dominion in Arab-Islamic civilization. The confident tone, triumphalist ideology, and the muscular rhetorical expression of the Abbasid master-poets became the model adopted by the Neo-Classical poets. The poetic idealization or celebration of the Abbasid Age became the Neo-Classical poets' weapon of self-defense against European claims of civilizational superiority.[5]

I believe the Neo-Classical period is also one in which we can detect the interface or overlap of the public and private in that the poets and their fellow-countrymen at the time felt a deeply personal sense of humiliation resulting from colonial domination. We can sense the mortification in, for example, Aḥmad Shawqī's (d. 1932) "Farewell to Lord Cromer" ("Wadāʿ al-Lūrd Krūmir") where the British Consul-General's condescension to Egyptians and the Khedive was deeply personally felt—and not just by the poet.[6] The confident and assertive Abbasid proclamation of right, power, and dominion served to bolster a sense of self-respect in the face of imperial European indignities.[7]

The Egyptian pre-Romantics and Romantics, largely educated on the British *Golden Treasury* anthology, comprised largely of Romantic verse, and (belatedly) Romantic notions of poetry, roundly rejected the entire Arabic Classical tradition and with it, of course, the Neo-Classical poets, on the grounds that is was nothing but artifice and flattery, completely lacking in the spontaneity and unfiltered emotion of true poetry. This led to the birth of the Arab Romantic movement, characterized, in my view, by rather artificial imitation and occasional plagiarism of English Romantic verse. Arab Romantic poetry occasionally featured nationalist sentiments—for example, the works of Tunisian poet Abū al-Qāsim al-Shābbī (d. 1934), such as "When the People Will" ("Idhā al-qawmu yawman arāda al-ḥayāt"), proved extremely inspirational during the 2011 Arab Spring. However, this school of poetry was characterized by effusive sentimentalism. It is tempting to categorize such an outpouring of emotion as the private sphere laying claim to poetry, except that this movement was part of a British imperialist project promoting (mostly British) Romantic poetics. Thus, if Neo-Classical poetry, for all its rhetorical and structural formalism and "obsolete" Abbasid motifs, themes, and diction, was a public challenge to imperial domination, Arab Romantic poetry that appeared to champion private passions ultimately represents a political surrender to the poetics of the oppressor,

that is, a personal loss of faith in and respect for one's own tradition. The Egyptian literary critic ʿAbbās Maḥmūd al-ʿAqqād (d. 1964) and his ilk, in their critical disparagement of the Arab Classical poetic tradition, were, to a large extent, merely parroting the Orientalist scholars of Arabic poetry. This happened even as Arab Romantic poets imitated their overlords in the name of "passion" and "spontaneity" (*wijdān*).[8] The result is in my view a poetic Stockholm Syndrome.

With the Arab Free Verse Movement (*al-shiʿr al-ḥurr, shiʿr al-tafʿīlah*) (1950s–), poetry took an alternate route. First, to some degree, the influence of Anglo-American Modernists, especially T.S. Eliot and Edith Sitwell, produced a rejection of Romanticist self-involvement and the search for a less solipsistic, ego-centric poetic voice. Second, participation in the Arab nationalist movement(s) and Sartrean Commitment (*iltizām*) or the political engagement of the artist in response to the call for independence from colonial powers came to be seen as moral imperatives. This was the case in the Algerian War of Independence, the struggle for the liberation of Palestine, or the hero-worship of the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser. In fact, although the Arab defeat (Naksah) in the Six-Day War (1967) deflated the defiant and nationalist tone of much of Arab poetry, poetic commitment forced poets to look inward, question the Arab defeat, and criticize Arab dictatorial regimes, their leaders, and their alleged complicity with Western and/or Israeli-Zionist powers.[9]

In response to the 1967 defeat, we see a withdrawal from committed political and public poetry, in general, from the 1970s onward and a transition to more intimate, personal, and even lyrical poetry. This was at a time when there was growing disenchantment with the fruits of Arab independence, and hopes were fading as Israel made the transition from a colonialist settlement to an entrenched state entity. In poetry from this time, there is a notable inward turn of the poet and the subsequent creation of metapoetry, in the sense of an intensely private exploration of the nature of poetry and creativity itself.[10] Other directions include Maḥmūd Darwīsh's transformation from a 'committed' poet of the Palestinian cause to a poet of a still public stance but now embracing a more expansive humanism.[11] As the Baḥraynī poet Qāsim Ḥaddād has noted, with Arab poetry's withdrawal into the personal, the more subdued private tone adopted by the Egyptian Free Verse pioneer Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣabūr (d. 1981), especially in his later and more lyrical poetry, has proved more influential than the more public and declamatory poetic tone and stance of *iltizām* poets, such as Ḥijāzī.[12]

This new poetic stance of inwardness and withdrawal from the public sphere found expression in a change in poetic form away from Arabic Free Verse, with its

vestiges of rhyme and meter, to the Arabic Prose Poem (*qaṣīdat al-nathr*), which, whether written in poetic lines or in paragraph form, exhibits neither.

Sayyid al-Sīsī, in his recent book on the Arabic Prose Poem, has remarked that the hostility exhibited by many critics toward this form, which completely abandons even the much-loosened rhyme and meter of Arab Free Verse (*tafʿīlah*) poetry. In his view this hostility stems largely from a dispute between "committed" poetry geared toward public declamatory performance as opposed to private inward-turned poetry intended for individual contemplative reading.[13] It is the latter, the Arabic Prose Poem—a poetry of despair, alienation, isolation, or emigration—that dominates the Arab poetic scene today.[14]

This short introduction, then, aims not so much to summarize Arabic poetic history but rather to point out that all literary periods have witnessed a complex interplay between the private/personal and the public/political axes. Poetry is never entirely free from one or the other axis; furthermore, a tendency or tilt in either direction can be understood as a poetic response to political realities. I would think that it is only at very stable, peaceful, and prosperous periods that we could imagine having a private life so untouched by external political realities that we might draw a line between the personal/private and the public/political spheres. I believe Edward Said long ago disabused us of this idea.[15]

The Poetics of the Public and Private in Classical Arabic Poetry: The Abbasid Case

I would like to begin by examining a couple of examples of classical poetry from the Abbasid period (750–1256 CE) to demonstrate the subtle polyvalence or ambiguity of the private and public and the personal and political. On the surface, the conventional thematic sections of the usually two-part Abbasid *qaṣīdah* represent, respectively, the private-personal and the public-political dimensions of the poet's experience. The first, the lyric-elegiac prelude (*nasīb*), is intimately personal and takes the theme of failed love and separation, couched in the motifs of romantic love and passion, treachery and betrayal, and the erotic suffering of the pining lover. The second, concluding, section—in our present examples, praise (*madīḥ*) and personal and tribal-dynastic boast (*fakhr*)—by contrast, consists of the poet's declaration and declamation of allegiance to the patron or tribe and the celebration of public virtues, both martial and political. However, a more nuanced reading of the *naṣīb*, to which we will limit this study, reveals carefully encoded

political elements couched in poetic conventions and motifs of the heightened personal emotions associated with erotic betrayal.

These motifs can be interpreted in several ways, which are complementary, rather than contradictory. The classical Arab literary critic Ibn Qutaybah (d. 889) famously interpreted the eroticism and high emotion of the *nasīb*, almost literally as a "pre-lude"—an enticing act of poetic "fore-play" that piques the listener's interest.[16] The *nasīb*, especially the amorous and erotic *nasīb ghazalī*, undoubtedly has this effect. However, scholars such as Stefan Sperl and I have proposed an essential structural (in his case Structuralist) reading. If we view the roots of the *qaṣīdah*-structure as resembling the transitional structure of rites of passage, that is a pattern of psycho-social development from immaturity to maturity, we can see the *nasīb* section as grounded in the first adolescent experiences of self-consciousness, self-centeredness, untrammeled emotion, and, especially, the first experience of erotic love and betrayal. Love and betrayal are universal experiences that serve as the necessary setting-off-point (Van Gennep's "separation phase") for a process of or journey toward maturation, characterized by the establishment of permanent bonds of mutual allegiance, fidelity, and responsibility. As has been pointed out in ritual structures and in the *qaṣīdah*, the opening and closing components bear a dialectical relationship. Particularly in the three-part *qaṣīdah*, the emphasis of the poem lies in the process of transition, as well as the starting and ending points. In any case, the failed private and personal erotic relationship is left behind and is replaced by a mature public and political relationship—the poet's allegiance to and willingness to sacrifice for the tribe or patron in an abiding, mutual, and permanent bond of trust and allegiance instituted by the poem itself.[17] In more explicitly Structuralist terms, Sperl demonstrates the antithetical relation between the treacherous beloved of the *nasīb* and the loyal patron of the *madīḥ*. He notes, however—and this is important for us here—that this dialectical relationship creates a conceptual bond or even identity between the two.[18]

Thus, the emotionally heightened, intimate, first-person, experience of erotic love and betrayal, the immaturity and self-involvement of the poet-speaker-victim, and its dialectical relation to the patron are essential to the *nasīb*. Furthermore, I would like to shed light on another aspect, related to the dialectical one, through a socio-anthropological perspective: The notions of betrayal, deception, breaking of promises, and stinginess are bound into motifs associated with the female beloved featured in the *nasīb*; whereas virtues are literally that, *vir*-tues, that is, 'manly' traits—of loyalty, allegiance, generosity, and nobility—are firmly established in the all-male *madīḥ* or *fakhr*

section. This gendering of vice and virtue is embedded in the classical Arabic poetic code.

The result is that the motifs of the highly private, personal, and gendered (female) betrayal and failed relationships of the *nasīb* can be used or understood metaphorically to express, or rather allude to, failed relationships of a public and political nature. This is not so much the use of allegory as a subtle layering of meaning that allows the poet to simultaneously express and evade a public-political statement or accusation.

Arabic poetry enjoys two poetic conventions that have the effect of encouraging polyvalent readings: both involve the use of pronouns. First, the conventionally female beloved can be referred to with either the masculine or feminine pronoun. Second, in what is termed *iltifāt* (also found in the Qurʾān), pronouns for the same referent can be switched in person, gender, and/or number. For example, the poet can switch from addressing the beloved as *anti* (you, f.s.) to *hiya* (she, f.s.), but also from *anti* (you, f.s.) to *anta* (you, m.s.) to *antum* (you, m.pl.), etc. Therefore, on the one hand, the reader remains focused on the conventional female beloved—and literary criticism traditionally insists that the referent remains the same even as the pronouns change. On the other hand, the expression can at the same time seem to allude to a different or broader referent—such as a tribe (of men) instead of an individual, etc. This convention of pronoun switching, I argue, has a way of destabilizing both the point of view (person) and the antecedent (person, number, gender) and, further, of intimating allusive, metaphorical, or allegorical intent.

When little or nothing is known of the contextual circumstances of a poem, the *nasīb* is conventionally understood, literally, as the expression of an intimate, personal, and emotionally charged erotic experience, however much it may serve as a metonym, metaphor, or allegory for broader, political, experiences. It is only when a poem is accompanied by some form of traditional or historical setting that the apparently private erotic *nasīb* appears to bear a clearer—or more convincing—public, political allegory or allusion. The crucial point, however, is that the message is never made overtly political and public—and that the poet's refraining from issuing an explicit public and political statement is crucial to the politics of his poetics.

This argument has two corollaries. The first is that the naïve reading of the *nasīb* as actually autobiographical on the literal level is correct at least in the sense that this is how the poet intends the reader to first read it. However, the erotic *nasīb* is not historically biographical or autobiographical. Rather, it is composed entirely of conventional poetic motifs. The poet-speaker himself is not an "autobiographical I," but a "lyrical I"—a poetic conceit. Indeed, if there is a historical or biographical aspect to the *nasīb* at all, it is at the political, allegorical, or metaphorical level and not at the literal, personal level. The

second corollary is that if we can determine from historical or traditional settings of a particular poem's composition that its erotic *nasīb* is imbued with political references or allusions, we can presume or, at least, suspect that the same is the case for other poems whose circumstances are not known to us.

I will look briefly at the *nasīb*s of two Abbasid *qaṣīdah*s from the 10th century. In both cases, the unnamed public figure involved in the political falling-out is the celebrated Ḥamdānid emir of Aleppo, Sayf al-Dawlah (r. 947–967). In the first case, Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī's (d. 965) first panegyric to Kāfūr, the Ikhshīdids' Black slave ruler of Egypt, the political allusion in the *nasīb* and its referent, Sayf al-Dawlah, are widely, indeed generally, recognized. In the second case, the most celebrated of Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī's (d. 968) Rūmiyyāt (Byzantine prison-poems), the *nasīb* has become so well-known as a love-song (most famous in the arrangement of the Egyptian composer Riyāḍ al-Sunbāṭī (d. 1981) as performed by the Egyptian singer Umm Kulthūm (d. 1975)), that its political allusions—and indeed, the second half of the poem—are largely unrecognized—at least, in the popular realm.

I: Al-Mutanabbī's First Praise Poem to Kāfūr: The Nasīb

Feeling underappreciated and underpaid at the court of Sayf al-Dawlah in Aleppo, al-Mutanabbī answered the call to come to the court of Kāfūr, the eunuch Black slave ruler of the Turkic Ikhshīdid dynasty of Egypt. The poem has a three-part structure, as it reinstitutes the central journey (*raḥīl*) section of the *qaṣīdah* to express the physical, emotional, and political transition of the poet as he cuts off his bonds of allegiance to and flees the court of his former patron, and thereby declares his loyalty and allegiance to his new patron. The poet opens the *nasīb* with the words: "*Kafā bika dāʾan"* (Disease enough for you), apparently apostrophizing himself (lines 1–5), then turns to a more intimate dialog with his own heart (6–12).

Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī
"Disease Enough"[19]

1. Disease enough for you that you consider death your cure!
   And enough for death that it become your hope!

2. You hoped for death when you hoped to see
   A true friend, and found none, or even a dissembling foe.

3. If you are content to live in ignominy
Then don't equip yourself with a Yemeni sword,

4. Don't choose the long spears for the attack,
Nor the best bred of the full-grown battle-steeds.

5. Timidity never helps lions against hunger,
Nor are they feared till they become ferocious.

6. I loved you, my heart, before you loved him who is now distant—
He has been treacherous, so you be faithful.

7. I know that separation makes you complain after him,
But you are not my heart if I see you complaining.

8. For the eye's tears betray their master
If they run after the trail of his betrayers.

9. If generosity is not bestowed free of reproach,
Praise is not gained, nor wealth retained.

10. The soul has qualities that indicate one's character—
Was it out of true munificence he gave, or mere pretense?

11. Less passion, O heart, for perhaps
I've seen you give true love to one who is untrue.

12. I am by nature so devoted that, were I to travel back to youth again,
With heavy heart and weeping eye would I leave gray hair behind,

[*Raḥīl Section*]

13. But in Fusṭāṭ is a sea to which I bring
My life and loyalty, my affection and my rhymes,
. . . . . .

Arabic text[20]

١	كَفَى بكَ داءً أنْ ترَى المَوْتَ شافِيَا	وَحَسْبُ المَنَايَا أنْ يكُنّ أمانِيَا
٢	تَمَنّيْتَهَا لمّا تَمَنّيْتَ أنْ تَرَى	صَديقاً فأعْيَا أوْ عَدُوّاً مُداجِيَا
٣	إذا كنتَ تَرْضَى أنْ تَعيشَ بذِلّةٍ	فَلا تَسْتَعِدّنّ الحُسامَ اليَمَانِيَا
٤	وَلا تَستَطيلَنّ الرِّماحَ لِغَارَةٍ	وَلا تَستَجيدَنّ العِتاقَ المَذاكِيَا
٥	فما يَنْفَعُ الأُسْدَ الحَياءُ من الطَّوَى	وَلا تُتّقَى حتى تكونَ ضَوَارِيَا
٦	حَبَبْتُكَ قَلْبي قَبْلَ حُبّكَ مَن نَأَى	وَقد كانَ غَدّاراً فكُنْ أنتَ وَافِيَا
٧	وَأعْلَمُ أنّ البَينَ يُشْكيكَ بَعْدَهُ	فَلَسْتَ فُؤادي إنْ رَأيْتُكَ شَاكِيَا
٨	فإنّ دُمُوعَ العَينِ غُدْرٌ بِرَبّهَا	إذا كُنّ إثْرَ الغَادِرِين جَوَارِيَا
٩	إذا الجُودُ لم يُزْرَقْ خَلاصاً من الأذَى	فَلا الحَمْدُ مكْسوباً وَلا المالُ باقِيَا
١٠	وَللنّفْسِ أخْلاقٌ تَدُلّ على الفَتى	أكانَ سَخاءً ما أتَى أمْ تَسَاخِيَا
١١	أقِلَّ اشتِياقاً أيّهَا القَلْبُ رُبّمَا	رَأيْتُكَ تُصْفي الوُدّ من ليسَ صافيَا
١٢	خُلِقْتُ ألُوفاً لَوْ رَجعتُ إلى الصِّبَى	لَفارَقتُ شَيبي مُوجَعَ القلبِ باكِيَا
١٣	وَلَكِنّ بالفُسْطاطِ بَحْراً أزَرْتُهُ	حَيَاتِي وَنُصْحي وَالهَوَى وَالقَوَافِيَا
	[. . . . .]	

The initial "meaning" of the *nasīb* of this poem is understood to be the conventional theme of the poet's erotic suffering and despair at his betrayal at the hands of his (female) beloved. While the opening lines (1–5) express a general despair and world-weariness, indeed, death-wish, the following passage (6–12), in which the poet addresses his own heart, explores with great delicacy the contradictory plight of the betrayed lover who wrongs or "betrays" himself through his own virtues of loyalty and devotion. With this, the poet abandons his posture as a virtuous victim in the *nasīb* to take his fate into his own hands and direct himself to his new patron in Fusṭāṭ, the Egyptian capital (13).

However, beneath this surface, this *nasīb* is generally taken by commentators and

critics to allude to al-Mutanabbī's erstwhile patron, Sayf al-Dawlah, the emir of Aleppo, from whose court the disappointed and disgruntled poet fled when Kāfūr invited him to Fusṭāṭ. Interestingly, although this *nasīb* is phrased in the 3ms, "he," it is not taken to directly "refer" to Sayf al-Dawlah, but rather, through the conventions of disappointment over the treacherous female lover, to "allude" to him. A curious exception to this reading is that of the Egyptian editor, Maḥmūd Shākir, who takes this *nasīb* as evidence that al-Mutanabbī was in love with Sayf al-Dawlah's sister, Khawlah![21]

The virtue of this *nasīb* in terms of the performative goals of the poem is that it declares that the poet's previous bonds of affection and loyalty have been cut-off due to the treachery and betrayal of the *other party*—through no fault of the poet. It does not, however, overtly mention the offending party—which would be as socially gauche as it would be politically awkward. In other words, the poet declares the abrogation of his allegiance to his previous patron without having to explicitly mention the patron or state the object of that allegiance.

II: Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī's: Boast from a Byzantine Prison: The Nasīb

Abū Firās, a younger cousin of Sayf al-Dawlah, was second only to al-Mutanabbī among the famed circle of poets attending the Ḥamdānid court of Aleppo. Appointed governor of Manbij at an early age by Sayf al-Dawlah, he was taken prisoner by the Byzantines (al-Rūm) during one of the many border skirmishes between the two. After his capture, he languished in prison in Constantinople for four years (962–966) as his cousin, the emir, failed to pay the ransom for his release. He was finally freed during a general exchange of prisoners. Of his Rūmiyyāt (Byzantine prison-poems), the one that opens: *"Arāka ʿaṣiyya al-dam ʿi"* (I see your tears refuse [to fall]) has been throughout the centuries the most popular.

Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī

"I See Your Tears Refuse to Fall"[22]

1. I see that your tears refuse to fall and that you are by nature steadfast,
   But does passion wield no power over you to forbid or to command?

2. Of course, I am filled with yearning and suffer the pangs of love,
   But a man like me does not broadcast his secrets.

3. But when night weakens my resolve, I unclench passion's fist
And I humiliate by my weeping those tears that were too proud to flow,

4. With a fire so bright that, when my passion and my thoughts ignite it,
It nearly glows right through my ribs.

5. She makes me hope in vain for union, though death stands between us.
If I die still thirsting, may no rain ever fall again!

6. I preserved but you let perish the love between us:
You proved better at excuses than at loyalty.

7. These days are nothing but pages whose letters
Are erased by the same hand that wrote them.

8. May my soul be ransom to that tender girl of the tribe that departed at morn!
My love for her was my sin, her beauty my excuse!

9. She furtively attends to what my slanderers say,
While my ear is deaf to all who would defame her.

10. I have become a Bedouin, though my people are settled,
For, to me, an abode where her tribe does not dwell is a desert.

11. I fought my own tribe over my love for you,
Though, but for my love for you, we'd have mixed like wine and water.

12. Even if what my slanderers said were true (but it's not!),
Your Faith should have destroyed the Infidels' edifice of lies.

13. I was loyal—though sometimes loyalty can cause humiliation—
To a girl in the tribe who was by nature treacherous.

14. At times, she was dignified, though youthful passion stirred her veins;
At other times, she frolicked like a frisky colt.

15. She'd ask me, "Who are you?" though she knew full well—
Can anyone not know a man like me?

16. So I said what she, and love, wanted to hear, “The one you slew!”
“Which one?” she replied, “For there are many!”

17. So I said, “You didn’t have to torment me with questions
And inquire about me, when you know me from experience!”

18. Then she said, “Since we parted, time has treated you with scorn.”
“No,” said I, “It’s not time, but you, who have scorned me.

19. Were it not for you, sorrows would have found no way
To my heart, but love is a bridge that leads to ruin.”

20. Between jest and earnestness, there perishes a heart
That could not bear the pain of separation.

21. So I was certain that after my humiliation no lover would ever attain honor,
And that my hand was emptied of what it once had grasped.

22. I turned the matter over in my mind but found no rest:
When other cares made me forget, separation from the beloved implored to remember.

23. So I submitted once more to the rule of fate and to her rule:
Hers is the sin, which will never be punished; mine the apology!

24. As if I were trying to call, from across the soft earth at the wadi’s mouth,
A tawny gazelle, atremble with fear,

25. Now starting with fright, then drawing near as if to call
Her still wobbly-legged fawn in the wadi’s bed.

26. So don’t deny you know me, my uncle’s daughter, for surely
Both Bedouin and townsfolk know the man you would deny!

27. So don’t deny you know me, for I’m never unknown
When feet slip and the cry for help goes up!

[Fakhr section]

28. For I am the one who leads every battalion
Accustomed to victory and never forsaking it,

29. For I am the one who attacks in every dreaded land
Full of hostile glances for those that alight there.
[. . . . . .]

Arabic text[23]

١	أَرَاكَ عَصِيَّ ٱلدَّمْعِ، شِيمَتُكَ ٱلصَّبْرُ،	أَمَا لِلْهَوَى نَهْيٌ عَلَيْكَ وَلَا أَمْرُ؟
٢	بَلَى، أَنَا مُشْتَاقٌ، وَعِنْدِيَ لَوْعَةٌ،	وَلَكِنَّ مِثْلِي لا يُذَاعُ لَهُ سِرُّ!
٣	إِذَا ٱللَّيْلُ، أَضْوَانِي بَسَطْتُ يَدَ ٱلْهَوَى	وَأَذْلَلْتُ دَمْعاً مِنْ خَلَائِقِهِ ٱلْكِبْرُ
٤	تَكَادُ تُضِيءُ ٱلنَّارُ، بَيْنَ جَوَانِحِي،	إِذَا هِيَ أَذْكَتْهَا ٱلصَّبَابَةُ وَٱلْفِكْرُ
٥	مُعَلِّلَتِي بِٱلْوَصْلِ، وَٱلْمَوْتُ دُونَهُ،	إِذَا مِتُّ ظَمْآناً، فَلَا نَزَلَ ٱلْقَطْرُ!
٦	حَفِظْتُ وَضَيَّعْتِ ٱلْمَوَدَّةَ بَيْنَنَا	وَأَحْسَنَ، مِنْ بَعْضِ ٱلْوَفَاءِ لَكِ، ٱلْعُذْرُ
٧	وَمَا هَذِهِ ٱلْأَيَّامُ إِلَّا صَحَائِفٌ	لِأَحْرُفِهَا، مِنْ كَفِّ كَاتِبِهَا، بَشْرُ
٨	بِنَفْسِي، مِنَ ٱلْغَادِينَ فِي ٱلْحَيِّ، غَادَةً	هَوَايَ لَهَا ذَنْبٌ، وَبَهْجَتُهَا عُذْرُ
٩	تَرُوغُ إِلَى ٱلْوَاشِينَ فِيَّ، وَإِنَّ لِي	لَأُذْناً بِهَا، عَنْ كُلِّ واشِيَةٍ، وَقْرُ
١٠	بَدَوْتُ، وَأَهْلِي حَاضِرُونَ، لِأَنَّنِي	أَرَى أَنَّ دَاراً، لَسْتِ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا، قَفْرُ
١١	وَحَارَبْتُ قَوْمِي فِي هَوَاكِ، وَإِنَّهُمْ	وَإِيَّايَ، لَوْ لا حُبُّكِ، ٱلْمَاءُ وَٱلْخَمْرُ
١٢	فَإِنْ كَانَ مَا قَالَ ٱلْوُشَاةُ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ	فَقَدْ يَهْدِمُ ٱلْإِيْمَانُ مَا شَيَّدَ ٱلْكُفْرُ
١٣	وَفَيْتُ، وَ فِي بَعْضِ ٱلْوَفَاءِ مَذَلَّةٌ،	لِآنِسَةٍ فِي ٱلْحَيِّ شِيمَتُهَا ٱلْغَدْرُ
١٤	وَقُورٌ، وَرَيعَانُ ٱلصِّبَا يَسْتَفِزُّهَا؛	فَتَأْرَنُ، أَحْيَاناً، كَمَا يَأْرَنُ ٱلْمُهْرُ
١٥	تُسَائِلُنِي:«مَنْ أَنْتَ؟»، وَهْيَ عَلِيمَةٌ،	وَهَلْ بِفَتىً مِثْلِي عَلَى حَالِهِ نُكْرُ؟
١٦	فَقُلْتُ، كَمَا شَاءَتْ، وَشَاءَ لَهَا ٱلْهَوَى:	«قَتِيلُكِ!» قَالَتْ: «أَيُّهُمْ؟ فَهُمُ كُثْرُ!»

١٧ فَقُلْتُ لَهَا: «لَوْ شِئْتِ لَمْ تَتَعَنَّتِي، وَلَمْ تَسْأَلِي عَنِّي، وَعِنْدَكِ بِي خُبْرُ!»

١٨ فَقَالَتْ:«لَقَدْ أَزْرَى بِكَ ٱلدَّهْرُ بَعْدَنَا!» فَقُلْتُ:«مَعَاذَ ٱللهِ! بَلْ أَنْتِ لا ٱلدَّهْرُ،

١٩ وَمَا كَانَ لِلْأَحْزَانِ، لَوْ لَاكِ، مَسْلَكٌ إِلَى ٱلْقَلْبِ؛ لَكِنَّ ٱلْهَوَى لِلْبِلَى جِسْرُ!»

٢٠ وَتَهْلِكُ، بَيْنَ ٱلْهَزْلِ وَٱلْجِدِّ، مُهْجَةٌ؛ إِذَا مَا عَدَاهَا ٱلْبَيْنُ عَذَّبَهَا ٱلْهَجْرُ

٢١ فَأَيْقَنْتُ أَنْ لَا عِزَّ، بَعْدِي، لِعَاشِقٍ؛ وَأَنَّ يَدِي مِمَّا عَلِقْتُ بِهِ صِفْرُ

٢٢ وَقَلَّبْتُ أَمْرِي لَا أَرَى لِيَ رَاحَةً، إِذا ٱلْهَمُّ أَسْلَانِي أَلَحَّ بِيَ ٱلْهَجْرُ

٢٣ فَعُدْتُ إِلَى حُكْمِ ٱلزَّمَانِ وَحُكْمِهَا، لَهَا ٱلذَّنْبُ لَا تُجْزَى بِهِ وَلِيَ ٱلْعُذْرُ

٢٤ كَأَنِّي أُنَادِي، دُونَ مَيْثَاءَ، ظَبْيَةً، عَلَى شَرَفٍ ظَمْيَاءَ، جَلَّلَهَا ٱلذُّعْرُ

٢٥ تَجَفَّلُ حِيناً، ثُمَّ تَدْنُو كَأَنَّمَا تُنَادِي طَلاً، بِٱلْوَادِ، أَعْجَزَهُ ٱلْحُضْرُ

٢٦ فَلَا تُنْكِرِينِي، يَٱبْنَةَ ٱلْعَمِّ، إِنَّهُ لَيَعْرِفُ مَنْ أَنْكَرْتِهِ: ٱلْبَدْوُ وَٱلحَضْرُ

٢٧ وَلَا تُنْكِرِينِي، إِنَّنِي غَيْرُ مُنْكَرٍ إِذَا زَلَّتِ ٱلْأَقْدَامُ؛ وَٱسْتُنْزِلَ ٱلنَّصْرُ

٢٨ وَإِنِّي لَجَرَّارٌ لِكُلِّ كَتِيبَةٍ مُعَوَّدَةٍ أَنْ لَا يُخِلَّ بِهَا ٱلنَّصْرُ

٢٩ وَإِنِّي لَنَزَّالٌ بِكُلِّ مَخُوفَةٍ كَثِيرٌ إِلَى نُزَّالِهَا ٱلنَّظَرُ ٱلشَّزْرُ

[. . . . . .]

The *nasīb* is highly impassioned and exquisitely lyrical in its intimate and personal expression of erotic suffering and all that it entails of hope and despair, heartbreak, sighs and tears, humiliation, and the tormented lover's undying devotion. The poem opens with an unnamed interlocutor—who might be the poet himself—querying the heart-broken poet on his stoic ability to withhold his tears and hide his feelings (line 1). The poet responds that, of course, he is suffering terribly, but a man does not express his feelings (2). That is, until nighttime, line 3, when the poet's tears, sighs, and emotions flood out uncontrollably, at least, through line 27. From line 2 onward, the poet consistently speaks in the first person, but references to the beloved, on the other hand, switch repeatedly between "she" (3fs) in lines 5, 7–10, 13–14, [15–19], 20–25 and "you" (2fs) in lines 6, 11–12, [15–19], 26–27. Notably, this constant switching or shifting reflects the distraught emotional state of the poet. Of further note is the pronoun complex of the dialog between

the poet-lover and the beloved quoted in lines 15–19: "She said" (3fs), "I said" (1s), and the quoted phrases in "you," both 2fs and 2ms. Finally, we should note the repeated phrase: "So don't deny you know me" of lines 26–27. Although phrased in the feminine singular "you," it reads equally, especially in the context of the thematic shift from the lyric-erotic *nasīb* to the martial-heroic *fakhr*, by way of *iltifāt* pronoun shift, as a masculine plural "you" addressed to the poet's liege-lord and tribesmen at Sayf al-Dawlah's court in Aleppo.

More broadly, the poet-lover's complaint and the female beloved's teasing and disparagement of the poet in the *nasīb* serve as the perfect keying or staging for his ensuing boast in the *fakhr* section of the poem. Furthermore, once we have understood that the poet's boast is, in essence, his petition to his kinsmen—Sayf al-Dawlah among them—to recognize his loyalty and allegiance to them and his demand that they fulfill their obligations of kinship and fealty by paying his ransom, it becomes difficult to avoid the conclusion that the *nasīb*, however intimate and erotic in tone, is a veiled accusation, aimed at Sayf al-Dawlah in particular, of disloyalty and betrayal in not fulfilling the obligations of kinship and fealty to his cousin and liege-man.

In this light, the poet's suffering from the beloved's flirtation, teasing, and infidelities serves as a perfect analog for the prisoner's feeling that Sayf al-Dawlah is "playing with him"—in terms of (broken) promises, (disappointed) expectations that the ransom will be paid, and competing loyalties back home in the Aleppan court. The conceit of a conversation between lovers, then, becomes a (veiled) negotiation between kinsmen. What is intimated through this essentially allegorical reading of the *nasīb* is then stated somewhat more directly in the second half of the poem, the *fakhr* (boast). There, too, now at an extremely explicit, rather than allusive or allegorical level, the private and political merge, for, the poet virtually has no "private sphere" in which the "individual enjoys some degree of authority . . ." until his cousin, the emir, lives up to his public and political responsibility of obtaining his release from prison.

I conclude my section on the Abbasid court panegyric by noting that while the referents of the *nasīb* are polyvalent, coded, or implied (even the female beloved, if named, bears a conventional poetic, not a personal historical, name), those of the second and final section, of *madīḥ* or *fakhr*, are named and are explicitly historical, usually identifiable, figures.

The Poetics of the Private and Public: Arabic Free Verse

The highly traditional form of the Classical Arabic *qaṣīdah* provided, as we saw in Part I, a well-established code of allusion and implication, even allegory, to create an interface between the private and personal on the one hand and the public and political on the other. The poets of the Post WWII Arabic Free Verse (*al-shiʿr al-ḥurr*, *qaṣīdat al-tafʿīlah*), however, largely abandoned the diction, motifs, themes, and structure of the Classical *qaṣīdah* and claimed their place in the Arabic poetic tradition by virtue of maintaining some vestiges of Classical prosody. Rather than the classical monometer and monorhyme, the length of the poetic line and even the meter were now variable, as was the rhyme. What the Free Verse poets rejected was not merely the strict prosodic requirements of the Classical *qaṣīdah* and, as is commonly pointed out, the now-archaic classical poetic lexicon but, above all, the closely encoded interlocking network of metaphors, metonymies, symbols, and allusions—verbal, rhetorical, and structural. On the one hand, Arab poets developed a radically new and specifically Arabic modernist form that opened Arabic poetry to more immediate and contemporary expression and subjects and to world—mostly Western—literature. On the other hand, each poet had for the most part to create their own storehouse of words, images, topics, etc. These might be borrowed from or influenced by—from Western poetry—T. S. Eliot, Edith Sitwell, etc., or might be new inventions. Perhaps the Iraqi poet ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī is the most obvious example of a poet who has created his own repertoire symbols, diction, metaphors, etc. However, for all the Arab Free Verse modernists, in the face of modern political and poetic realities, the expression of the interface between the private and the public, the personal and the political, had to be reconfigured on a mostly individual basis.

I will examine three examples. The first is of commitment or *iltizām*, the obligation of the artist to take a public or political stance. However, as we shall see in the Egyptian poet Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī's (b. 1935) Elegy to Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, "Al-Riḥlah Ibtadaʾat" (1970) (The Journey Has Begun), the poet also explores and expresses the relationship of personal and national identity and identification with a charismatic leader. The second is a highly ironic exploration of the relationship between the individual and the police state by the Iraqi poet, Buland al-Ḥaydarī (d. 1996), which appears under two different titles: "Anta Mudānun, Yā Hādhā!" (Hey You! You're Under Arrest!) and "Al-Huwiyyāt al-ʿAshr" ("The Ten IDs") (late 1980s). The third exemplifies how a layering of metaphorical possibilities allows the poet to convey simultaneously the personal, the political, the mythic, and the metapoetic in ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī's (d.

1999) elegantly achieved lyric, "Alladhī Yaʾtī wa Lā Yaʾtī" (1966) (He Who Comes and Does Not Come).

I: Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī: Al-Riḥlah Ibtadaʾat (The Journey Has Begun)

Ḥijāzī's poem is extraordinary in the strikingly original ways in which it captures the combination of deeply personal and intimate emotions, such as those of shock and grief at the death of the charismatic leader, with the public (political) and communal dimension of the national tragedy. The full poem is quite long, running to approximately 180 uneven lines of free verse. It opens with the lyric motif of the poet addressing, in the first person, a woman, his beloved. However, it immediately becomes clear that the two of them are on their way by train to Cairo after hearing the news of ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's death. The main body of the poem is a lament for the fallen hero and savior, who takes on the mythic trappings of a fertility god. The poem includes elements of disbelief and denial that the hero has fallen, expressions of love and devotion, hope for his return or resurrection, and above all the simultaneously intensely personal and public mourning that sweeps through the city, transforming it into a human sea. The closing section, regrettably the weakest, is a politically engaged call for the nation to take up where the hero has left off in the liberation of Palestine.

I will limit myself to the most striking and original passage, in which the poet evokes the image of the mourners, each holding up a placard with a picture of the dead leader—addressed in the second person ("your faces, sorrowful and brown"/ *wujūhuka al-sumru al-ḥazīnah*)—as a compelling metaphor to capture the sense of what is simultaneously an intimate personal and collective national tragedy.

Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī
The Journey Has Begun: Elegy for Gamal Abd al-Nasser (1970)

[. . . . . .]
I saw in the streets a Cairo like no other.
Calamity convulsed the city from end to end.
It went out to you with the morning as if reeling,
And began once more to surge with what was hidden in its gut.
The quarters of the city spill out, one after another, around the course of the Nile,
And the towering edifices and lofty palaces disappear among the bodies of her people,

And the sons of petty mamluks are lost among her weeping sons,
And the slain star gleams over her heights,
Banners flutter
And small handkerchiefs hang out in the vast morn's black processions.
No, he didn't die!
Your faces, sorrowful and brown, look down upon their heads,
Nothing of you remains to us but them,
The hands cling to them,
Until it's as if you've become thousands of men
And as if you've become the private property of each hand that bears you,
So that each bereaved woman has a Gamal!
And each victim of oppression has a Gamal!
[. . . . . .]

Trans. Suzanne Stetkevych

Arabic text[24]

أحمد عبد المعطي حجازي
الرحلة ابتدأت (في رثاء عبد الناصر)

[. . . . . .]

ورأيت في الطرقات قاهرة سوى الأخرى،
تفجرت المصيبة عن مداها
خرجت إليك مع الصباح كأنها مادت،
وعادت مرة أخرى تموج بما تخبئ في حشاها
تتدفق الأحياء حيا بعد حي حول مجرى نيلها،
وتغيب في أجساد أهليها الشواهق والصروح
ويضيع في أبنائها الباكين أبناء المماليك الصغار،
ويلمع النجم القتيل على ذراها
وترفرف الشارات
تندلع المناديل الصغيرة في سواد جنائز الصبح الفسيح
لا لم يمت!
وتطل من فوق الرؤوس وجوهك السمر الحزينه
لم يبق منك لنا سواها

تتشبث الأيدي بها
فكأنما أصبحت آلاف الرجال
وكأنما أصبحت للكف التي حملتك ملكا خالصا
فلكل ثاكلة "جمال! "
ولكل مضطهد "جمال! "
[. . . . . .]

II: Buland al-Ḥaydarī: "Anta Mudānun Yā Hādhā!" (Hey You, You're Under Arrest!) ["Al-Huwiyyāt al-ʿAshr" (The Ten IDs)]

This poem by Buland al-Ḥaydarī, from the 1980s, revolves around the Arabic homonym or polysemy of *huwiyyah* to engage in complex conceptual wordplay involving punning or, perhaps more precisely, *double entendre*. The first meaning of *huwiyyah* (a *nisbah*-form derived from the pronoun *huwa* "he" = "he-ness") is "identity," a conceptual term for the sense of self. The second is its use as an abbreviated form of the term *biṭāqat huwiyyah* (the term *bitāqah shakhṣiyyah* is also used)—"identity card" or "ID." The two meanings overlap or are confused as the poet exploits this homonymity or polysemy to explore the distortions of the sense of self in a police state or authoritarian regime. Indeed, the poem, which, in a personal typescript, was sent to me in the late 1980s (and which I follow here), is titled "Anta Mudānun Yā Hādhā" (Hey You, You're Under Arrest!—*mudān* literally means "convicted" or "guilty"). In the poet's 1989 collection, *Ilā Bayrūt maʿ taḥiyyātī*, the poem bears the title "Al-Huwiyyāt al-ʿAshr" (The Ten IDs) and has minor textual variations. From the beginning, the personal sense of self, self-confidence, and authority that we associate with the "private sphere" is confused or conflated with the state authority, associated with the "public sphere," to determine status and identity and to issue state documents, identity cards, which the citizen is then required to carry and produce upon (state) request to prove their "identity." In the authoritarian state, as the poem demonstrates, there is a total distortion and confusion of both the "private" and "public" identities. The poet-speaker seems to conflate his identification cards with his personal sense of identity and "self."

The poem can be divided into three sections or movements. In the first, the speaker, addressing himself and/or the reader, presents himself taking a walk at night—but seems to rely on the ten IDs in his pocket to justify what we would normally consider a purely "private" undertaking. His sense of confidence is reflected in his sense of "owning" the night, the sidewalks, etc., and the steady and commanding sound of his shoes—"taq taq

taq"—on the pavement. This sense of confidence and power, however, soon gives way to an altogether sadistic—or is it masochistic?—tormenting of his own shadow—inescapably a symbol of the self or soul—which he drowns, smothers, and crushes. The message seems to be that when one accepts as one's own the "public" state definition of the self, it is at the expense of and through the brutal masochistic repression of a "private" or personal sense of self.

In the second part of the poem, the speaker turns to the IDs themselves. Initially, he takes pride in his name, his photograph, the signature of the minister of justice. But then, in what we might term an "over-identification" with his IDs, he notes that this official signature has cut his lip (on his photograph) and knocked out one of his teeth. He takes this, as we would say, "personally" and as a bad sign. Surely, this is an image of state brutality toward the individual. However, he does his best to repress his apprehension and declares his total submission to the remaining IDs and the sense of security that he depends on them to provide. He continues singing, whistling, and laughing through the night to the increasingly imperious "taq taq taq" of his footsteps.

The third part takes place the next day, when two policemen show up at his door. They do not even call him by his name—his "identity" and his "ten IDs" mean nothing to them and afford him no protection from arrest, being declared guilty, and imprisonment. In a flash of insight, he realizes that his identification cards are nothing but "false witnesses" that provide him with neither personal nor public "identity" or protection from the state. In a particularly effective use of the Free Verse rhetorical tool of repetition, the speaker laughs once more. However, the verbally identical "I laughed and I laughed and I laughed" is now utterly transformed from an expression of happiness, self-confidence, and even authority to a cruelly ironic laughter of loss of self, loss of confidence, and loss of freedom. In an even more brilliant exploitation of repetition, the self-confident imperiousness of the speaker's footsteps—"taq taq taq"—is now transformed into the self-confident and imperious "taq taq taq" of his jailer's footsteps.

Ultimately, we must ask ourselves, what does the poet-speaker mean when he says, "In a time that has no identity//Whoever has any identity/ID will be found guilty," before imploring his jailers to rip up and crush his ID cards? First, he seems to mean that being the "perfect citizen" of an authoritarian state, accepting its rules and definitions of the self (its ID cards), is no guarantee of safety. As the individual, or the individual's rights, is of no concern to the state, any "identity" is inculpatory or incriminating. In an authoritarian state, individuals are stripped of their rights—that is, of their individuality, their ability to speak and act freely. In other words, the authoritarian state creates a "public"

realm that leaves no space for a separate "private" realm. Even the simple exercise of "private" individual rights, such as taking a walk at night, becomes a crime. Al-Ḥaydarī's poem disabuses us of any idea that there can really be two distinct spheres or realms of "private" and "public." To have no identity—that is, individuality—in the public sphere inevitably distorts or prevents any true sense of identity and individuality in the private sphere, and vice-versa. Further, he tells us, to have "no identity" means to be a person with no identifiable political or moral convictions or allegiances, who might therefore be able to successfully navigate a state of the same sort. Clearly, the ramifications of Buland al-Ḥaydarī's "The Ten IDs" go far beyond the scope of this paper and call upon us, in our own fraught political times, to give his poem our further consideration.[25]

Buland al-Ḥaydarī
Hey, You! You're Under Arrest! [The Ten IDs]
[Part 1]

****

I went out one night
In my pocket I had ten IDs that allowed me to go out that night.
My name is Buland ibn Akram.
I'm from a well-known family.
I never killed anyone . . . I never robbed anyone
And in my pocket I have ten IDs that prove who I am,
So why shouldn't I go out tonight?
. . . . .
The sea had no shores
And the darkness was bigger than a man's two eyes,
    Deeper than a man's two eyes,
And the street was empty
Except for the sound of my footsteps
Taq . . . taq . . . taq
Now I gather my shadow under a streetlamp and now I spread it out
And I laughed because I realized that I owned my shadow
And that I could throw it behind me,
Drown it in a puddle of muddy water,
Crush it under my shoes,

Smother it in my coat.
Taq . . . taq . . . taq, with my shadow behind me,
Behind me, behind me. . .
What a big shadow you cast, you with the ten IDs!
In a time . . . in a country that has no identity.
I sang . . . I whistled . . . I shouted out loud . . . I laughed and I laughed and I laughed
And I felt as if I owned the sea, all of it, and all of the night,
And all of the black pavement,
And that now I could force them to listen to me,
To become the echo of my call
To become part of the sound of my footsteps
Taq . . . taq . . . taq
[Part 2]
I stuck my hand in my pocket . . . the ten IDs were still there
This is my name . . . this is my photo
This is the seal of the police chief of my town
This is the signature of the minister of justice—
A flourish from it has nicked my lip
And knocked out one of my teeth,
Scratched out part of my address
And I was afraid that . . . but then I swallowed my tongue
And I have seven other IDs
I swear if a mountain passed by them, it would bow down before them
and say they are greater
Than my poetry, than my letters, than my art
And because I
Had ten IDs in my pocket
I sang . . . I whistled . . . I shouted out loud . . . I laughed and I laughed and I laughed
What a big shadow you cast, you with your ten IDs in the deep of night,
Ten IDs in a time, in a country that has no identity.

****

[Part 3]
The next day

There were two policemen at my door
They asked me: Who are you?
Me!? Buland ibn Akram. I'm from a well-known family.
I never killed anyone . . . I never robbed anyone
And here in my pocket are ten IDs . . . that prove who I am and that I . . . but why?
They laughed at me . . . and at all ten of my IDs
And I saw a hand flash before my eyes, striking in my heart something between disappointment and fear.
—Hey, you! You're under arrest!
"Hey, you!?" What about my name and my photo?
And the signature of the minister of justice?
I had no idea . . . none at all
But I realized that my ten IDs were nothing but false witnesses
And that I would be spending the night in jail in the name of my ten IDs
And I laughed . . . and I laughed . . .and I laughed
. . . . . .
In a time that has no identity
Whoever has any identity/ID is guilty
Rip them up . . . rip them up, my jailers!
Crush them . . . crush them, my jailers!
. . . . . .
And I heard footsteps behind me
Taq . . . taq . . . taq
The sea was his and the night was his and all the black pavement was his
Taq . . . taq . . . taq

Trans. Suzanne Stetkevych

Arabic text[26]

بلند الحيدري
أنت مدان يا هذا [الهويات العشر]

وخرجتُ الليلةَ

كانت في جيبي عشرُ هُويات تسمح لي أن أخرج هذي الليلةَ
اسمي . . بلند ابن أكرم
وأنا من عائلة معروفهْ
وأنا لم أقتل أحداً . . . لم أسرق أحداً
بجيبي عشر هويات تشهد لي
فلماذا لا أخرج هذي الليلةَ
. . . . .
كان البحر بلا شطئآنْ
والظلمة كانت أكبر من عيني إنسانْ
أعمقَ من عيني إنسانْ
ورصيف الشارع كانْ
خلواً إلا من صوت حذائي
طق . . . . طق . . . . طق
أجمع ظلي في مصباح حيناً ...و أوزعه حينا
وضحكت لأني ، أدركت بأني أملك ظلي
وبأني أقدر أن أرميه ورائي
أن أغرقه في بركةِ ماءٍ وحلِ
إن أسحقه تحت حذائي
أن أخنقه بين ردائي
طق . . . طق . . . طق والظل ورائي
ورائي . . ورائي
ما أكبر ظلَك إنساناً يملك عشر هوياتٍ
في زمنٍ . . في بلدٍ لا يملك أي هويهْ
غنيتُ . . صفرتُ . . صرخت . . ضحكتُ ، ضحكتُ . .ضحكتُ
وأحسستُ بأنيَ أملك كلَ البحرِ وكل الليلِ
وكلَ الأرصفةِ السوداءِ
وأني أجبرها الآنَ على أن تُصغي لي
أن تصبحَ رجعاً لندائي
أن تصبح جزءاً من صوت حذائي
طق . . . طق . . . طق
ومددتُ يدي . . ما زالت عشر هوياتي في جيبي
هذا اسمي . . . هذا رسمي
هذا ختم مدير الشرطة في بلدي
هذا توقيعُ وزيرِ العدلِ
وقد مدّ به زهوٌ حزّ فمي

وأطاح بسن من أسناني
خدش بعضاً من عنواني
وخشيتُ على . . . . . فبلعتُ لساني
ومعي سبعُ هويات أخرى
أُقسم لو مرّ بها جبلٌ ، أحنى قامته ولقال: هي الكبرى
عن شعري ، عن أدبي ، عن فنّي
ولأني
أحمل عشر هويات في جيبي
غنيت . . . صفرت . . . صرخت . . ضحكت ، ضحكت ، ضحكت
ما أكبرَ ظلَ إنساناً يحمل عشرَ هويات في عتمة ليل ،
عشرَ هويات في زمن، في بلد لا يملك أي هويهْ
****

في اليوم الثاني
كان ببابي شرطيانِ
ساءلاني من أنت ؟
أنا . . ! بلند بن أكرم ، وأنا من عائلة معروفهْ
وأنا لم أقتل أحداً . . لم أسرق أحدا
وبجيبي عشرُ هويات تشهد لي وباني . . فلماذا ؟
ضحكا مني . . من كل هوياتي العشر
ورأيتُ يداً تومضُ في عيني ، تسقطُ ما بين الخيبةِ والجبنِ
— أنت مدانٌ يا هذا !
يا هذا . ! ماذا فعلا باسمي وبرسمي
وبتوقيع وزيرِ العدلِ
لم أدرِ . . لم أدرِ
لكني أدركتُ بأن هوياتي ما كانت إلا شهادةَ زورِ
وبأني سأنام الليلةَ في السجنِ وباسم و هوياتي العشرِ
وضحكتُ . . . ضحكتُ . . .ضحكتُ
. . . . . .
في زمنٍ لا يملك أي هويهْ
سيكون مداناً من يملك أي هويهْ
مزّقها . . مزّقها يا سجاني
اسحقها . . اسحقها يا سجاني
. . . . . .
وسمعتُ خطاه ورائي
طق . . . طق . . . طق

كان البحرُ له والليل له وجميع الأرصفة السوداءِ
طق . . . طق . . . طق

****

III: ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī: "Alladhī Yaʾtī wa Lā Yaʾtī" (He Who Comes and Does Not Come)

My third example, which is from al-Bayātī's 1966 collection, is earlier than the two other Free Verse poems already discussed. I have saved it for the end because it exhibits a striking polyvalence in its metaphorical language and imagery that is particularly pertinent to our discussion of the public and private spheres. At the same time, it is to my mind one of the most perfectly accomplished of al-Bayātī's exquisitely lyrical Free Verse poems. In it, he combines a lightened underpinning of the Tammūzī fertility myth of death and rebirth (as employed by T. S. Eliot and, following him, Arab Free Verse poets, such as the Iraqi Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (d. 1964)), with a commitment to *iltizām* or political engagement. However, to this he adds the dimensions of intimate personal love, on the one hand, and metapoetic inspirational anxiety, on the other. At the same time, the utter simplicity of the title and key phrase and much of the diction remind us of Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣabūr's unrivaled ability to extract lyrical depth from the simplest of language.

In al-Bayātī's poem, the combination of the mythic with simple every-day language centers on two primary polyvalent elements. The first is ʿĀʾishah (the name means "the living"), who is at once the beloved of the poet (that is, the poet's persona, in this collection, Omar Khayyam), the fertility goddess Ishtar, and the inspirational muse, who hovers between life and death. The second is the similarly vacillating identity of "he who" or the Arabic "that which" "comes and does not come." The polyvalent metaphorical meanings include erotic love, mythic death and rebirth, natural fertility, political revolution, and poetic inspiration—all fraught with anxiety and uncertainty.[27]

ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī
He Who Comes and Does Not Come

Aisha died, but I see her traversing the darkness
Waiting for a knight from Syria
O blind fly
Don't veil the light

From me, and from Aisha, O hoary dame!
—The wine in this tavern is diluted!
You got drunk for free
And the worm crawled over your pale sad forehead
And your eyes were all dried up.
—O my lord, nothing lasts but the One, the Everlasting
And these stars!
All else is but vanity and grasping at the wind.
—Aisha died, but I see her just as I see you
She said, and stretched out her hand, “I love you”
And the angels smiled . . .
Then, rain down, O cloud
Wherever you want, so tomorrow Nishapur will turn green
She will return to me from her abandoned grave
Wipe my cheek and water the rocks and bones
—He comes and does not come, I see him coming toward me, and I don’t.
His two hands point at me
From the shore of death that begins where life begins
—Who was weeping beneath this wall?
Dogs from the vision of an ensorcelled sorcerer
Barking in the darkness?
Or one root-dead
In the belly of the earth awaiting resurrection
Who was weeping under this wall?
Perhaps it was the wind that precedes him who comes and does not come
Perhaps a poet is born or dies

Trans. Suzanne Stetkevych

Arabic text[28]

عبد الوهاب البياتي
الذي يأتي ولا يأتي

عائشة ماتت ، ولكني أراها تذرع الظلام

تنتظر الفارس يأتي من بلاد الشام
— أيتها الذبابة العمياء
لا تحجبي الضياء
عني ، وعن عائشة ، أيتها الشمطاء
— مغشوشة خمرة تلك الحان
سكرتَ بالمجان
وزحف الدود على جبينك الممتقع الأسيان
وجفّت العينان
— مولايَ ، لا يبقا سوى الواحد القيّوم
وهذه النجوم
الكل باطل وقبض الريحْ
— عائشة ماتت ، ولكني أراها مثلما أراك
قالت ، ومدّت يدها : أهواك
وابتسم الملاك . .
فلتمطري أيتها السحابةْ
أيّان شئت ، فغداً تخضرّ نيسابور
تعود لي من قبرها المهجور
تمسح خدّي وتُرَوِّي الصخر والعظام
— يأتي ولا يأتي ، أراه مقبلاً نحوي ، ولا أراه
تشير لي يداه
من شاطئ الموت الذي يبدأ حيث تبدأ الحياة
— مَنْ كان يبكي تحت هذا السور؟
كلاب رؤيا ساحر مسحور
تنبح في الديجور؟
أم ميّت الجذور
في باطن الأرض التي تنتظر النشور
— مَنْ كان يبكي تحت هذا السور؟
لعلها الريح التي تسبق مَنْ يأتي ولا يأتي ،
لعل شاعراً يُولد أو يموت

[1] See: Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989) (German, 1962); Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopaedia Article (1964)," trans. Sara Lennox, Frank Lennox. *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49–55. [Trans. of *Fischer-Lexicon: Staat und Politik*, new ed. (Frankfort-am-Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1964): 22–226]

[2] See, respectively: Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); Thomas Bauer, "'Ayna hādhā min al-Mutanabbī!' Toward an Aesthetics of Mamluk Literature," *Mamluk Studies Review* 17 (2013): 5–22; Yaseen Noorani, *Culture and Hegemony in the Colonial Middle East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 122–123 and passim.

[3] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Literature and Existentialism* (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1980). [Originally published as *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948).]

[4] See, for example: Bauer. "Ayna hādhā min al-Mutanabbī!"; Thomas Bauer, "In Search of 'Post-Classical Literature': a review article," *Mamluk Studies Review* 11.2 (2007): 137–167; Adam Talib, *How Do You Say "Epigram" in Arabic? Literary History at the Limits of Comparison* (Leiden; Boston: E. J. Brill, 2018); Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Mantle Odes: Arabic Praise Poems to the Prophet Muḥammad* (Indianapolis & Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), pt. 2.

[5] See: Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, "Abbasid Panegyric: *Badīʿ* Poetry and the Invention of the Arab Golden Age," *British Journal of Middle East Studies* 44.1 (2017): 48–72. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2016.1180236

[6] Hussein N. Kadhim, *The Poetics of Anti-Colonialism in the Arabic Qaṣīdah* (Leiden; Boston: E. J. Brill, 2004), 1–19.

[7] See, for example: Kadhim, *Poetics of Anti-Colonialism*, chs. 1–3; Stetkevych, *Mantle Odes*, pt. 3; for an overview: M. M. Badawi, *A Critical Introduction to Modern Arabic Poetry* (Cambridge UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975), ch. 2.

[8] For an overview, see: Badawi, *A Critical Introduction,* chs. 3–4.

[9] See: Badawi, *A Critical Introduction*, ch. 6; Verena Klemm, "Different Notions of Commitment (*Iltizām*) and Committed Literature (*al-adab al-multazim*) in Literary Circles of the Mashriq," *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literatures* 3.1 (2000): 51–62.

[10] See: Yair Huri, "'The Queen who Serves her Slave': From Politics to Metapoetics in the Poetry of Qāsim Ḥaddād," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 34.3 (2003): 252–279; Aida Azouqa, "Metapoetry Between East and West: ʿAbd al-Wahhāb and the Western Composers of Metapoetry—A Study in Analogies," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 39.1 (2008): 38–71; Aida Azouqa, "Al-Bayyātī and W.B. Yeats as Mythmakers: A Comparative Study," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 30.3 (1999): 258–290; Stetkevych, Jaroslav, *The Hunt in Arabic Poetry: From Heroic to Lyric to Metapoetic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), pt. 3: Modernism and Metapoesis: The Pursuit of the Poem.

[11] Waed Athamneh, *Modern Arabic Poetry: Revolution and Conflict* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017), ch. 4.

[12] Qāsim Ḥaddād, personal conversation with the author, Washington, D.C., Oct. 2016.

[13] Sayyid ʿAbd Allāh al-Sīsī, *Mā baʿd qaṣīdat al-nathr: naḥw khiṭāb jadīd lil-shiʿriyyah al-ʿarabiyyah* (Beirut: Al-Muʾassasah al-ʿArabiyyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 2016), 29–30.

[14] See: al-Sīsī, *Mā Baʿd Qaṣīdat al-Nathr*; Huda Fakhreddine, "The Prose Poem and the Arabic Literary Tradition," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 19.3 (2016): 243–259; Clarissa C. Burt, "Connecting Two Shores with Sound: Saʿādeh's World of Loss," *Ebebiyat*: 14.1–2 (2003): 133–147; Clarissa Burt, "Loss and Memory: The Exilic Nihilism of Wadīʿ Saʿādah, Australia's Lebanese Émigré Poet," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 41.1–2 (2010): 180–195.

[15] See especially: Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books /Random House, 1993).

[16] ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muslim Ibn Qutaybah, *Kitāb al-shiʿr wa-al-shuʿārāʾ*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1904), 14–15.

[17] Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual*, (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1993), esp. ch. 1; Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender, and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode* (Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2002) passim.

[18] Stefan Sperl, "Islamic Kingship and Arabic Panegyric Poetry in the Early 9th Century," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 8 (1977): 20–35.

[19] S. Stetkevych, *Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy*, 213–214; for the full poem, translation, interpretation, and refs., see 209–223.

[20] Abū al-Baqāʾ al-ʿUkbarī, *Dīwān Abī al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī, al-musammā bi-al-Tibyān fī sharḥ al-dīwān*, 4 vols., ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī and ʿAbd al-Ḥafīẓ Shalabī (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1936), 4:281–285; full poem: 4:281–294.

[21] S. Stetkevych, *Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy*, 218.

[22] Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, "Performative Poetics in ʿAbbāsid Poetry: A Re-Reading of Abū Firās al-Ḥamdānī's Rāʾiyyah: *Arāka ʿaṣiyya al-damʿi*," *Annals of the Japan Association of Middle Eastern Studies* 29.2 (2013): 113–115; for the full poem, translation, interpretation, and refs., see 107–144.

[23] Sāmī al-Dahhān, ed. & ann., *Dīwān Abī Firās al-Ḥamdānī*, 3 vols. (Beirut: al-Maʿhad al-Firānsī bi-Dimashq, 1944/1363), 2:209–214.

[24] Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī, "Al-Riḥlah Ibtadaʾat (rithāʾ li-Jamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir)," in *al-Aʿmāl al-kāmilah lil-shāʿir Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī* (Kuwait: Dār Suʿād al-Ṣabāḥ, 1993), 357–367.

[25] For translations of other poems by this, to my knowledge, understudied Arab Free Verse poet, see: Salih J. Altoma, "Buland al-Haydari: Nine Poems [and an Introduction]," *Banipal* 18 (2003): 29–34. My thanks are due Salih Altoma for his bibliographical help with Buland al-Ḥaydarī's poem.

[26] Buland al-Ḥaydarī, "Anta Mudānun, Yā Hādhā," typescript of author, late 1980s; also published: "Al-Huwiyyāt al-ʿAshr," in Buland al-Ḥaydarī, *al-Aʿmāl al-kāmilah lil-shāʿir Buland al-Ḥaydarī* (Kuwait: Dār Suʿād al-Ṣabāḥ, 1992), 621–627 [originally published in Buland al-Ḥaydarī, *Min Bayrūt maʿ taḥiyyātī*. Beirut: Dār al-Sāqī, 1989].

[27] For a comparison with Yeats, discussion, and translation, see Azouqa, "Al-Bayyātī and Yeats as Mythmakers," 268–274, 286.

[28] ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī, "Alladhī Yaʾtī wa-Lā Yaʾtī," in *Alladhī yaʾtī wa-lā yaʾtī* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 1966), 25–27.

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2
War and Death in the Poems of Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm and Akiko Yosano: The Interplay of the Personal and the Public*

Akiko Sumi

Abstract

This paper analyzes two Arabic poems by Egyptian poet Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm ("A Young Woman of Japan" and "The Japanese-Russian War") and a poem and an essay by Japanese poet Akiko Yosano ("Beloved, You Must Not Die" and "An Open Letter") to examine the motifs of war and death. Both poets were distinguished in their respective nations and use the theme of death in the Russo-Japanese war in these poems to express personal and public voices. I argue that Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's poems display a complex interplay between personal and public voices, whereas Akiko Yosano's poem mainly exemplifies personal expression. Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's personal voice rings out more loudly in "The Japanese-Russian War" than in "A Young Woman of Japan," where he attempts to appeal to his people to stand up for their nation against the British rule through his skillful application of the form and theme of the *qaṣīdah* (classical Arabic poetry). Using repetition of the phrase "Beloved, you must not die," Akiko Yosano projected her personal feelings and reinforced them in "An Open Letter," evoking merciless attacks from critics. Conscious of the political and social trends of their time, both maintained their pride as poets and continued to preserve and develop their poetics pursuing social virtue, even in the face of real and potential criticism. Poetry was and is continually associated with society and its individual members.

Keywords: Personal, public, Arabic poetry, *qaṣīdah*, Japanese poetry, the Russo-Japanese War, war, death, social virtue, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, Akiko Yosano

Introduction

This chapter investigates two Arabic poems by the Egyptian neo-classical poet Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm (1872?–1932), titled "Ghādat al-Yābān" ("A Young Woman of Japan"), and "Al-

Ḥarb al-Yābāniyyah wa-al-Rūsiyyah" ("The Japanese-Russian War"), and a Japanese new-style poem and an essay (referring to the poem) by Japanese poet Akiko Yosano (1878–1942), titled "Kimi shinitamō kotonakare" ("Beloved, You Must Not Die")[1] and "Hirakibumi" ("An Open Letter"), respectively. These poems reflect the poets' influence on their people and societies and have been included in school textbooks. Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's poem, "A Young Woman of Japan," circulated in Arab countries, including Lebanon, in the 1970s.[2] Some Japanese school textbooks continue to include Akiko Yosano's "Beloved, You Must Not Die."

I explore how these literary works represent the personal and the public aspects by utilizing the structure and theme of the literary genre and gender and politics. These works have the theme of death in war in common, particularly the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). This theme is intimately associated with the interplay between personal and public because dying in a war can generally be considered a contribution to public interest, whereas someone's death is a personally heartbreaking experience. I also examine this interplay in the process of the formation of social virtue.

The concept of "personal" refers to matters associated with an individual. The concept of "public" refers to matters associated broadly with a whole society, transcending personal interest.[3] However, this concept involves some ambiguity. One question that arises is what should be considered a "whole society." This consideration depends on individuals and their environment. After modern times, the framework of a nation-state has generally been considered the most public.[4] The public spirit here refers to the will and attitude of rendering services to the nation (and its people).[5] In this chapter, because the target poems were composed in the beginning of the twentieth century, "a whole society" is considered as a nation.

The act of going to battle, while facing one's fear of death in the process, in relation to the personal and public, must be examined along with the question of virtue, on the premise that poems strive to represent virtue. One's act of fighting in a war with a readiness to die for one's nation is generally considered an act of self-sacrifice; therefore, the act is for public interest and transcends personal desire.[6] In the context of the formation of nationality in the colonial Middle East, Noorani argued that "the national model of the self by which the self attains the state of order" […] "accounts for how it is possible for human beings, seen as inherently inclined to act only on the basis of their own immediate desires and lusts, to attain a state of control over their desires to the extent that they adhere to moral principles—that is, sacrifice their own desires for the sake of others."[7] What are the "moral principles" that can influence people to form "virtue"?

Kohama claimed that one's act of fighting in a war with a readiness to die for one's community is not one of value as virtue, but becomes social virtue when that act is approved of by the community or the ruler.[8] Therefore, the value of the act changes based on how society sees it.

I argue that Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's poem, "A Young Woman of Japan," demonstrates the transformation from the personal to the public voice, and the victory of the public over the personal and the celebration of it, by the manipulation of the form and theme of the *qaṣīdah* (classical Arabic poetry) tradition. His poem indicates the inversion of gender and politics, relying on the theme of *taḥrīḍ* or instigation to blood vengeance by female poets in the pre-Islamic *marāthī* (elegies) poetry.[9] In doing so, the poem indirectly calls on people to resist the (then) Egyptian ruler who deferred to the British over his own people. If Ibrāhīm is considered "the poet of the people" in Egypt,[10] this message may further prove that social virtue, which used to come down from the ruler in premodern times, should be formed by the populace in modern times, that is, his days in Egypt. His people, who receive his message to emulate Japan by way of praise for the Japanese ruler, are supposed to participate in the formation of social virtue.

Akiko Yosano's poem, "Beloved, You Must Not Die," illustrates personal feelings, laying bare her heart for her brother who was in the battlefield during the Russo-Japanese War. In Ibrāhīm's "A Young Woman of Japan," bravery without hesitating to die in the war is extoled. By contrast, the praise for that bravery vanishes in "The Japanese-Russian War," which mostly describes the disastrous scenes of battle. This emerges from questions concerning his consciousness of the heavy loss of human life in the war and his concern for it. His expression of the disastrous nature of the war resonates with the personal desire of Yosano in her poem, bearing in mind the agony and sorrow of the victims' families. Having shifted from a triumphant tone of admiring the bravery of self-sacrifice in the war in the first poem of Ibrāhīm into a dismal and miserable tone describing the dire battlefield full of blood in the second poem, the second poem hints at his vacillation between the personal and the public. This shift further implies that the "bravery" is able to become social virtue when it is approved and relied upon as virtue by his society and Japanese society.

Both poets use the theme of death in war and express both personal and public voices. In this paper, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's poem, "A Young Woman of Japan," is investigated within the framework of the Arabic *qaṣīdah*. Akiko Yosano's poem and essay, along with a controversy concerning her poem that was raised by some critics, are examined next. Furthermore, a comparative study of the personal and public theme in these two poems is

conducted. Finally, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's other poem, "The Japanese-Russian War," is compared to "A Young Woman of Japan."

"Ghādat al-Yābān" ("A Young Woman of Japan") by Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm

Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm (1872?–1932) was an Egyptian neo-classical poet who is said to have won the hearts of the people. This is illustrated by his titles, such as "the poet of the people" and "the poet of the Nile." Although often compared with his contemporary, Aḥmad Shawqī (1868–1932), called "the prince of poets" who had an aristocratic background and was a court poet of the Khedive, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm was born in a lower middle-class family and was more concerned with the common people. Many of his poems deal with the distress and misery of the people and speak of their political and social desires.[11]

The poet was born on a river houseboat on the Nile, near Dayrūṭ in the Ṣaʿīd.[12] His father was an engineer from Egypt and his mother was Turkish. Having lost his father when he was four, Ibrāhīm moved with his mother to Cairo, where his maternal uncle lived, and later to Tanta. Though partially financially supported by his uncle, his formal education was interrupted because he had to work to contribute to his family's income. However, Ibrāhīm attended classes at the mosque, studying the Arabic language and classical religious and poetic texts.[13] Influenced by the classical poets and Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (1839–1904), he recited and composed poetry while he was still young. Feeling unwelcome at his uncle's house, Ibrāhīm left for Cairo where he began working in law offices without any formal training in the law. Shortly thereafter, Ibrāhīm entered the Military Academy and graduated in 1891.[14] He also served in the 1896 Sudan campaign, where he endured numerous miseries and hardships.[15] As he joined in an abortive army rebellion, Ibrāhīm was court-martialed and cashiered in 1900, and then transferred to the reserves with a derisory monthly salary of £4. His attempt to obtain a post in *Al-Ahrām* was unsuccessful.[16] With the help of Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849–1905), he became acquainted with influential political leaders such as Saʿd Zaghlūl (1857–1927), Qāsim Amīn (1865–1908), and Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874–1908), to whom he dedicated panegyrics and other poems. However, he also kept company with his old friends who shared his humble origins. He was sociable with people of all social classes.[17] From this period onward, he was known as a nationalist, despite the fact that he composed some poems to commemorate members of the British Royal Family and the Ottoman Empire.[18] After eight years of unemployment, in 1911, the poet was appointed as the head of the literary section of *Dār al-Kutub*, the Egyptian National Library, which ended his financial

problems. Owing to fear that he would lose this job, he did not publish any of his poems that contained harsh political criticism; however, he did recite them to his friends.[19]

Ibrāhīm's "A Young Woman of Japan" was published on April 6, 1904, according to *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm.*[20] This was approximately two months after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, on February 10, 1904. He also composed the poem "The Japanese-Russian War," which was published on November 10, 1905.[21] Both poems about the war were composed in the early period of his career and reveal the poet's concern about the contrast and confrontation between the East and the West.[22] His ideas were shared by the Egyptian politician Muṣṭafā Kāmil, who considered Japan a symbol of the victory of the "East" (which included the Arabs) over the "West," which included Russia.[23]

The title "A Young Woman of Japan" suggests that the poem exemplifies a *nasīb*, or amatory ode, which often involves unrequited love, though the poem—together with "The Japanese-Russian War"—is placed within the section "*al-siyāsiyyāt*," or political poems, in the *dīwān* (collected poems). Another mode of viewing the structure of "A Young Woman of Japan" is to divide it into two: the *nasīb* (ll. 1–28) and the *madīḥ*, which is the concluding panegyric section (ll. 29–40). His *dīwān* contains an "*al-madāʾiḥ wa-al-tahānī*" (panegyrics and congratulations) section, but again, this poem is placed in the category of political poetry.

Examining this poem as a two-part work helps to illuminate Ibrāhīm's intention in utilizing the *qaṣīdah*, or classical Arabic poetic structure.[24] The first part describes the poet's complaint against his nation, Egypt, his love for a woman from Japan, and the woman's departure to her own nation. It goes on to describe the poet's request to her and his attempt to persuade her not to depart for war. The second part contains her refusal of his request and praise for the Mikado (the Japanese emperor).

Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm
"A Young Woman of Japan"

1. Do not blame the palm of my hand if the sword seems blunt;
   my resolution is unshakable, though my days have been difficult.
2. Many a person, who also endeavored and understood his endeavor,
   failed in what he sought.
3. [I] Welcome a calamity that tests me,
   if [seeking] loftiness may be the result.

4. My time has been hard; had I not preferred virtue/beauty,
   I would have abandoned literature.
5. Ah, the world! It frowns or smiles at me.[25]
   [Now,] I see lightning without a downpour.[26]
6. I would not have complained of this calamity,
   were it not that my *ummah* (nation) abandoned me.
7. The *ummah*'s [Egypt's] hatred of its own people
   and its love for foreigners had weakened its strength.
8. It passionately loves [exalted] titles without seeking exaltedness,
   and it sacrifices souls for high ranks.
9. While disasters target it,
   [the *ummah* devotes itself to] the love of amusement and pleasure.
10. [The people] do not mind that foreigners [the British] have played with it [the country]
    or that the passage of nights has played with it [or, tossed it about].
11. If only [the *ummah*/people] would listen to
    my story of grief and amazement!
12. I once loved a tender young woman,
    whom God endowed.
13. Her beautiful face was so radiant yellow
    that it made Jews forget gold.
14. One day she brought me news.
    O news, may God not protect you.[27]
15. She swayed toward me when the night was a youth,[28]
    and a new moon crept on the horizon.[29]
16. Then she spoke to me with a smiling mouth—
    [her teeth] like pearls or bubbles strung over the surface of water.
17. [She said] I have been told to depart swiftly,
    and I will never return here.
18. My home country has summoned me—
    I must quickly go and obey my duty.
19. We will slaughter the bear [Russia] and rip off its skin.
    Does it believe its own invincibility?
20. I said, while pain cut into my heart:
    Woe for you! What can a gazelle do in war?
21. We did not know that the war was for a gazelle a pasture,

where it could seek a place of amusement and a playground.
22. The war is not souls that you acquire with desire,
nor is it like minds that may be charmed.
23. Do you think that your lovely figure would help you in the war,
or do you think [your] glance might be like the tip of a spearhead in the war?
24. Ask me.
I suffered in the war and defied the horror in a warship.
25. I plunged into death during attacks,
in which the dust came down like a cloud looming over the earth.
26. The war glowered at us,
and I saw death furrow its brows.
27. Azrael (the angel of death) roamed all over the battlefield,
stalking beneath that dust.
28. Leave it to one who knows it, and—
O willow[-like] gazelle, stay within your tent.
29. She answered with a frightening voice
and seemed to me a thick-necked lion.
30. My people find the oasis of death sweet;
why do you urge me not to drink of it?
31. I am a Japanese woman.
My resolve will not diminish, even should I face death.
32. Even if I cannot shoot capably
and my hands cannot wield a sword.
33. I am able to serve the wounded and fulfill my duty to them,
and [I can] comfort those afflicted by the war.
34. The Mikado taught us thus,
[so] that we see our homeland as our mother or father.
35. He is suited to be a king
who awakened the East and shook the West.
36. When you fight with him,
you will learn how he handles all incidents with a great insight.
37. He was small, as was the crown,
while the splendor of his reign was still in the cradle of childhood.
38. [But he] has now reached the apex of sublimity
and has become a star in [the heavens].

39. He has aroused the nation from its torpor,
and has called upon it to pursue sublimity indefatigably.
40. [The country] has risen high in glory while seeking its apex,
and has attained its every goal.

Trans. Akiko Sumi

Arabic text[30]

حافظ ابراهيم
غادة اليابان

١ لا تَلُمْ كَفِّي إذا السَّيْفُ نَبَا صَحَّ مِنِّي ٱلعَزْمُ و الدَّهْرُ أَبَى
٢ رُبَّ ساعٍ مُبْصِرٍ في سَعْيِه أَخْطَأ التّوفيقَ فيما طَلَبا
٣ مَرْحَبًا بِالخَطْبِ يَبْلُوني إذا كانت العَلْياءُ فيه السَّبَبا
٤ عَقَّنِي الدَّهْرُ و لولا أنّني أُوثِرُ الحُسْنَى عَقَقْتُ الأَدَبا
٥ إيهِ يا دُنْيَا ٱعْبِسي أو فٱبسِمِي لا أَرَى بَرْقَكِ إلّا خُلَّبا
٦ أَنا لولا أنّ لي من أُمتي خاذِلاً ما بِتُّ أَشْكو النُّوَبا
٧ أُمة قد فَتَّ في ساعِدِها بُغْضُها الأَهْلَ و حُبُّ الغُرَبا
٨ تَعْشَقُ الأَلْقابَ في غَيْرِ العُلَا وَتُفَدِّي بِالنُّفوسِ الرُّتَبا
٩ وهي والأَحْداثُ تَسْتَهْدِفُها تَعْشَق اللَّهْوَ وتَهْوَى الطَّرَبا
١٠ لا تُبالِي لَعِبَ القَوْمُ بها أَمْ بها صَرْفُ اللَّيالِي لَعِبا
١١ لَيْتَها تَسْمَعُ مِنِّي قِصَّةً ذاتَ شَجْوٍ وحَدِيثًا عَجَبَا
١٢ كُنْتُ أَهْوَى في زَماني غادَةً وَهَبَ اللهُ لها ما وَهَبا
١٣ ذاتَ وَجْهٍ مَزَجَ الحُسْنُ بِه صُفْرَةً تُنْسِي اليَهُودَ الذَّهَبا
١٤ حَمَلَتْ لي ذاتَ يَوْمٍ نَبأً لا رَعاكَ اللهُ يا ذاكَ النَّبَا
١٥ وَأَتَتْ تَخْطِرُ وَالليلُ فَتًى وَهِلالُ الأُفْقِ فِي الأُفْقِ حَبَا
١٦ ثُمَّ قالت لي بثَغْرٍ باسِمٍ نَظَمَ الدُّرَّ به وَالحَبَبا:
١٧ نَبِّئُونِي بِرَحِيلٍ عاجِلٍ لا أَرَى لي بَعْدَه مُنْقَلَبا

١٨ وَدَعاني مَوْطِني أَنْ أغْتَدِي عَلَّنِي أَقْضِي لَهُ ما وَجَبا

١٩ نَذْبَحُ الدُّبَّ وَنَفْرِي جِلْدَه أَيَظُنُّ الدُّبُّ أَلّا يُغْلَبا

٢٠ قُلْتُ والآلامُ تَفْرِي مُهْجَتِي: وَيْكِ! ما تَصْنَعُ فِي الحَرْبِ الظِّبا؟

٢١ ما عَهِدْناها لظَبْيٍ مَسْرَحًا يَبْتَغِي مَلْهًى به أو مَلْعَبا

٢٢ لَيْست الحَرْبُ نُفُوسا تُشْتَرى بالتَّمَنِّي أو عُقولًا تُسْتَبَى

٢٣ أَحَسِبْتِ القَدَّ مِنْ عُدَّتِها أم ظَنَنْتِ اللَّحْظَ فِيها كَالشَّبَا؟

٢٤ فَسَلِيني ، إنّني مارَسْتُها ورَكِبْتُ الهَوْلَ فيها مَرْكَبا

٢٥ وتَقَحَّمْتُ الرَّدَى فِي غارَةٍ أَسْدَلَ النَّقْعُ عليها هَيْدَبَا

٢٦ قَطَّبَتْ ما بين عَيْنَيْهَا لَنا فرأيتُ الموتَ فيها قَطَّبا

٢٧ جالَ عِزْرائيلُ فِي أَنْحَائِها تحتَ ذاكَ النَّقْعِ يَمْشِي الهَيْذَبَى

٢٨ فَدَعِيها لِلّذي يَعْرِفُها وٱلْزَمِي يا ظَبْيَةَ البانِ الخِبا

٢٩ فَأَجابَتْنِي بِصَوْتٍ راعَنِي وَأَرَتْنِي الظَّبْيَ لَيْثًا أَغْلَبا :

٣٠ إنّ قَوْمِي ٱسْتَعْذَبوا وِرْدَ الرَّدَى كيف تَدْعُونِي ألّا أَشْرَبا

٣١ أنا يابانِيَّةٌ لا أَنْثَنِي عَنْ مُرَادِي أو أَذُوقَ العَطَبا

٣٢ أنا إنْ لَمْ أحْسِنِ الرَّمْيَ ولَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ كَفّايَ تَقْلِيبَ الظُّبَا

٣٣ أَخْدُمُ الجَرْحَى وأَقْضِي حَقَّهُمْ وَأُواسِي فِي الوَغَى مَنْ نُكِبَا

٣٤ هٰكذا (المِيكادُ) قَدْ عَلَّمَنا أَنْ نَرَى الأَوْطانَ أُمًّا وأَبَا

٣٥ مَلِكٌ يكفيكَ منهُ أنّه أنْهَضَ الشَّرْقَ فهَزَّ المَغْرِبا

٣٦ وإذا مارَسْتَه أَلْفَيْتَه حُوَّلًا فِي كُلِّ أَمْرٍ قُلَّبا

٣٧ كانَ والتاج صغيرَيْنِ مَعًا وَجَلالُ المُلْكِ فِي مَهْدِ الصِّبا

٣٨ فغدَا هٰذا سَماءً للعُلَا وغَدا ذلِكَ فِيها كَوْكَبا

٣٩ بَعَثَ الأمّةَ مِنْ مَرْقَدِها وَدَعَاها للعُلا أَنْ تَدْأَبَا

٤٠ فسَمَتْ لِلْمَجْدِ تَبْغِي شَأْوَه وَقَضَتْ مِن كُلِّ شيءٍ مَأْرَبا

The first part conveys the poet's discontentment with the time that caused him suffering and misfortune, which is a traditional theme of the *nasīb*.[31] Although he felt that his time was difficult, he sought virtue/beauty in literature (i.e., the composition of poetry) (l. 4). The poet notes the world's fickleness: it has both smiled and frowned at him. However, presently, his expectations have not been fulfilled: the words "lightning without a downpour" indicate his disappointment (l. 5). The *ummah* or Egypt is also the target of his complaint because it abandoned him (l. 6). This is also because Egypt hated its own people, while it was fond of foreigners, (that is, the British), who had imposed an informal protectorate over it (l. 7). Although Egypt was weakened because of that protectorate, the Egyptian people, absorbed in their own pursuits, were indifferent to their plight.

The poet begins to tell a story about a young Japanese woman who used to be his beloved (l. 12). This line functions both to change the topic from his laments about his people and nation and to direct his audience (or his people) toward a way out of the degenerated situation of their nation—but this can happen "If only [the *ummah*/people] would listen to my story of grief and amazement." The poet describes how his beloved was beautiful. "Yellow" indicates that she was Japanese (l. 13). The description of her (ll. 12–16) accords with the Arabic poetic tradition. That is, she walks with a swinging gait (translated above as "she swayed"). Yet, the poet informs the audience of news that she brought to him. It appears that he tells her story for the sake of awakening the Egyptian people, who indulged in pursuits.

The dialogue between the poet's beloved (*qālat*: "she said" on l. 16) and the poet (*qultu*: "I said" on l. 20) indicates her resolution to serve her nation and his dissuasion of her from doing so. The poet reveals what the bad news is: the poet's beloved, the Japanese woman, must leave for her nation, never to return (l. 17). Summoned by her nation, she will leave to help it fight against the Russians in the Russo-Japanese War. She says that her nation of Japan will defeat Russia (l. 19).

The poet tries to dissuade her from leaving him, saying, "What can a gazelle do in war?" (l. 20) The beloved is generally likened to a gazelle in the *qaṣīdah* tradition. The poet continues to sarcastically remark that her lovely figure would be useless in the war. The beloved or the gazelle conventionally directs her glance at men's hearts in the *qaṣīdah*. The poet mocks her resolution to fight in the war because he thinks that she does not know the reality and dreadfulness of war (ll. 20–23). The poem contrasts a pasture for the gazelle with the battlefield, which corresponds to a young woman/the young Japanese woman and a warrior/the poet. The poet says that he had gone to a war and confronted its

terror. In telling her this, he emphasizes the risk of death, saying that the angel of death, Azrael, ambushes one in every corner of the battlefield. Trying to convince his beloved that war is only for one who is well acquainted with it (that is, not her), he advises her to stay in her tent (l. 28). Called a willow-gazelle (*al-bān* is a willow tree, which gazelles are fond of), the beloved is presented as supple and graceful. The strategy of the poem is to contrast a graceful woman/the beloved with a warrior/the poet. The poet notes that his beloved's answer is unexpected and amazing. She suddenly changes her voice, which is first spoken from a smiling mouth, to a frightening one—and her appearance, from a graceful gazelle to a thick-necked, strong lion.

In the beginning of the second part (l. 29), the beloved responds (*ajābat-nī*: "she answered me") to the poet's advice to stay in her tent, which would be a safe place far from death. Her answer sounds as though she is upbraiding him for his timidity. For her, being a woman is no excuse to stay in a safe place. She desires to go to the battlefield to help her people engage in battle. However, she intends to help the Japanese soldiers as a nurse because she does not excel in shooting or wielding a sword. From line 34 to the end, she praises the Mikado (the Japanese emperor). She says that the Mikado taught her to "see our homeland (the *awṭān*) as our mother or father." Referring to the East and the West, the poet claims that the Mikado aroused the East (the representative of the East is Japan; the West is Russia).

Let us look at historical facts pertaining to the Russo-Japanese War before Ibrāhīm composed this poem. Japan declared war on Russia on February 10, 1904. Subsequently, using naval maneuvers on February 24 and March 27, Japan boldly attempted to block the mouth of Port Arthur (Lushun) by attacking the Russian fleet. This ended in failure. Based on this war, Ibrāhīm's poem states that the Mikado awakened the East (Asia, including Egypt) and shook the West (including Russia). It also conveys the Mikado's insightfulness and excellence in battle. He attained great brilliance during his reign, polished the crown of the empire and rose steadily in glory to his current peak.

This poem concerns gender and politics in two ways. First, it indicates the gender inversion of the theme of *taḥrīḍ* or instigation in the *marāthī* (elegies) by female poets in the classical Arabic poetical tradition, where a female poet instigates her male relatives to blood vengeance or battle against the enemy for the fallen men of her tribe.[32] In contrast, in Ibrāhīm's poem, the Japanese woman makes a firm resolution to go to the battlefield as a nurse who tends to the wounded to avenge the deceased soldiers of her nation. Portraying himself as a man who has conservative and antiquated views about women that they should stay at the tent/home, the poet was rebuked by her with her strong

will to participate in the war. In other words, the gender roles are inverted. The Japanese woman shows her strength and valor stating, "I am able to serve the wounded and fulfill my duty to them" (l. 33), while the poet's complaints about his unhappy past and his nation's cowardice remain unsolved until the end. This gender inversion reflects Ibrāhīm's concern for women's liberation and the improvement of their social status in Egypt. He is considered one of the pioneers of women's emancipation movements.[33]

Second, with the use of a female voice, the poem attempts to indirectly call on people to raise their voice against their ruler Khedive ʿAbbās Ḥilmī (r. 1892–1914), who was virtually under the control of the British Consul-General. Stefan Sperl stated that in the ʿAbbāsid panegyric poem concerning the poet's relationship between the beloved and the ruler, "In the ruler, all the failings of the beloved" in the *nasīb* "are countered by virtues, all her virtues sublimated by higher virtues. In turning to him, the individual leaves behind a sorrowful and potentially destructive passion in favor of integration into a justly ruled society" in the *madīḥ*.[34] In light of Sperl's understanding, the poet's complaint against his nation or *ummah*, which abandoned him and preferred foreigners to its own people, in addition to his unrequited love for his beloved or the Japanese woman, in the *nasīb* is countered by the Japanese woman's resolution to carry out an act of vengeance against Russia, her allegiance, and her praise for the ruler of Japan, the Mikado in the *madīḥ*. His laments concerning his nation were supposed to be healed by the virtue of the ruler of his nation. However, the poem directs its goal to the ruler of the beloved, who is not his ruler. Through this outline, Ibrāhīm indirectly impugns the timidity of his own nation and calls on his people to find an effective leader like the Mikado. Given the emphasis on the Mikado as the ruler who has inspired his nation, it appears that he is alluding to the ineffectiveness of the Khedive to lead and inspire his people. His implication may also prove that social virtue can and should be molded by the populace in modern times, that is, his days in Egypt, though it used to descend from the ruler in premodern times.

The issue of the personal and the public can be connected with the conventionality of each poetic genre. In the Arabic *qasīdah*, the theme of a poet's unrequited love in the *nasīb* and of the panegyric on the ruler of his community in the *madīḥ* is based on the conventional rules of the *qasīdah*. Therefore, in light of the Romantic notion of individual and original expression, it may be difficult to distinguish what is personal and public, because this expression is limited to a certain extent.[35] Nevertheless, poets express personal poetic vision within the poetic tradition, relying on their personal experiences and views, which are also linked to public vision by the application of traditional

prescribed regulations both in content and form. They occasionally deviate from them and produce variants, in accordance with their poetic intention, for the purpose of expressing individuality and originality. Otherwise, all poems sound very similar. Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm indicates originality and creativity based on his personal opinion and experience, which are connected to the public vision of his nation, as discussed above. We now examine Akiko Yosano's poem. She was an eminent poet of *tanka* (literally, "the short poem"), one of the traditional Japanese poetic genres, and reckoned as a representative poet of Romanticism in the Meiji era (1868–1912).[36]

The Poem "Beloved, You Must Not Die" by Akiko Yosano and Its Critics

Akiko Yosano is a well-known poet. She was born in 1878 in Sakai, Osaka, into a family that owned a Japanese-style confectionery store. From her childhood, she was fond of reading classical literature and began writing *tanka* (a Japanese poem in 5 lines and 31 syllables) and poetry for a local poetry circle after graduating from high school. She published *tanka* in the magazine *Myōjō* (Bright Star), founded by Tekkan Yosano (the *tanka* poet) in 1900. She fell in love with Tekkan and married him in 1901. They had 11 children together. Her first anthology, *Midaregami* [Tangled Hair] (1901), became her most important work. It demonstrated her passion unrestrictedly and sensually. This was a conservative period during which it was difficult for women to speak about their ego and sexuality. She also wrote critical essays on women's issues and political, educational, and social problems and published a modern translation of *The Tale of Genji*. Her style in her early career reflected Romanticism, but later, she became more introspective and speculative.

Although Yosano is mostly famous for her *tanka* (i.e., a traditional form), she also produced modern style poems. Her best-known new-style poem (*shintaishi*), "Beloved, You Must Not Die," appeared in *Myōjō* in September 1904, seven months after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. This poem was addressed to her younger brother (Chūzaburō), who was aged 24 years at the time and was a member of an infantry corps that participated in an attack on Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War. He got married in 1903, and his wife lived with his mother in Osaka. His father died in 1903, after which he inherited a Japanese-style confectionery store. He was close to Yosano and understood her poetry. Around 1900, he joined the local poetry circle before Akiko did. The content of the poem is clear. It is a sister's lamentation and entreaty to her younger brother not to die in the war, because his family cherishes him, and because he must protect his family

and succeed in the family business. In the third verse, the poem poses a question on how the great emperor, who does not go to war in person, can ask his people to die like beasts and glory the death.

Akiko Yosano
"Beloved, You Must Not Die: Lamenting My Younger Brother Who Was among the Troops Who Besieged Port Arthur"[37]

Ah, my brother, I weep for you.
Beloved, you must not die.
You, the last born,
and so most cherished—
did our parents teach you to grasp a sword,
to kill another man?
Did they bring you up to twenty-four
to murder, and then die?

You, proud master of an old store
in the merchant city of Sakai,
heir to your father's name—
beloved, you must not die.
What is it to you whether
the walls of Port Arthur tumble or they stand?
Why should you care? Such things are not in
the laws of a merchant's family.

Beloved, you must not die.
How could our great emperor,
whose wondrous heart is so deep,
not do battle himself
but still ask others to spill their blood,
to die like beasts,
and think those deaths a glory?

Ah, my brother, you must not
die in war.
Father dead last fall,
Mother in her grief had to face
the pain of your being drafted,
of being left alone to watch our home.
In this great and peaceful reign
her white hairs have increased.

Your new wife, young and lovely, lies
and weeps behind the shop curtains.
Have you forgotten her? Do you think of her?
Left alone after being wed less than ten months.
Think of her maiden heart!
Besides you, who, ah who, in all the world
can she rely on?
Beloved, you must not die!

Japanese text[38]

与謝野晶子
君死にたまふこと勿れ
（旅順口包囲軍の中に在る弟を歎きて）

あゝをとうとよ君を泣く
君死にたまふことなかれ
末に生れし君なれば
親のなさけはまさりしも
親は刃をにぎらせて
人を殺せとをしへしや、
人を殺して死ねよとて
二十四までをそだてしや

堺の街のあきびとの
旧家をほこるあるじにて

親の名を継ぐ君なれば
君死にたまふことなかれ
旅順の城はほろぶとも
ほろびずとも何事か
君は知るべきやあきびとの
家のおきてに無かりけり

君死にたまふことなかれ
すめらみことは戦ひに
おほみづからは出でまさね
かたみに人の血を流し
獣の道に死ねよとは
死ぬるを人のほまれとは
大みこゝろの深ければ
もとよりいかで思されむ

あゝをとうとよ戦いひに
君死にたまふことなかれ
すぎにし秋を父ぎみに
おくれたまへる母ぎみは
なげきの中にいたましく
わが子を召され家を守り
安しと聞ける大御代も
母のしら髪はまさりけり

暖簾のかげに伏して泣く
あえかにわかき新妻を
君わするるや思へるや
十月も添はでわかれたる
少女ごころを思ひみよ
この世ひとりの君ならで
あゝまた誰をたのむべき
君死にたまふことなかれ

Yosano's poem stirred controversy and drew criticism for its antiwar tone. The contemporary poet and critic Keigetsu Ōmachi (1869–1925) censured it as unpatriotic and treasonous in the literary magazine, *Taiyō* (The Sun, which showed a marked inclination toward nationalism) in October 1904. He attacked the poem's direct appeal to renounce one's duty to serve in the army for his nation. The mention of the emperor who was not personally on the battlefield also angered him. He suggested that she should refrain from renouncing the war that the socialists and Christians had denounced. For him, Yosano's poem appeared harmful and daring as it considered the family and wife important, while suggesting that the nation can perish, and that merchants are not obliged to fight in the war. Drawn into a public debate, Yosano offered a counterargument in the form of a letter to her husband, titled "An Open Letter" (*Hirakibumi*). This appeared in the magazine *Myōjō* in November 1904. She claimed that her poem was based on family affection—that is, universal human feelings, and had nothing to do with socialism. In contrast, she stated that Ōmachi's idea to glorify death in battle was dangerous:

> At the end of a letter to my brother, I wrote a poem—what is wrong with that? It is a poem, no more, no less. My family and I are natives of this country—who could love it more than we do? [……] As you know, when my younger brother was called up and bravely went to the front, he courageously spoke of what should be done in case the worst happened. If the "valiant warriors" who often appear in the newspapers these days deserve that name, then without a doubt my dear younger brother does, too. But my dead father never taught his youngest son to behave like a pitiless beast, to kill people, or to seek out death. My brother was sent to school and allowed to write haiku and tanka, and his thoughts are always for his wife, his mother, the child soon to be born, and for you and me. For a brother whose feelings are so human, how could I, a woman, write the sort of things that we hear in today's war songs? [.....] Keigetsu says the ideas expressed in my poem "Beloved, You Must Not Die" are extremely dangerous. But isn't the current fashion, on the contrary, the real danger—this saying "die, die!" and the constant use of phrases like "loyalty to the throne and love of country" and quotations from the Imperial Rescript on Education? [.....] A poem is a poem, no more no less. Since I began to write, I have always wanted to set down the heart's truth in poetry in a way that would not be ridiculed by later ages. What value can a poem have if it does not express the heart's truth? What good can come of one who does not create poems

and prose based on that truth? True emotion, unalterable and unchanging until the end of time, and adherence to that truth: these are what I desire most.[39]

Although Yosano did not use the word, "personal," in her counterargument, it is obvious that she emphasized the personal aspects of her poem, as some scholars pointed out.[40] This emphasis can be seen in the form of the "letter" in which her argument is presented, addressed to her husband, Tekkan. It is her personal letter. Second, at the start of the letter, she makes it clear that she is writing it at her parental home, having gone there with her oldest son, where the head of the household, her brother, is absent because of his active service at the warfront.[41] She started it as a personal matter. Third, she says in the letter that she wrote the poem at the end of the letter to her brother. These personal aspects reveal her intention to stress that her poem originated from her personal feelings and that poetry should be an expression of such feelings. She emphasized these personal aspects in order to protect herself and evade the danger of being considered a socialist, which may have led to her imprisonment.[42] Nevertheless, her statement in "An Open Letter" that the value of a poem rests on the expression of the heart's truth can be considered her true feelings. She believed that a poet's responsibility is to express his or her deepest emotions honestly. According to Janine Beichman, Yosano said that this understanding of poetry "dates back to Kino Tsurayuki's statement in the *Kokinshū* (Anthology of Old and New Japanese Poems, early tenth century) that the seed of poetry is the human heart."[43]

In response to Ōmachi's criticism, Kennan Kakuda wrote in support of Yosano in a newspaper. He stated that to say "come back safely" to a soldier who went to fight is a manifestation of human feelings and one's true voice and questioned the denouncements of such a poem that contained the heart's truth. According to Taguchi, Kakuda took Yosano's side and argued that her poem was in the personal sphere, that is, the poetic sphere.[44] Ōmachi refuted this again in *Taiyō*. The debate came down to "personal feelings" versus "public feelings," and "person" versus "nation."[45] Ōmachi claimed that it is fine for feelings to be expressed as they are in poems, but there are both public and personal feelings. He was unable to accept her poem although it was grounded in her "personal feelings." It is possible that he felt that her poem resonated with the "personal feelings" of many other people, which made it a dangerous poem in his view.[46] To Ōmachi, Yosano's poem opposed "public feelings." Therefore, he apparently believed that feelings expressed in published poetry must be in line with public feelings. Yosano was fond of

the Japanese Imperial Household. Therefore, some scholars have argued that her poem contained expressions that exceeded her intention and brought censure upon her work.[47]

Ōmachi belittled her attempt to compose a new-style poem, which was supposed to embody European poetical form and spirit and be made with seven-five or five-seven syllables. Yosano was a highly rated writer of *tanka*, traditional poetry. As "Beloved, You Must Not Die" is a new-style poem, he considered it clumsy and advised her to avoid the style and stick to *tanka*. She wrote in "An Open Letter" that she attracted such criticism because of her husband Tekkan, who urged her to compose new-style poems.[48]

A Comparative Examination of Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm's and Akiko Yosano's Poems concerning the Personal and the Public

Both Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm and Akiko Yosano's poems involved the topic of the Russo-Japanese War. They strived to express the idea of "Do not die in the war" to their beloved. In Ibrāhīm's poem, the beloved says to the poet, "My people find the oasis of death sweet; why do you urge me not to drink of it?" Before this line, the poet says to his beloved that the battlefield is a dangerous place where Azrael, the angel of death, is waiting for her; therefore, she must stay in her tent and not go to war. Thus, the poet tells her not to go to war, lest she die. She abruptly refuses his request, saying that she would go there and that she did not fear death. Furthermore, Yosano's poem is addressed to her younger brother who has already departed for the war. The reasons underlying the poet's entreaty that he should not die is her care for her brother as family affection and her feeling that it is his duty to take care of the family and protect the family business. The poem states that the emperor should not ask his people to die like beasts, while he himself does not go to the battlefield. Some scholars have suggested that the statement in this poem that human beings should not murder each other as beasts was taken from Tolstoy's "Bethink Yourselves: Tolstoy's Letter on the Russo-Japanese War" (published in *The London Times* on June 27, 1904); a partial Japanese translation appeared in a newspaper on August 7, 1904.[49] In Yosano's poem, the response from her brother is not included, unlike in Ibrāhīm's poem, where his beloved does answer.

The premise of Ibrāhīm's poem—his love for the Japanese woman—seems to be fiction;[50] he relied on the Arabic *qaṣīdah* convention. This can be explained by suggesting that the beloved represents a Japanese woman. Although the beloved's name often appears in the *qaṣīdah* convention, her name is not mentioned in this poem, which suggests that she is a symbol of the Japanese woman. Her statement, "I am a Japanese

woman," in line 31 (and the following two lines) also suggest that she represents all Japanese women who are willing to sacrifice themselves for their nation, serving as military nurses, even though they may confront death. After line 34, her being a woman is transformed into "us," as is highlighted by "the Mikado taught us." From this line until the end, her words—stated with the collective "first-person plural"—now do not represent Japanese women alone, but also all Japanese people. Her praise for the Mikado is not solely her personal voice, but the collective and/or communal voice.

This fictional character may be linked to the public sphere in Ibrāhīm's poem. The praise for the Japanese emperor by the beloved in the last part of "A Young Woman of Japan" agrees with the perspective of the nationalist movement, which was led by Egyptian politicians such as Muṣṭafā Kāmil (1874–1908) and Saʿd Zaghlūl (1857–1927). Under the rule of Britain and the Ottoman Empire, a desire for independence arose in Egypt. In that situation, Japan appeared to Egyptians as a symbol of the awakening of the East during the Russo-Japanese War, as Hideaki Sugita stated.[51] They admired Japan for valiantly proclaiming war against Russia. Ibrāhīm was on good terms with nationalists, such as Muṣṭafā Kāmil and Saʿd Zaghlūl, from his youth. He also composed other patriotic poems against foreign rulers, including one about the Dinshawāy incident.[52] Consequently, the praise for Japan can be seen as a public sentiment offered by Ibrāhīm.

Ibrāhīm's poem also reflects his own experience. In the first part, it can be assumed that the poet's complaint against Egyptian society is based on his own experiences. He grieves over his misfortune, stating that the world frowned on him and that events that fell short of his expectations afflicted him (l. 5). This misfortune highlights the obstacles he confronted when he was raised in his uncle's house with his mother, and when he tried to obtain a stable job with a steady income. He put in great effort until 1911, when he was appointed to a post at the National Library. He seems to have endeavored not to lose the post thereafter. For instance, he did not publish his poems, which contained biting political criticism, lest he lose his position, as stated above. The brave and heroic image of the young Japanese woman in the second part may also represent Ibrāhīm's support for women's liberation. In response to the poet's advice to stay in her tent (l. 28), the beloved clearly conveys her intention to leave her tent and go to war, as though she were a lion (l. 29). As Ibrāhīm was recognized as a "champion of the feminist movement," according to Mounah Abdallah Khouri,[53] this image of the woman hints at his personal opinion. Another element based on the poet's own experience is evident, wherein he indicates that he went to war, where he witnessed numerous dead bodies and experienced the horrors of war. Ibrāhīm participated in the Sudan campaign in 1896. The horrible and

ugly images of war and the fear of death may have derived from his personal experience. On the other hand, it appears that Yosano's "Beloved, You Must Not Die" was based on a real event. She believed that her brother had followed the army to Port Arthur. The information about his family, including his new wife and mother, was real.

With respect to the theme of death in the war, the two poets highlighted a sharp contrast between the public and the personal. "A Young Woman of Japan" exemplifies the public, whereas "Beloved, You Must Not Die" illustrates the personal. Ibrāhīm expresses that death as self-sacrifice for one's nation is a respected and encouraged act among the nation's people in the *madīḥ* section of his poem. This view may have been shared by Japanese public opinion of those days that a citizen's life must be devoted to national interest and victory in the war, which is evident in some critics' vehement attacks on Yosano's poem. Opposing this public opinion, Yosano's desire is based on her personal feelings and affection for her family. The thesis that the willingness to die bravely for the nation is a virtue will be questioned in Ibrāhīm's other poem, "The Japanese-Russian War." This contrast may not be unrelated to the fact that Ibrāhīm was male and Yosano was female. Kohama revealed that women tend to be more concerned with personal matters that surround them than public matters, whereas men believe that public matters, such as social and political situations and movements, are more important than daily personal matters and affectional relationships.[54] Additional literary works of these and other poets must be examined to support Kohama's idea and to avoid generalizing gender differences.

"Al-Ḥarb al-Yābāniyyah wa-al-Rūsiyyah" ("The Japanese-Russian War") by Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm

The other poem by Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm on the same war, "The Japanese-Russian War," was published on November 10, 1905, after Japan's victory over Russia. If the poet conveyed a panegyrical tone regarding Japan in "A Young Woman of Japan," one may assume that a celebratory tone should prevail in "The Japanese-Russian War." Instead, a gloomy and mournful tone predominates in this poem, which describes the fierce battles between the two nations and terrible scenes of the wounded and the killed. Based on the *qaṣīdah* tradition, the poem can be divided into two parts: the *nasīb* (ll. 1–34) and the *madīḥ* (ll. 35–39).

Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm

"The Japanese-Russian War"

1. Is this a battlefield or the place of congregation for the Day of Judgment?
   an oasis of death or the al-Kawthar River?
2. Are these soldiers who obeyed the whim of their commanders
   or slaughtered livestock?
3. O God! How cruel were the minds of those
   who were in charge of the command of the reign and appropriated it for themselves!
4. Their power deluded them in the time
   and they went to extremes in the land and colonized.
5. The white men swore by their Crosses
   that they would not relinquish death until they won.
6. The yellow men swore by their idols
   that they would not sheathe the sword until they gained a victory.
7. The earth shook to its foundations
   when the white man and the yellow man met [in battle].
8. It was intoxicated by a wine of blood
   that the Mikado and the Czar relished.
9. It resembled its sister [the sky] on the battle day
   when the red twilight glimmered.
10. It has come to yearn for a flood from the sky,
    for perhaps that will purify the [blood] stain.
11. O war, you satiated the desert wolves,
    and surfeited the eagles and vultures.
12. The whales in the sea were fed [with the flesh of the dead],
    and human craving is immeasurable.
13. If this bear does not turn back and
    that dragon is not conquered,
14. And the white men are not content with their defeat,
    and the yellow men, after today, are not destroyed.
15. Then why did this war tuck up her garment from her shank
    until the army perished?
16. [And why did] the souls of the people flow over the crooked points of swords
    the open country and rivers flow [with blood]?

17. Mukdin City became ruby[-red],
    until pearls and gems were jealous of it.
18. A ruby that was valued among them
    in souls innumerable as drops of water.
19. The messenger of death became so bewildered
    he did not know how to follow his orders.
20. Azrael, did you ever see in the past—
    and you are the skilled expert—
21. [Anything] like the force of this cannon
    when its hateful sound rang out?
22. You see, if it hits a heart,
    neither a coat of mail nor a helmet protects it.
23. Kuropatkin became overwhelming,
    and Ōyama continued to look at him.
24. The Russians continued to fight vehemently,
    and glory called to them "be patient!"
25. What did the [Russian] fleet want
    before the greatest terror befell it?
26. Did it cleave the water
    whenever a swimmer or boat appeared in the darkness?
27. Did [the fleet] think that [the boat] carried Togo,
    and offer a greeting which Togo knew well?
28. A greeting from an excited passion
    whose breathes sigh from its heat.
29. Did the Czar know in his palace
    what the war made public and kept secret?
30. How many a slain man on the battle field
    was beset by talons and beaks!
31. How many a wounded man stretched out his hand calling his brother [for help],
    but he did not notice!
32. How many a drown man sank into the fathomless sea
    where even the mountain topples down, so he was never seen [again]!
33. How many a soul of a prisoner in captivity
    shed tears of grief!
34. If you do not see that making peace is better for you,

time will fall short of your ambitions.

35. The war hurts us,
    even though it called upon the men of the East to be proud.
36. There once was a time,
    when all living beings were mentioned, the Easterner was not mentioned,
37. There once was a time for the East
    when it did not draw any attention nor come into anyone's mind,
38. Until the Yellow revived their days [of former prosperity],
    and the Black and the Brown demanded justice.
39. May God have mercy upon the community (*ummah*),
    of which history relates what is worth mentioning.

Trans. Akiko Sumi

Arabic text[55]

حافظ ابراهيم

الحرب اليابانية الروسية

١ أَسَاحَةٌ للحَرْبِ أم مَحْشَرُ ومَوْرِدُ المَوْتِ أَم الكَوْثَرُ؟

٢ وهٰذه جُنْدٌ أَطاعُوا هَوَى أَرْبابِهِمْ ، أَم نَعَمٌ تُنْحَرُ؟

٣ للهِ ما أَقْسَى قُلوبَ الأُلَى قامُوا بِأَمْرِ ٱلمُلْكِ وٱسْتأْثَرُوا!

٤ وغَرَّهُمْ فِي الدَّهْرِ سُلْطانُهُمْ فأَمْعَنُوا فِي الأَرضِ وٱستعمروا

٥ قد أَقْسَمَ البِيضُ بصُلْبانِهِمْ لا يَهْجُرُونَ الموتَ أَو يُنْصَروا

٦ وأَقْسَمَ الصُّفْرُ بأَوْثَانِهِمْ لا يَغمِدُونَ السَّيْفَ أو يَظْفَرُوا

٧ فمَادت الأرضُ بأَوْتادِها حينَ ٱلْتَقَى الأَبْيَضُ والأَصْفَرُ

٨ وأَثْمَلَتْها خَمْرَةٌ مِنْ دَمٍ يَلْهُو بِها (المِيكادُ) والقَيْصَرُ

٩ وأَشْبَهَتْ يومَ الوَغى أخْتَها إذْ لاحَ فيها الشَّفَقُ الأَحْمَرُ

١٠ وأَصْبَحَتْ تَشتاقُ طُوفانَهاَ لَعَلَّهَا مِن رِجْسِها تَطْهُرُ

١١ أَشْبَعْتِ يا حَرْبُ ذِئابَ الفَلَا وَغَصَّتِ الْعِقْبانُ والأَنْسُرُ

١٢ ومِيرَتِ ٱلحِيتانُ في بَحْرها ومَطْمَعُ الإنسانِ لا يُقْدَرُ

١٣ إن كان هٰذا الدُّبُّ لا يَنْثَنِي وذلك التِّنِّينُ لا يُقْهَرُ

١٤ والبِيضُ لا تَرْضَى بخِذْلانِها والصُّفْرُ بعد اليومِ لا تُكْسَرُ

١٥ فما لِتِلْكَ الحَرْبِ قَدْ شَمَّرَتْ عَنْ ساقِها حَتَّى قَضَى العَسْكَرُ

١٦ سالَتْ نُفوسُ القَوْمِ فَوْقَ الظُّبَا فسالَت البَطْحاءُ والأَنْهُرُ

١٧ وأَصْبَحَتْ (مكْدنُ) ياقُوتةً يَغارُ مِنْها الدُّرُّ وَالْجَوْهَرُ

١٨ ياقُوتَةً قدْ قُوِّمَتْ بينهم بِأنفُسٍ كَالْقَطْرِ لا تُحْصَرُ

١٩ أَضْحَى رَسُولُ المَوْتِ ما بينها حَيْرانَ لا يَدْرِي بما يُؤْمَرُ

٢٠ عِزْرِيلُ ، هَلْ أَبْصَرْتَ فيما مَضَى وأنتَ ذاكَ الكَيِّسُ الأمْهَرُ

٢١ كذلك المِدْفَعِ في بَطْشِه إذا تَعالَى صَوْتُه المُنْكَرُ؟!

٢٢ تَرَاهُ إنْ أَوْفَى على مُهْجَةٍ لا الدِّرْعُ يَثْنِيه ولا المِغْفَرُ

٢٣ أمْسَى (كُرُوبَتْكين) في غَمْرةٍ وباتَ (أُوياَمَا) له يَنْظُرُ

٢٤ وظَلَّت (الرُّوسُ) على جَمْرَةٍ والمَجْدُ يَدعُوهم أَلا فاْصْبِرُوا

٢٥ وذَلكَ الأسْطُولُ ما خَطْبُه حَتَّى عَرَاهُ الْفَزَعُ الأَكْبَرُ؟

٢٦ أكلَّما لاحَ لَه سابِحٌ تحتَ الدُّجَى أو قارِبٌ يَمْخُرُ

٢٧ ظَنَّ بِهِ (طُوجُو) فأَهْدَى لَهُ تَحِيَّةً (طُوجُو) بها أَخْبَرُ؟

٢٨ تَحِيَّةً مِنْ واجِدٍ شَيِّقٍ أنْفاسُه مِنْ حَرِّها تَزْفِرُ

٢٩ فهل دَرَى القَيْصَرُ في قَصْرِه ما تُعْلِنُ الحَرْبُ وما تُضْمِرُ؟

٣٠ فَكَمْ قَتِيلٍ باتَ فَوْقَ الثَّرى يَنْتابُه الأُظْفُورُ والْمِنْسَرُ

٣١ وكم جَرِيحٍ باسِطٍ كَفَّه يَدْعُو أَخاه وهو لا يُبْصِرُ

٣٢ وكم غَرِيقٍ راحَ في لُجَّةٍ يَهْوِي بها الطَّوْدُ فلا يَظْهَرُ

٣٣ وكم أَسِيرٍ باتَ في أسْرِه ونَفْسُه مِنْ حَسْرَةٍ تَقْطُرُ

٣٤ إنْ لَم تَرَوْا في الصُّلْحِ خَيْرًا لكمْ فالدَّهْرُ مِنْ أَطْماعِكُم أقْصَرُ

٣٥	تَسُوءُنا الحَرْبُ وإنْ أَصْبَحَتْ	تَدْعُو رِجالَ الشَّرْقِ أنْ يَفْخَرُوا
٣٦	أَتَى على الشَّرْقِيِّ حِينٌ إذا	ما ذُكِرَ الأَحْياءُ لا يُذْكَرُ
٣٧	ومَرَّ بِالشَّرْقِ زَمانٌ وَمَا	يَمُرُّ بالبالِ ولا يَخْطِرُ
٣٨	حتّى أعادَ (الصُّفْرُ) أيّامَه	فانْتَصَفَ الأَسْوَدُ والأَسْمَرُ
٣٩	فرَحْمَةُ اللهِ على أمّةٍ	يَرْوِي لَهَا التاريخُ ما يُؤْثَرُ

"The Japanese-Russian War" opens with the poet likening a battlefield to the place for the Day of Judgment, and dead soldiers seem to go to al-Kawthar River, which appears in the Qur'ān; this is a river in Paradise.[56] Furthermore, it suggests that soldiers are harried by their commanders and lay down their lives like beasts. The poem criticizes both nations' rulers, stating "It [The earth] was intoxicated by a wine of blood that the Mikado and the Czar relished" (l. 8). The Russians are described as white, and the Japanese as yellow (l. 14). He grieves that the war claimed a heavy death toll and says that the battlefield, Mukden in Southern Manchuria, is as red as a ruby now—to the extent that gems envy its redness. The Battle of Mukden was the largest land battle during the Russo-Japanese War and was fought from the end of February to March 10, 1905. The angel of death, Azrael, makes an appearance, as he does in "A Young Woman of Japan." Even Azrael is perplexed by the immense number of casualties (l. 19). The commanders of both nations, Kuropatkin and Ōyama, confront each other (l. 23). The poem describes a disastrous scene of victims and clearly claims that the war torments us (l. 35). Only the final four lines (ll. 36–39) commemorate the triumph of the East over the West due to Japan's valor. This invokes the revival of the *ummah* (Egypt).

The poem hints at a harsh criticism of the war and of the nations and their rulers who force their people to die in the war. The war sacrificed a considerable number of human lives; Japan lost 90,000 victims.[57] Though this poem was composed after Japan's victory over Russia, the gruesomeness of the war permeates it and the celebration of Japan's victory is minimal. The poem barely congratulates Japan for its triumph—only a single line (l. 38) is dedicated to this. It is possible that this change of tone from "A Young Woman of Japan" was caused by Tolstoy's newspaper article titled "Bethink Yourselves: Tolstoy's Letter on the Russo-Japanese War" (published in *The London Times* on June 27, 1904), as Yosano appeared to have been inspired by it in composing her poem. In the article, Tolstoy advocated renunciation of the war, vehemently criticizing it from the

perspective of humanism as nothing but the encouragement and celebration of murder. Ibrāhīm wrote a *rithā'* (an elegy) on the death of Tolstoy on November 20, 1910. The elegy refers to the fact that Tolstoy wanted peace in war.[58] This shows the poet's interest in the Russian writer. Therefore, he may have read Tolstoy's article before composing "The Japanese-Russian War."

This poem clearly displays the terror and grief around men dying and killing each other in the war. In "A Young Woman of Japan," the Japanese woman's bravery of plunging into war with no fear of death can be understood as an act of self-sacrifice for the sake of her nation, which can constitute the base of social virtue.[59] In contrast, "The Japanese-Russian War" does not claim that dying for the sake of one's nation is virtue. Rather, it proposes the conciliation of the two nations (l. 34) to stop killing each other. The bravery (of the Japanese women) is not always considered social virtue. It is considered thus when the bravery with a readiness to die for the nation obtains approval and reliance from the community because bravery can sometimes become brute courage, recklessness, or temerity.[60] Upon the composition of "A Young Woman of Japan," Ibrāhīm seems to have believed that the Japanese woman's bravery to go to the battlefield with self-sacrifice corresponded with the people's virtue both in Egypt and Japan. However, in sharing Yosano's view in "Beloved, You Must Not Die," Ibrāhīm's second poem is strongly inclined to his personal feelings in the *nasīb*. He may have realized that he had excessively idealized Japan, which sacrificed the heavy toll of its people's lives for its triumph. The poem "The Japanese-Russian War" tells us "The war hurts us" (l. 35) and "history relates what is worth mentioning" in the concluding line.

Conclusion

In "A Young Woman of Japan," the poet's "personal" voice that says, "you must not die" in the war is defeated by the "public" voice that says, "I do not fear to die," uttered by the beloved. This public voice is based on the political desire of that period: "Follow and emulate Japan" for the sake of the liberation of Egypt and its advancement. Nevertheless, there is tension between the personal and the public. The personal feelings are his complaint against Egyptian society, the fear of death, and the poet's request for the beloved not to die in the war. The public feelings are her bravery, the praise for Japan, and the antagonism toward Russia. By way of praising Japan, the poet attempts to indirectly call on his people to raise their voice against their ruler who was virtually under the control of the British.

In relation to the motifs of war and death, Ibrāhīm's personal voice rings out more loudly in "The Japanese-Russian War" than in "A Young Woman of Japan." A manifestation of her personal feelings, Yosano's poem is more straightforward and clear. Repeating the phrase "Beloved, you must not die," she projected and reinforced her personal feelings in "An Open Letter," despite her critics' merciless attacks. Ibrāhīm's poems demonstrate a complex interplay between personal and public voices, whereas Yosano's poem is full of personal expression.

In "The Japanese-Russian War," which can be read as a sequel to "A Young Woman of Japan," Ibrāhīm chiefly wished to convey that the war causes immense suffering and involves an immense number of deaths. We may go so far as to say that he suggests "you must not die" in the war in the second poem as well. Its opening section emphasizes that the main theme is death. The poet asks his readers to determine whether or not the oasis of death is the al-Kawthar River in Paradise. There is no role for the beloved. She does not appear at all in this poem. The poet attempts to make "The Japanese-Russian War" appear as a eulogy to the East (including Japan) in the last five lines. Yet, the confident tone in praise for the brave Japanese people in "A Young Woman of Japan" hardly remained in "The Japanese-Russian War." Considering the outcome of the war, the poet seems to have wished to color the felicitation of Japan's victory over Russia with a bloody hue. When "The Japanese-Russian War" was published, there was a tendency to see Japan as an Eastern model of liberation from European and other Western powers, which may have applied in Egypt. As this trend can be considered the public view, Ibrāhīm expressed his personal perspective instead.

Based on their personal views, Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm and Akiko Yosano demonstrated that their poems have the power to form social virtue by stimulating and uniting people's minds. Their poems made a significant impact on their societies, given that they have been included in the school textbooks of their respective countries. On the theme of death in war, the shift of the claim, from its approval in Ḥāfiẓ's first poem to its rejection in his second poem, which is similar to Yosano's poem, suggests that social virtue can descend from the top (or the ruler) and it can also ascend from the bottom (or the populace). In modern times, virtue becomes social virtue when it is supported by people. In Ḥāfiẓ's second poem, the ruler is not mentioned in the concluding section that offers praise, whereas the people of the East are mentioned. As Ibrāhīm says, history shows what is worth mentioning. As Japan pursued the route of colonialism in Asia after the Russo-Japanese War, Ibrāhīm's treatment of the war in "The Japanese-Russian War" was more personal and probably more critical than the contemporary idealization of Japan in his

country, Egypt. He may have been honest to his heart's truth, as was Yosano. Conscious of the political and social trends of their time, both poets maintained their pride as poets and continued to preserve and develop their own poetics, seeking social virtue, even in the face of real and possible criticism. Poetry was and is continually associated with society and its individual members.

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* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International Symposium, "The Personal and Public in Literary Works of the Arab Regions," held on March 24 and March 25, 2018 at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan. I am grateful to Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych for her valuable comments on this paper.

1 The title of the poem has the subtitle "Kimi shinitamō kotonakare: Ryojunkō hōigun no nakani aru otōto wo nagekite [Beloved, You Must Not Die: Lamenting My Younger Brother Who Was among the Troops Who Besieged Port Arthur]." This translation of the subtitle is mine. See Akiko Yosano, "Beloved, You Must Not Die," trans. Janine Beichman, eds. J. Thomas Rimer and Van C. Gessel, *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature Volume 1: From Restoration to Occupation, 1868–1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 302–303.

2 Masao Abe, *Arabu sekai: Sono miryoku wo saguru* [Seeking Fascination in the Arab World], Color Books 379 (Tokyo: Hoikusha, 1976), 103.

3 The understanding of "public" is based on Itsuo Kohama, *Rinri no kigen* [The Origin of Morals] (Tokyo: Potto Shuppan Purasu, 2019), 393–394.

4 Jürgen Habermas stated that the concepts of public sphere and public opinion arose for the first time in the eighteenth century. Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)," trans. Sara Lennox, Frank Lennox, *New German Critique* 3, 49–55, 1974. Kohama points out the illusion of "nation," as Benedict Anderson calls it "imagined communities," 404–405.

5 The "public" sphere can be expanded further to the global scale.

6 Noorani argued that "war is the primary metaphor" for the process of manifestation of achieving existence and agency "because it most vividly portrays the extirpation of disorder through willingness to die, self-sacrifice for the sake of the community, which is the foundation of social virtue (*himma*)." Yaseen Noorani, *Culture and Hegemony in the Colonial Middle East* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 45.

7 Noorani, *Culture and Hegemony*, 8.

8 Kohama, *Rinri*, 422.

9 I would like to thank Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych for suggesting this idea.

10 Mitchell Hartman, "Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm," ed. Roger Allen, *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography: 1850–1950*, 149–159 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 150.

11 The information in this paragraph is based on Hartman, 149–159; Muḥammad Mustafā Badawī, "Ḥafiz Ibrahim," *A Critical Introduction to Modern Arabic Poetry*, 42–47 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

12 Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, eds. Aḥmad Amīn, Aḥmad al-Zayn, and Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, 3rd ed. 2 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿah al-Amīriyyah, 1948), 1: the first page.

13 Hartman, 151.

14 Arthur Goldschmidt, "Ibrāhim, [Muhammad] Hafiz," *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt*, 86–87.

15 The poet's frequent letters to home convey his bitter experience in his sojourn in Sudan. See Hartman, 151.

[16] Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 1: the section of *lām*; Badawī, 42.
[17] Hartman, 153.
[18] Hartman, 152.
[19] Hartman, 157; Badawi, 43.
[20] Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, eds. Aḥmad Amīn, Aḥmad al-Zayn, and Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, 2 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1937) 2:7.
[21] According to *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, the poem was published on November 10, 1904. However, this date was actually November 10, 1905 because the content of the poem mentions detailed historical facts, such as the names of the commanders on both sides: the Russian Kuropatkin and the Japanese Ōyama (l. 23) in the battle that occurred between February and March of 1905. For this, see also Hideaki Sugita, *Nihonjin no chutō hakken: Gyaku enkinhō no nakano hikaku bunkashi* [The Discovery of the Middle East by Japanese People: Comparative Cultural History from the Paradoxical Perspective] (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1995), 203 and note 47.
[22] Hartman, 154.
[23] Sugita, *Nihonjin*, 192; Hartman, 154.
[24] Although the Arabic *qaṣīdah* conventionally comprises the *nasīb*, the *raḥīl* (desert journey), and the *madīḥ* or the *fakhr* (boast), the two-part *nasīb-madīḥ* form increasingly dominates the ʿAbbāsid and post-ʿAbbāsid *qaṣīdah*.
[25] This means, "I have known fortunes and pain."
[26] The *sharḥ* (commentary) conveys that "lightning without a downpour" means a disappointing or disillusioning matter. Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 2:7.
[27] This is because it was bad news.
[28] The *sharḥ* states that "young" or "youth" means the beginning of the night. Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 2:8.
[29] The *sharḥ* says that the new moon is likened to a baby, who crawls in the cradle. Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 2:8.
[30] Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 2:7–10.
[31] Akiko Motoyoshi Sumi, *Description in Classical Arabic Poetry:* Waṣf*, Ekphrasis, and Interarts Theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 108.
[32] See Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, "The Obligations and Poetics of Gender: Women's Elegy and Blood Vengeance," in *The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993).
[33] See Mounah Abdallah Khouri, "Poetry and Society," in *Poetry and the Making of Modern Egypt* (1882–1922), 119–133 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 128.
[34] Stefan Sperl, *Mannerism in Arabic Poetry A Structural Analysis of Selected Texts* (3rd Century AH/9th Century AD 5th Century AH/11th Century AD) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 21. I relied for this idea on Noorani, *Culture and Hegemony*, 34.
[35] For more on this topic, see Stetkevych, *Mute Immortals Speak*, 167; Sumi, *Description*, 191.
[36] Fumio Nakamura, *Kimi shinitamō kotonakare* [Beloved, You Must Not Die] (Tokyo: Izumi Shoin, 1994), 254.
[37] Yosano, "Beloved, You Must Not Die," trans. Janine Beichman, 302–303.
[38] Akiko Yosano, "Kimi shinitamō kotonakare: Ryojunkō hōigun nonakani aru otōto wo nagekite" [Beloved, You Must Not Die: Lamenting My Younger Brother Who Was among the Troops Who Besieged Port Arthur], *Myōjō* (September, 1904): 51–52. This text is based on Nakamura, *Kimi shinitamō kotonakare*, 6–7.
[39] Akiko Yosano, "An Open Letter," trans. Janine Beichman, eds. J. Thomas Rimer and Van C. Gessel, *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature Volume 1: From Restoration to Occupation, 1868–1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 334–339. Akiko Yosano, "Hirakibumi" [An Open Leter], *Myōjō* (November, 1904): 98–102.
[40] Michiaki Taguchi, "Yosano Akiko 'Kimi shinitamō kotonakare' ronsō no shūhen: Shijō no yukue [The Controversies Surrounding 'Beloved, You Must Not Die' by Akiko Yosano: The

Traces of 'Personal Feelings'"], *Ronkyū Nihon Bungaku* 96 (2012), 35–51.
[41] According to Taguchi, Yosano may not have been at her parental home when she wrote "The Open Letter." See Taguchi, note 4, 47–48.
[42] Taguchi, 37.
[43] Yosano, trans. Janine Beichman, "An Open Letter," 334.
[44] Taguchi, 38.
[45] Takeshi Abe, *Kindai nihon no sensō to shijin* [War and Poets in Modern Japan] (Tokyo: Doseisha, 2005), 22–28; Kumi Itsumi, *Hyōden Yosano Hiroshi Akiko Meiji-hen* [The Critical Biography of Hiroshi and Akiko Yosano, Meiji Volume] (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2007), 347–355. In opposition of Kakuda's remarks defending Yosano, Ōmachi stated that it is natural for poetry to be produced by feelings, but there are public and poetic feelings. See Keigetsu Ōmachi, "Bungei jihyō" ["Comments on Current Literature"], *The Sun*, December, 1904.
[46] Taguchi, 44.
[47] Taguchi, 41.
[48] Yosano, trans. Janine Beichman, "An Open Letter," 337.
[49] Itsumi, *Hyōden Yosano*, 354–355.
[50] Sugita, *Nihonjin*, 201. Sugita argued that this image of the beloved may have been inspired by war news about Japanese military nurses.
[51] Sugita, *Nihonjin*, 189–212.
[52] This was a confrontation in 1906 between residents of the Egyptian village of Dinshawāy and British officers during the occupation of Egypt by Great Britain (1882–1952).
[53] Khouri, *Poetry and the Making of Modern Egypt*, 128.
[54] Kohama, *Rinri*, 427–428.
[55] Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 2:10–14.
[56] The Qur'ān, 108:1.
[57] Nakamura, *Kimi shinitamō kotonakare*, 218.
[58] The elegy was published in the same month. It is found in Ibrāhīm, *Dīwān Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm*, 2:164–167. See line 22 of the elegy.
[59] See Noorani, *Culture and Hegemony*, 45.
[60] Kohama, *Rinri*, 422.

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II. From the Individual to Society

3

The Discourse of Coffee and Coffeehouse in Contemporary Arabic Poetry: An Analysis of "An Ancient Song" by the Iraqi Poet Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb*

Hassan El-Banna Ezz El-Din

Abstract

This paper sheds light on the phenomenal presence of "coffee" (*qahwah* قهوة: in Arabic) and "coffeehouses" (*maqhā* مقهى: in Arabic) in contemporary Arabic poetry, through the analysis of a poem titled, "*An Ancient Song*" by the Iraqi poet Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (1926–1964). As research about the subject is mostly limited to historical aspects and literary coffeehouses, this paper concentrates on the poetic discourse(s) of coffee and coffeehouses within contemporary Arabic poetry (1945–recent). This paper attempts to address the gap by focusing on modernism. The paper elaborates on the main features of different discourses regarding the poetic usage of coffee and coffeehouses. In this ongoing scholarly project, six "discourses" are identified under the following categories: "Coffee/Coffeehouses and Alienation," "Coffeehouse of Lovers," "Coffee/Coffeehouses and Homeland," "Coffee of Writing," "Coffeehouse of Creativity," and "Coffeehouse of Pretenders."

Keywords: Discourse, coffee, coffeehouse, contemporary Arabic poetry, alienation, homeland, public sphere.

Introduction

At the dusk of the Second World War, and with the dawn of a new form of Arabic poetry, "the *free verse,*" coffee and coffeehouses dominated the themes in this newborn poetry, forming their own poetic discourses. This poetic phenomenon is still flourishing. A large number of poems by contemporary Arabic poets use "coffee" and "coffeehouses" as the main title, theme, or entity. The author has identified about 150 poems that pertain to this

category. Examining these poems provides an insight regarding the dialectics of the personal and the public, in literary works of the Arab regions.

The poetic function (Jacobson)[1] is a starting point to consider the discourses of coffee and coffeehouses from the perspective of Habermas' *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (*Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*).[2] Also, poetics of things and daily objects and details (Heidegger and others)[3] are considered to be a part of the theoretical background for this paper.

Coffee was "discovered" in the Islamic-Arabic world at the turn of the 16th century, and it began its long journey from Yemen, where it was spread among Sufi gatherings, to the Holy city of Mecca, in the heart of Arabia. From here it reached Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, and then, Constantinople. It then found its route to Vienna. It also came to be known in the rest of European major cities through other routes and on different dates. It is easy to observe how smoothly coffee diffused in these varied civilizations, emphasizing on the power of its authenticity despite how geographically and culturally diverse the environment was. Coffee's spotlight in Arabic poetry can be attributed to this authenticity. The existence of coffeehouses, as social establishments, coincided with the prevalence of coffee among common and intellectual individuals. Coffee and coffeehouses were primary subjects of controversy since the Ottoman era in the Arabic world, that is, circa 1517 to 1850, at different religious, political, and medical levels. These arguments were basically expressed in Arabic verse. Additionally, poets of that era expressed their artistic views about coffee by comparing it to wine in classical Arabic poetry. The primary reason for this comparison was that coffee ("*qahwah*" in Arabic) was one of the names for "wine" since pre-Islamic era, and was used as such in classical Arabic poetry.

For approximately one century, from 1850 to 1950, a stage called *al-nahḍah* (Arabic: النهضة, meaning "the Awakening" or "the Renaissance"), which is the period of revival and rebirth for the Arabic literary heritage with cultural contact with Western cultures, there was a relatively rare use of coffee and coffeehouses in Neo-classical and Romantic Arabic poetry. However, in particular, coffee and coffeehouses in Middle Eastern countries have been common themes in Orientalist paintings during the 19th century. These two observations need to be deeply examined and interpreted.

"Coffee" and "coffeehouses" have become two common vocabularies in the diction of contemporary Arabic poetry. However, it must be noted that there is an epoch between the romantic and the contemporary stage, in which most of the poets were still influenced by the previous generation. A decade of transition is visible between the

romantic and the contemporary era, approximately from 1945 to 1955. In this decade, the precursors of *free verse* began publishing their own poems, for example, the Iraqi poetess Nāzik al-Malāʾikah نازك الملائكة (1923–2007), the Iraqi poet Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb بدر شاكر السياب (1926–1964), the Iraqi poet ʿAbd al-Wahhab al-Bayyātī عبد الوهاب البياتي (1926–1999), and the Syrian poet Nizār Qabbānī نزار قباني (1923–1998). These poets were soon followed by other poets from different Arab countries in the following decades.

"Coffee" and "coffeehouse," were absorbed within the new poetry as the poetry of *things* (*objects*) and daily details, and this helped poets in creating new discourses that stepped away from the previous classical and romantic spirit. The transition of the perception of coffee and coffeehouses in poetry illuminates their fluidity and flexibility as subjects, revealing how wide the horizon of the topic is. Subsequently, Arab poets largely managed to eliminate the impact of the transitional period from their poetry.

The first manifestations of "coffee and "coffeehouses" are perhaps evident in contemporary Arabic poetry and the most obvious is the abundance of these two vocabularies in the poetic diction quantitatively and qualitatively. Other aspects can be identified in specific discourses, such as "alienation," "love," and "homeland." However, it is evident that these discourses could be included in a central discourse represented in the relationship of coffee and coffeehouse with the poets' awareness of the "*poetic function*" within the poem itself. We can easily trace three main discourses for coffee and coffeehouse that would be "sources." These are, "writing," "creativity," and "pretension," that is, claimed creativity by false personalities.

It is evident that these discourses are intertwined in one form or the other. At the same time, some complete poems can be found that could be addressed within a particular discourse, without completely departing from the features of other discourses. This very "overlap" sheds light on each discourse, confirming its autonomy as well as, conferring shadows on some of the other discourses, and consequently enhancing their ability to interact with each other in shaping the vision and discourse of the poet in every single poem.

In contemporary Arabic poetry, we can see how the terms of "coffee" and "coffeehouse," and in other cases, "*finjān*" فنجان [cup], were among the main terms in the titles of a variety of poems, in addition to their presence within the poems. Approximately 150 poems written by about one hundred contemporary Arab poets include these terms. This reincarnation of coffee and coffeehouses reveals the immortality of the effect that they have on poetry.

As mentioned, the sample poems are categorized into six main themes or

discourses related to coffee or coffeehouse as follows:

- Coffee/writing
- Coffeehouse/creativity
- Coffeehouse/pretension.
- Coffee - coffeehouse/mother, homeland
- Coffee - coffeehouse/men/women
- Coffee - coffeehouse/alienation

These poems were written by poets from 14 Arab countries, namely, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE, Yemen, Oman, Morocco, Tunisia, and Sudan.

From the perspective of the "*poetic function*" (Jacobson), the coffee or coffeehouses relationship with writing or creativity is a central starting point to view their discourses in contemporary Arabic poetry. A major observation regarding the first three discourses is the predominance of sadness and alienation that is always associated with writing and creativity. We can also distinguish some of these poems in close relationship with the meanings of isolation, exile, and imprisonment, in addition to the presence of famous classical poets, such as al-Mutanabbī (303–354 H/915–965 AD) and Imruʾ al-Qays (501–540 AD) in the titles or within some contemporary Arabic poems dealing with coffee and coffeehouses.

Coffee/Writing Discourse

In the coffee/writing discourse, coffee as a drink is the main theme of many poems and is enough to form its own discourse. In this discourse, we have identified 24 poems by 18 different Arab poets (14 male poets and four poetesses) from eight Arab countries. Both Nizār Qabbānī and Maḥmūd Darwīsh have four poems in this category.

Here we refer to the following poems: "A Song" أغنية by Maḥmūd Darwīsh (1941–2008), "Coffee Pot" فنجان قهوة by Fawziyyah Abū Khālid (Saudi Arabia, born 1956), "Maybe" ربما , "The Cup Reader" قارئة الفنجان, and "Depression" اكتئاب by Nizār Qabbānī, "Coffee Cup" فنجان قهوة by Fawāghī Ṣaqr al-Qāsimī فواغي صقر القاسمي (UAE), "In the Coffee Shop" في المقهى by Muḥammad Ḥasan ʿAlwān محمد حسن علوان (Saudi, born 1979), "Cold Coffee" قهوة باردة, by Mundhir Abū Ḥaltam منذر أبو حلتم (Palestine, born 1964), and "Coffee with Mint" قهوة بالنعناع, by Gamāl Mursī جمال مرسي (Egyptian, born 1957).

An example of this discourse can be found among these poems, as is seen in

Maḥmūd Darwīsh's محمود درويش poem, "A Song" أغنية (from *The Olive Leaves Collection* "*dīwān*" أوراق الزيتون, 1964).[4]

The lyrical "I" begins his song with the sentence, "And when I come back home." It is evident from the way that the poem begins that the poet starts from a resumed point, that could be presumed as the "end" of the poem itself, and he wants to start the story after he is done with it, and is willing, as a way of narrating "his story" to others. However, the recipients could be aware of the "story" implicitly. Therefore, the persona begins at the "climax." As a matter of fact, this kind of beginning represents a particular structure in the contemporary Arabic poem, which can be called "climax structure." Darwish uses this sentence as a rhythmical standing phrase with which he begins the passages, implicitly and explicitly.

In Darwīsh's poem, the lyrical "I" is no longer alone at home, missing the "woman" who filled the house with a life laugh, and without her he remains alone, empty, except with loneliness:

And when I come back home	وحين أعود للبيتِ
Lonely and empty, but from loneliness	وحيداً فارغاً، إلاّ من الوحدة
My hands without belongings, my heart without a rose	يداي بغير أمتعةٍ، وقلبي دونما وردة
For I have distributed my roses	فقد وزعت ورداتي
among the miserable since the morning ... my roses	علي البؤساء منذ الصبح ... ورداتي
I wrestled the wolves, and came back home	وصارعت الذئاب، وعدت للبيتِ
No sweet echo of the house's laughter	بلا رنَّات ضحكةٍ حلوة البيتِ
Without the swish of her kiss	بغير حفيف قبلتها
Without the flutter of her touch	بغير رفيف لمستها
Without her asking about me, and the news of my tragedy.	بغير سؤالها عني، وعن أخبار مأساتي

However, loneliness, misery, and the struggle with the wolves, are the "booty" that the poet returns home with, as if a defeated hero comes back frustrated from an unknown battle, but this is a tragedy for him. The loneliness in the poem is synonymous with making and drinking coffee, and with a loss that leaves nothing for the poet, except a

lamp, some verses, and a few other things:

Lonely, I make coffee	وحيداً أصنع القهوة
Lonely, I drink coffee	وحيداً أشرب القهوة
So, I lose out of my life ...	فأخسر من حياتي...
I lose ecstasy	أخسر النشوة
My companions here are lamp, verses, and loneliness	رفاقي ها هنا المصباح والأشعار، والوحدة
And some cigarettes ...	وبعض سجائر..
and newspapers as black as night	وجرائد كالليلِ مسودَّة

In the third passage, the poet then introduces a new cycle of the poem. However, it begins with the same sentence that the poem initially began with, that is, the standing phrase, "And when I come back home."

And when I come back home	وحين أعود للبيت
I feel its emptiness	أحس بوحشة البيت
And I lose all my roses from my life	وأخسر من حياتي كل ورداتي
The secret of the spring ... the spring of light in the depths of my tragedy	وسرّ النبع.. نبع الضوء في أعماق مأساتي
And I store up the torment because I am alone	وأختزن العذاب لأنني وحدي
Without the tenderness of your hands	بدون حنان كفيك
Without the spring of your eyes!	بدون ربيع عينيك! ...

Loneliness is associated with making coffee and drinking it at home without the beloved, which makes the poet lose the spring of light in the tragedy, the fountain of inspiration that is inspired by the beloved, and, consequently, he loses the "ideal" poem, that has not been written yet, and may never be written. However, this implies that the poet can "write" this poem, because he "stores" the torment alone. There is an underlying metaphor in the association of coffee and loneliness, where the poet seems to be pouring coffee to fill the void of loneliness in his heart, the heat numbing him, robbing him of his "ecstasy" and "life." Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm (1898–1987), in the prologue of his *The Diary of*

a Country Prosecutor, يوميات نائب في الأرياف, 1933, stated, "The owner of a decent life does not write it down, but he rather lives it." Al-Ḥakīm refers to the same prologue and the fact that he "writes down" his diary, without the intention to publish it, but only as an open window through which he sets himself free, as it were, in times of tightness.

Coffeehouse/Creativity Discourse

Eight poems communicate that the coffeehouse could be a space for the process of creativity, where poets could find a unique shelter, that is free and secure, to express themselves, albeit with enough supply of alienation, sadness, and isolation which is always associated with the idea of creating poetry.

Some poems that can be referred to in this context are by Nizār Qabbānī, "Waiting for My Lady" بانتظار سيدتي, "What Happened to al-Mutanabbī When He Entered a Cafe in the Gorge of Bawwān?" ماذا حدث للمتنبي حين دخل مقهى في شعب بوان by Samīḥ al-Qāsim سميح القاسم(Palestine, 1939–2014), "Coffeehouse, and You with the Newspaper" مقهى، وأنت مع الجريدة, by Maḥmūd Darwīsh.

Here we take into consideration, Darwīsh's poem "Coffeehouse, and You with the Newspaper" مقهى، وأنت مع الجريدة.[5] In the poem, the poet portrays himself as two characters, his image as a well-known poet and as a free and forgotten poet who no one recognizes at the coffeehouse. He "sees" the others but is "not seen" by them.

The poem can be divided into five sections. In the first section, he looks at the "rushing pedestrians" المشاة المسرعين and into their private affairs. At the same time, he observes that his own "freedom" is not noticed by anyone:

Café, and you're sitting with the newspaper	مقهى، وأنتَ مع الجريدة جالسٌ
No, you are not alone. Your cup is half empty	لا، لستَ وحدَك. نِصفُ كأسُكَ فارغٌ
and the sun fills its second half ...	والشمسُ تملأ نصفَها الثاني ...
From behind the glass you can see the rushing pedestrians	ومن خلف الزجاج ترى المشاة المسرعين
And not seen [One of those unseen's attributes:	ولا تُرَى [إحدى صفات الغيب تلك:
You can see but not be seen	تَرَى ولكن لا تُرَى]
How free you are, who is forgotten in the café!	كم أنتَ حُرٌّ أيها المنسيُّ في المقهى!

In this passage, the sun, which is mentioned in a lot of poems that refer to coffee and coffeehouses, appears distinctly, as it fills half of the poet's cup while the other half is empty. Here it can be taken as a sign of the "warmth" of feelings and the brightness within him. It can also be a sign of inspiration. This implies that the poet is enjoying his freedom and is neglecting those who neglected him. However, it seems that he is telling his ego, "You are not alone." Therefore, being "forgotten" by others makes the poet "free," but does not imply that he is "alone."

In the second stanza, which is related to the first semantically and verbally, the poet says:

How free you are, forgotten in the café!	كم أنتَ حُرٌّ أيها المنسيُّ في المقهى!
No one can see the effect of the violin on you.	فلا أَحَدٌ يَرَى أثرَ الكمنجة فيك،
No one stares at your presence or absence,	لا أحدٌ يحملقُ في حضورِكَ أو غيابك،
Or checks your fog if you looked	أو يُدَقِّقُ في ضبابك إن نظرت
at a girl and broke in front of her...	إلى فتاةٍ وانكسرت أمامها..
How free you are to manage your personal affair	كم أنتَ حُرٌّ في إدارة شأنكَ الشخصي

The poet communicates that he is unaware of the people around him and vice versa. Hence, no one "sees" the effect of music on him or the effect of his gaze on some girl who does not respond to it. Therefore, he is "free" to manage his personal affairs. The reader feels the poet's agony when he wishes that even in his heartbreak, he longs to be alone, and craves for privacy rather than empathy from people who know or admire him. He states that he envies the forgotten as they have the blessing of weeping in solitude.

In the third stanza, the censor appears, or rather, disappears from the poet's side, or on the part of the readers, and the poet is once again forgotten and free in his imagination, without his memories being censored:

In this crowd without any supervision by you or a reader!	في هذا الزحام بلا رقيب منك أو من قارئ!
Do what you wish to yourself, take off your shirt or shoes if you like,	فاصنعْ بنفسك ما تشاء، اخلَعْ قميصَكَ أو حذاءَكَ إن أردتَ، فأنت

You are forgotten and free in your imagination, for your name or your face has no significance.	مَنسيٌّ وحُرٌّ في خيالك، ليس لاسمكَ أو لوجهكَ ههنا عَمَلٌ ضروريٌّ. تكون
Be as you are … there is nota friend or a foe	كما تكون ... فلا صديقَ ولا عَدُوَّ
Watching your memories here.	يراقب هنا ذكرياتِكَ /

In the next passage, the poet escapes from the censorship of others as he escapes from his own censorship. The poet finds liberty in being invisible, he does not wish for any extraordinary qualities like being invincible, but only wishes for the power to exist as he is, with no spying or judgmental eyes. Therefore, he becomes free and is forgotten in his mind and imagination, and consequently is absent from that of others as well. However, he finds excuses for those who are ignoring him, whether it is a potential muse or an enemy who is always present. The muse, that is, the inspiring girl, may sometimes be present, so that he can create a poem or a song. However, if he writes a poem, then there are those who want him to be assassinated as he wrote it with the ink of "a star" that hit him but did not kill him.

So seek an excuse for the woman who left you in the café	فالتمسْ عُذْراً لِمَن تَرَكَتْكَ في المقهى
Cause you didn't notice the new haircut	لأنك لم تلاحظ قَصَّة الشَّعر الجديدة
And the butterflies that danced on her dimples /	والفراشات التي رقصت على غمازتيها/
And seek an excuse for those who sought to assassinate you,	والتمس عذراً لمن طلب اغتيالك،
One day, not for nothing … but because you didn't	ذاتَ يوم، لا لشيء... بل لأنك لم
Die on the day you hit a star… and you wrote	تَمُتْ يومَ ارتَطمتَ بنجمة.. وكتبتَ
The first of songs with its ink …	أُولى الأغنيات بحبرها...

In the last part of the poem, the poet returns to the beginning of it, and is once again forgotten in a café, "*sitting with the newspaper*," without any kind of censorship,

without being insulted by anyone, maintaining his pure mood, and keeping himself safe from possible assassination. In other words, he is free in his imagination as much as he is forgotten in his reality. This virtual reality is what has allowed him, of course, to write the poem in the café, and this will always allow him to write other poems in other coffeehouses. Now, he just wishes to be forgotten, without anyone disturbing his clear mood, or thinking about assassinating him before he writes his first song with the ink of a star that hit him once. He will write as many songs or poems every time he is hit by other stars:

Café, and you are sitting with the newspaper	مقهًى، وأنتَ مع الجريدة جالسٌ
Forgotten in the corner, no one is disturbing	في الركن منسيًّا، فلا أحد يُهين
Your clear mood,	مزاجَكَ الصافي،
No one is thinking of assassinating you	ولا أَحَدٌ يُفَكِّرُ باغتيالكْ
How forgotten you are and free in your imagination!	كم أنت منسيٌّ وحُرٌّ في خيالك!

Café of Pretenders

The third discourse can be observed in poems in which a coffeehouse, in contrast to the previous discourse, is considered to be a "negative" space for writing and creativity, and is therefore being addressed as the "café of pretenders" مقهى الأدعياء. In ten poems that consider it as a café of pretenders, the coffeehouse functions as a "chaser away," of poets with real talent, and a "container" of semi-writers, poets, critics, and other scholars and audience of literature. In these poems the coffeehouse comes across as a place contaminated with hypocrisy, triviality, lies, and danger, that are represented by half-talented writers, critics, poets, and others.

Poems that portray the same include, "The Protocols of Cafe Rich's Men of Wisdom" بروتوكولات حكماء ريش by Nagīb Surūr (Egypt, 1932–1978) and "Five Poems from Cafe Rich" خمس قصائد من مقهى ريش by Ṭalʿat Shāhīn (Egypt, born 1949).

Here we take the example of the poem, "Cafe for Crying," مقهى للبكاء by the Syrian poetess Qamar Ṣabrī al-Jāsim from her collection *For those Who are Devoid of Hope*, للعاطلين عن الأمل (2004).[6] In this poem we find, in a coffeehouse for sad people, those who

are blind to hope, full of boredom, laziness, oppression, and have a compulsive cry:

In a café	في قهوةٍ
For those who are devoid of hope	للعاطلينَ عن الأملْ
I choose a corner to drink half a cup of boredom	أختارُ زاويةً لأشربَ نصفَ كوبٍ من مللْ
To watch them all burying the wishes	حتى أراقبهمْ جميعاً يدفنونَ الأمنياتْ
I smell the burning smell of life	أشتمُّ رائحةَ احتراقٍ من تباشيرِ الحياةْ
And I see on the chest of bereavement a kiss thrown	وأرى على صدرِ الفجيعةِ قبلةً مرميّةً
and a newspaper entitled River of Laziness	وجريدة عنوانها نهرُ الكسلْ
That waiter comes to me	يأتي إليَّ النادلُ الـ
“what do you want...	ماذا تريدُ..
Here we have everything you do not crave	هنا لدينا كلَّ ما لا تشتهي
What you do not like	ما لا تحبُّ
Juice of compulsion, Coffee of Memories	عصيرَ قهرٍ، قهوة من ذكرياتْ
Or did you come, like me, to practice without pay	أمْ جئتَ مثلي كي تمارسَ دونَ أجرٍ
(Right of work wish)?	(حقَّ أمنيةِ العملْ)؟
(Right of work wish)?	(حقَّ أمنيةِ العملْ)؟
I am here, my friend	إني هنا يا صاحبي
So that not to bring you what you wish	كي لا ألبّي ما تريدْ
Unless you say that you wish to cry	إلا إذا ما قلتَ أن أبكي
Then I bring you onions.	جلبتُ لكَ البصلْ

In the coffeeshop itself, there is nothing to drink but “compulsion juice,” عصير قهر and “coffee of memories,” قهوة من ذكريات , which are not desired by the person in the poem. The desire to cry is, however, easy to achieve from the point of view of the “waiter” through “onions.” Nevertheless, the “waiter,” in the poem, could be seen as an objective correlative to the lyrical “I” who is a female poet and seems to have feelings of boredom, frustration, and the incapacity to cry, with other “customers.” It is interesting that such cafes existed in China a few years ago. “A café for crying” opened in 2008, where customers were given some onions and red pepper to help them cry, and light mint oil to

ease their pain. It is interesting to see how coffeehouses can be a home to those who endeavor to cure their drought of emotion, or their inability to express it through the most common human act of crying.

Coffee/Coffeehouse as "Homeland"

In another set of poems that have 21 lyrics, and have been written by 13 contemporary Arab poets, the discourse addresses the "coffee or coffeehouse as 'homeland.'" In this case, both the coffee and home or homeland become synonymous with each other in one way or the other. Therefore, once "coffee" is a framework for the idea of "home," and "home" is a framework in which "coffee" represents a prominent term of its vocabulary. Poems that represent this include, "Habituation" اعتياد, by Riyad al-Salih, (Syria, born 1954) and "The Epic of Caravans and Rain"تغريدة القوافل والمطر, by Muḥammad al-Thubaytī (Saudi Arabia, 1952–2011), and four poems of Maḥmūd Darwīsh, "A Soldier Dreams of White Lilies" جندي يحلم بالزنابق البيضاء.

Here we take the example of a section of the poem al-Thubaytī, "The Epic of Caravans and Rain." This is a long poem from the poet's collection titled "Terrains" التضاريس, which won the *Jeddah Cultural Club Award* in 1991. The poem has 97 lines, and can be divided into six sections or six chants, especially as the poet adopts the style of "songs" in different parts. This poem can also be read in a more expansive context within the collection in which it was published, especially the poem "Embryos" الأجنة which precedes the poem referred to here, directly in the collection.

The first threshold: The title "The Epic of Caravans and Rain"

The choice of the word "*taghrībah*" تغريبة (epic) in the title of the poem gives it a poetic, epical, folk, and Bedouin sense at first glance, as the term is associated with the well-known epic journey, the *Taghrībat Banī Hilāl* تغريبة بني هلال, which refers to the migration of Arab tribes from the south and central Arabian Peninsula to the West of Africa, "Maghreb" المغرب. In Banū Hilāl's biography, it is known that Abū Zayd أبو زيد and his sister Yahyā's يحيى children, Marʿī مرعي and Yūnus يونس, disguised as traveling poets, and were imprisoned in Tunisia. Abū Zayd managed to escape from prison and returned to his tribe in Najd (central of Arabia), seeking to redeem the three prisoners. Here begins the second, large section of the epic, known as "alienation" تغريبة, in which the tribe overcomes the enemy by tricking them, and find its way to the city of Fez فاس in Morocco.

The *Taghrībat Banī Hilāl* is based on history, when Zirid Tunisia بنو زيري broke

away from the Fatimid Empire in the 11th century. Early sources describe how the Fatimid Caliph sent Banū Hilāl to the Maghreb lands to punish the Zirids for rebelling. The epic has come to represent a foundational myth for Arab identity in North Africa and the spread of Islam across the Sahara, affecting the cultural heritage of countries that were as far south as the Saḥel States, such as, Mali and Niger.

Whatever the case, we cannot escape from the first term in the title, that is, *taghrībah*, the "lyrical" dimension on more than one level, that is natural "singing" or "listening," dictated by the tradition of oral performance of the epic to live audience somewhere, accompanied by the "*rabābah*" ربابة (a stringed instrument). The rest of the title, "caravans and rain" القوافل والمطر, also invokes the *ẓaʿāʾin* ظعائن (departing women) in classical Arabic poetry, particularly during the pre-Islamic era, and hence, to the theme of war, or/and seasonal migration for green and fertile lands. Thus, it can be said that the poem from the beginning, combines in its title, these two main dimensions, epical and lyrical. This gave the poet, room to play with these two tunes to weave a poem that is similar to the *Muʿallaqāt* معلقات (Great pre-Islamic Seven Odes) in contemporary Arabic poetry, in terms of the poetic momentum and its proximity to the collective and individual feelings at the same time.

The poem's relationship with coffee or the homeland can be inferred from the first passage, which is "tuning/balancing" on the chord, and is metaphorically known as, "Muhjat al-Ṣubḥ" مُهْجَة الصُّبْحِ [soul of the morning], and goes on in "tuning" at the beginning of every section, using the phrase of "Pour us a homeland" صب لنا وطناً في الكؤوس. This introduces the poem smoothly within the realm of modernity from the widest doors.

The second threshold: The first section: "Soul of the Morning"

Turn the soul of the morning	أَدِرْ مُهْجَةَ الصُّبْحِ
Pour us a homeland into the cups	صُبَّ لنَا وطناً فِي الكُؤُوسْ
delegates the heads	يُدِيرُ الرُّؤُوسْ
And supply us with the Shādhiliyyah [coffee] until the cloud gives shade	وزِدْنَا مِنَ الشَّاذِلِيَّةِ حتَّى تَفِيءَ السَّحَابَةْ
Turn the soul of the morning	أَدِرْ مُهْجَةَ الصُّبْحِ
And spell on the heads of the people your bitter delightful coffee	واسْفَحْ علَى قِلَلِ القَومِ قَهْوتَكَ المُرَّةَ المُسْتَطَابَةْ
Turn the soul of the morning mixed with blaze	أَدِرْ مُهْجَةَ الصُّبْحِ مَمْزُوجَةً بِاللَّظَى

وقَلِّبْ مواجعنَا فوقَ جَمْرِ الغَضَا	And move our sufferings above the live embers of ‘ghadā’ [a variety of euphorbia]
ثُمَّ هَاتِ الرَّبَابَةَ	And then Bring ‘rabābah’ (a stringed instrument)

The first section begins with a call from the poet to the supposed “*sāqī*” الساقي [cupbearer] who pours coffee for the people. It can be assumed that the poet himself “wears” the mask of this “*sāqī*,” or there is a stronger possibility that he becomes their “*sāqī*.” Following that, he “orders” himself to perform all these acts, including, turn, pour, endow, spell, move, and bring, which are actions that make a rhythm in the passage, a rhythm that does not stop till the beginning of singing of the *rabābah* in the second section.

If the title of the poem combines the “alienation” from the homeland and the “devotion” to travel, it also includes ambiguity and concealment. We can, therefore, consider that “*taghrībah”* or “alienation” is, in principle, a psychological rather than a material alienation. Thus, the poet seeks to “restore” his homeland, in the first passage, through “Muhjat al-Ṣubḥ” مهجة الصبح (the soul of the morning/coffee), which is, bitter, delightful, and mixed with the blaze of fire. The poet also uses, in a remarkable manner, the collective plural pronoun, “for us, supply us, our sufferings,” which may imply that the poet speaks with the voice of the tribe, without imposing any sense of imposition of guardianship. The lyrical “I” shares its concerns with the “tribe,” in a way to break the feeling of alienation, and create belonging. However, the lyrical persona “stands” on the heads of the folks, “pouring” on their “heads” its “coffee,” which is bitter and delightful, and can symbolize, from this perspective, the poem itself.

The poet then insists, in the first passage, on “drinking” coffee or Shādhiliyyah, a name given to coffee because of its “sufi” [mystical] origin as it is said that coffee was discovered in Yemen by ʿUmar al-Shādhilī (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī), a Sufi who was famous as a healer in the Yemeni village of al-Makhā. Therefore, coffee becomes more dense in its symbolic sense in the first place, mixed with the “soul” of the morning, a “homeland” cast in the cups, and in the heads altogether. This means that the delightful bitterness of “coffee” awaits the return of the cloud at it is beginning to cast its shadows on the folks, that is, the return of the “homeland” itself after its liberation from its impurities and sufferings.

Love Discourse of Coffee

Coffee is of masculine origin as it was discovered by men, especially the Sufis, and maintained this masculinity after the establishment of cafes that were frequented mostly by men. The word "*maqhā*" مقهى [café, the place] is masculine (in Arabic), and it also adopted the word "*qahwah*" قهوة [coffee, the drink] which is "feminine" in Arabic. However, the space where coffee was served was originally known as the "*bayt al-qahwah*" بيت القهوة [the coffeehouse], hence, combining the masculine word "*bayt*" [house], and the feminine word "*qahwah*" [the drink]. In the Middle East and the West, the masculine originality of coffee and coffee shops has seen jealousy and rejection by women who hated the idea of their men going to a place particularly for men and prohibited for women.

However, in contemporary Arabic poetry, coffee and coffeehouses, have both become available and are a common space for both genders where they can meet, talk, and spend their leisure time. In fact, "women" themselves have become a common topic for poems inspired by such places and such a drink and are written mostly by men. Women have also become poetesses who create poems inspired by the same atmosphere and may be written about men, however the number of women writing such poetry is lesser than that of men. The way coffee allures both the genders highlights its universal profile of being a rich muse.

To conclude, it is evident that the café has become a space for meeting of both, men and women, primarily for a poetic encounter. The author has collected 42 poems on this discourse/topic. Thirty six of these poems are by male poets, including 11 poems by Iraqi poets (six poems by Hasab al-Shaykh Jaʿfar, three by Saʿdī Yūsuf, and two by al-Bayyātī), nine poems by the Syrian poet Nizār Qabbānī, four poems by the Palestinian poet M. Darwīsh, two poems by the Egyptian poet Amal Dunqul, and individual poems by poets from Egypt, Morocco, and Bahrain. Six poems have been composed by female poetesses, out of which three are from Jordan and one each from Lebanon, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

Examples of these poems are as follows: three poems by the Iraqi poet Saʿdī Yūsuf (born 1934): "Twenty-One Late View of Adrian Rich" إحدى وعشرون إطلالة متأخرة لأدريان ريتش, "Coffee Gets Cold on the Terrace" القهوة تبرد في الشرفة, "*Coffeehouse at the Edge*" مقهى الحافة, "Me, the Coffee, and Mahmoud Darwish, the Morning Coffee" أنا والقهوة ومحمود درويش، قهوة الصباح by the Moroccan poet Muṣṭafā Shukrī, "In Search of the Frost Rose" البحث عن وردة الصقيع by Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣabūr, (Egypt, 1931–1981), "The Cock Drinks Coffee" الديك يشرب القهوة, "On Coffeehouses" عن المقاهي, and "In the

coffeehouse”في المقهى.

Here we take the example of a poem by the Bahraini poet Qāsim Ḥaddād, “Coffee Shirt” قميص القهوة, from *The Heart of Love* قلب الحب collection, (1980).[7] The poem borrows “coffee” as a shirt for the beloved, and “cu*p*” for the man to portray a violent love affair:

You wear coffee, and you tell me:	تلبسين القهوة، وتقولين لي:
[Go] win!	اِنتَصِرْ!
I head for the forests, they escape	أتوجه إلى الغابات تهرب
I turn to the seas, they surge	أستدير إلى البحار تضطرب
I pass the towns and villages and I reach you	أجتاز المدن والقرى وأصل إليك
I strive	أستبسل
I pay my cup	أدفع فنجاني
I hear the coffee’s guffaw in [your] shirt	وأسمع قهقهة القهوة في القميص
Radiant like emeralds	الزاهي كالزمرد
I become madness in a cup	أصير جنوناً في فنجان
And you are pretending stillness	وأنت تتصنعين الصمود
And in the thrill of the attack,	وفي لذة الهجم،
I taste the flooding milky butter	أتذوق الزبد اللبني الغمر
And I win	وأنتصر
Where the coffee’s cries for help are clashing in maturity.	حيث تتلاطم استغاثات القهوة في النضوج.

The poem is in the form of a metaphor, “coffee” versus “cup,” as an expression of a woman and a man in a flirtatious situation, in which the man, who speaks in the poem, triumphs after he attempts to break into “forests,” “seas,” “cities,” and “villages,” to reach the woman who is pretending to be steadfast, whereas the coffee’s guffaw in [her] shirt hints at seduction and feminine incitement. Whatever the case, the use of the “shirt” refers to the story of Joseph, the prophet in Islam, although it is the woman who wears it and not the man. The poem, in a way of interpretation, elaborates on what could happen when the woman (in the Koranic “Joseph Chapter”) is wearing the “shirt” and at the same time plays the role assigned to her in the Qurʾān. This process of historical-religious seduction, takes place here without real resistance by Joseph, the man, under the influence of “coffee,” elusive in the shirt, as bright as an emerald, and then the “coffee’s cries” are immersed in the moment of maturity.

Coffeehouse of Alienation and Strangers

In this context, we can refer to 35 poems by 19 Arab poets, born between 1923 and 1976. This represents two generations, although more than two generations can be identified within each group by the extension of life of some poets till new generations appeared while the older one was still producing and mutually interacting with the younger one, according to the spiritual and material variables of reality. These 19 poets belong to eight Arab countries, including, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Morocco, and Yemen. The poets are:

1. Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (Iraq), "An Ancient Song" أغنية قديمة, (20/7/1948).
2. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī (Iraq), "Two poems to my son ʿAlī" قصيدتان إلى ولدي علي, (13/12/1965).
3. Amjad Nāṣir (Jordan, born 1955), "One evening at a café" ذات مساء في مقهى, (Nicosia, 1984).
4. Sayf al-Raḥbī (Oman, born 1956), "The Morning Coffee" قهوة الصباح, (1988).
5. Muḥammad al-Harthī (Omani, born 1962), "Coffee Shaykh ʿAlī in Zanjibār" قهوة الشيخ علي في زنجبار.
6. Muḥammad Ḥabībī (Saudi Arabia, born 1968), "Coffee Flies" ذباب القهوة, (1996).
7. Fāʾiz Yaʿqūb al-Hamdānī (Iraq, born 1968), "Coffee" قهوة.
8. Saʿdī Yūsuf (Iraq, born 1934), "Wandering in the Three Cafes" الطواف بالمقاهي الثلاث, (London, 2002).
9. Saʿdī Yūsuf, "No Coffee in the Morning" لا قهوة في الصباح, (London, 25/11/2004).
10. Saʿdī Yūsuf, "Port Café" مقهى بورت, (Tangier, 2011).
11. Muḥammad Khidr al-Ghamdī (Saudi Arabia, born in 1976), "Al-Fīshāwī Café" مقهى الفيشاوي.
12. ʿUmar Yūsuf Sulaymān (Syria, born in 1987), "Winter City and City Wind" شتاء الحنين وريح المدينة, (29/2/2008).

These twelve poems share several characteristics, most notable is the common sense of loneliness, isolation, sadness, complaint, and flight. Furthermore, almost all of them are exposed to alienation and distant lands where they have been written. Additionally, memory and remembrance play a major role, as the "sun" is mentioned in more than one poem distinctly, especially in "No Coffee in the Morning" لا قهوة في الصباح by Saʿdī Yūsuf, and "Morning Coffee" قهوة الصباح by Sayf al-Raḥbī. It is also important to note that the titles share the use of the single "coffee" as a "place" four times, and its

plural “coffeehouses” once, and the single “coffee” or drink thrice, while two titles do not include any of these terms, that is, the first and last poems. The space allotted for this paper does not offer the opportunity to analyze any of these poems at this point as we need to proceed with the last part of the paper.

Coffeehouse for Strangers in the Poem “An Ancient Song” by al-Sayyāb

Here we take the example of an early poem by Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, which takes the coffeehouse as a poetic space and creates a special discourse that combines the alienation of man and the tragedy of his existence in life despite his attachment to it. The poem is in chronological order at the peak of the era between the *Romantic* Arab poetry and *free verse* in Arabic countries, that is, between 1945 and 1950. Thus, it represents a “veteran” or interval “Khaḍramah” خضرمة state of poetic awareness, which seeks to establish the human presence itself, through the lyrical “I,” in such a state.

The word song “*ughniyyah*” أغنية and singing “*ghinā* ” غناء are used in Romantic Arabic poetry and in the following *free verse* after that. Al-Sayyāb mentioned the term “coffeehouse” in six poems that are as follows: “An Ancient Song” 1948 أغنية قديمة, “A Stranger on the Gulf” 1953 غريب على الخليج, “*Blind Prostitute*” 1954 المومس العمياء, “Jikur and the City” جيكور والمدينة, (at the collection of *The Rain Song* 1961 أنشودة المطر; “Gravedigger”حفار القبور , also at *The Rain Song*), and *“*Mother of the Borome” 1961 أم البروم. In these poems Al-Sayyāb’s mention of coffee and coffeehouses is always associated with singing, and the diction of “singing” spreads is significant in his poetry. He also has a poem titled “Umm Kulthūm [a great Egyptian female singer, (1898 or 1904–1975)] and the Memory” أم كلثوم والذكرى. It is evident that the idea of singing is linked to that of poetry, but the two are almost synonymous at times, as in the poem “Laylā” ليلى and other poems by al-Sayyāb, even if he does not mention coffee and coffeehouses in them.

The poem is taken from the second *dīwān* of al-Sayyāb’s poetry, *Myths* 1950 أساطير,[8] and consists of four stanzas, each of the first and second stanza constitutes ten lines, the third stanza constitutes twenty lines, and the fourth constitutes eleven lines. It is important to note that al-Sayyāb stresses, in his introduction to this *dīwān*, on a phenomenon that is perhaps most important from his point of view, that is, “the verse is not a unit of the poem. The meaning flows from one line to another, using a number of verses. Therefore, it is necessary to observe the ‘punctuation,’ otherwise the poems cannot be understood, and then cannot be tasted.”[9]

One evening in the outlying crowded café	فِي الْمَقْهَى الْمُزْدَحِمِ النائِي، فِي ذَاتِ مَسَاء
My eyes languidly watched Faces, hands, feet, and flames	وَعُيُونِي تَنْظُرُ فِي تَعَبٍ،
The clock, mocks the noise,	فِي الأَوْجُهِ وَالأَيْدِي وَالأَرْجُلِ وَالخَشَب:
Went beating - I heard the shadows of song	وَالسَّاعَةُ تَهْزَأُ بالصَّخَب
ghosts of song	وَتَدُقُّ - سَمِعْتُ ظِلالَ غِنَاء ...
Sighing forth from the pick-up whirling	أَشْبَاحَ غِنَاء ...
A vortex worn out, tubercular,	تَتَنَهَّدُ فِي أَلْحَانِي, وَتَدُورُ كإِعْصَار
Breathing darkness for centuries	بَالٍ مَصْدُورٍ،
In a decaying cave.	يَتَنَفَّسُ فِي كَهْفٍ هَارٍ
***	فِي الظُّلْمَةِ مُنذُ عُصُور!
	***
A love song… echoes Withdrawing ... dissolving ... shivering	أُغْنِيَةُ حُبٍّ ... أَصْدَاء
Like a distant sail glowing on the waters	تَنْأَى ... وَتَذُوبُ ... وَتَرْتَجِفُ
At midnight ... near the shore of some island;	كَشِراعٍ نَاءٍ يَجْلُو صُورَتَهُ الْمَاء
And I listen … heart squeezed by sorrow.	فِي نِصْفِ اللَّيْلِ .. لَدَى شَاطِئِ إِحْدَى الجُزُرِ؛
Why should the shadow of fate fall	وَأَنَا أُصْغِي .. وَفُؤَادِي يَعْصِرُهُ الأَسَفُ:
Between two hearts? Why should cruel time wrench You from my arms and pulsating breast?	لِمَ يَسقُطْ ظِلُّ يَدِ القَدَرِ
And how did I let you withdraw … A sweet song, gone out of hearing, tune by tune?!	بَيْنَ القَلْبَيْنِ؟! لِمَ انْتَزَعَ الزَّمَنُ القَاسِي
	مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَي وَأَنْفَاسِي،
	يُمْنَاكِ؟!
	وَكَيْفَ تَرَكْتُكِ تَبْتَعِدِينَ .. كَمَا
	تَتَلاشَى الغُنْوَةُ فِي سَمْعِي .. نَغَماً نَغَما؟!
***	***
Oh how ancient is that sighing record!	آهٍ مَا أَقْدَمَ هَذَا التَّسْجِيلُ البَاكِي
Ancient the voice,	وَالصَّوْتُ قَدِيم؛
So ancient the voice	الصَّوْتُ قَدِيم
Still wailing in the gramophone!	مَا زالَ يُوَلْوِلُ فِي الحَاكِي.
The voice here remains; but the essence of the voice:	الصَّوْتُ هُنَا بَاقٍ أَمَّا 'ذَاتُ' الصَّوْتِ:
The melting heart in song	القَلْبُ الذائِبُ إنشاداً
The upward-turned face in dream, became	وَالوَجْهُ السَّاهِمُ كَالأَحْلامِ فَقَدْ عادَا
A shadow in the kingdom of death-	شَبَحاً فِي مَمْلَكَةِ الْمَوْتِ –

A nothing-there... with nothingness.	لاَ شَيْءَ - هُنَالِكَ فِي العَدَمِ.
And I listen ... and tomorrow I'll die to the tune!	وَأَنَا أُصْغِي ... وَغَداً سَأَنَامُ عَنِ النَّغَمِ!
I listened ... my listening painted For me the face of a fair one Rippling with the tunes of the song As a water-reflected shadow ruffled by breezes	أَصْغَيْتُ .. فَمثَّلَ إِصْغَائِي لِي وَجْهَ مُغنِّيَةٍ كَالزَّهْرَةِ حَسْنَاءِ يَتَمَاوَجُ فِي نَبَراتِ الْغُنْوَةِ، كَالظِّلِّ فِي نَهْرٍ تُقْلِقُهُ الأَنْسَامُ؛
In the final hours of the night Waking and slumbering.	فِي آخِرِ سَاعَاتِ اللَّيْلِ، يَصْحُو .. وَيَنَامُ.
Shall I riot? yell at time? Would it avail? We will die	أَأَثُورُ؟ أَأَصْرُخُ بالأَيَّامِ! وَهَلْ يُجْدِي؟! إِنَّا سَنَمُوتُ
Forget in the depth of the tomb, Love that lives with us and dies!	وَسَنَنْسَى، فِي قَاعِ اللَّحْدِ؟ حُبًّا يَحْيَا مَعَنَا.. وَيَمُوتْ!
***	***
Particles of dust	ذَرَّاتُ غُبَارٍ
Vibrate and dance in boredom;	تَهْتَزُّ وَتَرْقُصُ، فِي سَأَمٍ،
In the music-charged atmosphere Particles of dust!	فِي الْجَوِّ الجَائِشِ بالنَّغَمِ ذَرَّاتُ غُبَارٍ!
The adored fair one, like her adorers Particles of dust.	الحَسْنَاءُ الْمَعْشُوقَةُ مِثلُ العُشَّاقِ ذَرَّاتُ غُبَارٍ!
What nights, what days Have shrouded the dead- But the voice remains-	كَمْ جَاءْ عَلَى الْمَوْتَى - وَالصَّوْتُ هُنَا بَاقٍ- لَيْلٌ .. وَنَهَارْ!!
Night … and day!!	هَلْ ضَاقَتْ، مِثلِي، بالزَّمَنِ
Were they, like me, bored with time,	تَقْويماً خَطَّ عَلَى كَفَنٍ،
A calendar traced on a shroud, Those particles of dust?!?[10]	ذَرَّاتِ غُبَارْ ؟!؟

The first stanza

The busy, remote café forms a framework for the poet's fatigue and his sense of the passage of time and his mockery of the noisy gathering in the place. This is because it constitutes a space for singing shades that create a hurricane in the melodies of the melancholic poet, which echo in the darkness for ages. "The decaying cave" and "the ghosts of a song" signify the void of loneliness and emptiness that the poet is trying to capture, and the attempt to engage the reader in his outmost hollowness. Here we can

imagine the “remote crowded café” in the image of a ruined cave, with mixed “singing ghosts” on its wall, looming in the poet’s ear and in his tuberculosis mind. These are “singing ghosts,” linked to very old singing, and a “darkness” that extends for ages, illuminated only by those “melodies” that gasp in the midst of “crowds” and do not care about that hour, which, therefore, does not give attention to the crowd, but rather “mocks” the noise that competes with the “melodies” of the singer and the poet.

In the second stanza, the poet sheds light on the “old song,” and it becomes a “love song,” but it fluctuates between distancing, melting, and shivering in the image of a sail. Mixed with a song, the tone fades away through a “weeping record” and an “ancient voice,” which is revealed in the following passage:

A love song… echoes withdrawing ... dissolving ... vibrating
As a distant sail glowing on the waters
At midnight ... near the shore of some island;
And I listen … with a woe-rent heart.
Why should the shadow of fate fall?
Between two hearts?! Why should cruel time wrench you from my arms and palpitating breast?
And how did I let you withdraw … A sweet song, gone out of hearing, tune by tune?!

It is clear that the hand of fate, the cruel time, and the poet himself, are all in conflict about the responsibility for this failure of the love story. However, the love story returns, in the third passage, through the weeping gramophone and the old voice that is still wailing in the gramophone parallel to the “same” voice, that is, the voice of the poet whose owner is manifested in the image of a melted heart in chant, and a face that contributed like dreams, returning in the image of a ghost in the kingdom of death:

Oh how ancient is that sighing record!
Ancient the voice,
So ancient the voice
Wailing in the gramophone!
The voice here remains; but the essence of the voice:
The heart melting in song
The upward-turned face in dream, became

A shadow in the kingdom of death-
A nothing-there ... with nothingness.

The poet, or the voice “itself” is still “listening” with confidence that he will fall away from the tune, that is, he will descend into the kingdom of nothingness. Listening here to the parallel song in the gramophone, is for the poet, a part of a poem about the beautiful singer, her face fluctuating in the tone of the song. The beautiful singer’s face also returns through the “shadows” of singing from the first stanza, and the “image” of the sail from the second stanza in the image of a “shadow” in a river, worried by breezes at the end of the night. This surrounds the poet’s vision from the beginning, with eternal darkness in the first stanza:

Shadows of song
Sighing forth from the pick-up whirling
A vortex worn out, tubercular,
breathing long in darkness
In a decaying cave.

And half of the night in the second stanza:

A love song… Echoes Withdrawing ... dissolving ... vibrating
As a distant sail glowing on the waters
At midnight ... near the shore of some island;

Here as well, “at the end of the night,” water manifests in the second passage through the sea, and in the third through the river, in a context of distance, and trembling and anxious between waking and sleeping:

And I listen ... And tomorrow I'll die to the tune!
I listened ... The sound pictured for me the image of a Fair One Rippling with the tunes of the song as a water-reflected shadow ruffled by breezes
In the last hours of the night Waking and slumbering.

In what resembles a fourth stanza within the third one, the poet wonders what he can do about this inevitable tragedy, revolting, crying out for days in place of night, mixed with death and forgetfulness:

Shall I revolt? Cry against time? Would it avail?
We will die
Forget in the depth of the tomb, Love that lives with us and dies!

For the fourth stanza, boredom and melody, the beloved beauty and the dead are mixed with "particles of dust":

Particles of dust
Vibrate and dance in boredom;
In the music-charged atmosphere Particles of dust!
The Fair One, like her lovers Particles of dust.
What nights, what days
Have shrouded the dead-
But the voice remains-
Night … and day!!
Were they, like me, bored with time,
A calendar traced on a shroud, Those particles of dust?!?

In this last passage, the busy, remote café is absent in the dark of time, but the voice "here" remains through the day and night, even though the café-goers have turned into the dead. "Here" time itself turns into "particles of dust," like history engraved on a shroud, as if they are the poet's words, standing as a sign of death, resisted by life in an atmosphere brutal with melody, falling dust with a number of years, specializing in "writing" that talks about the present and the past, with a "voice," clinging to the café space, the singer's singing, and the remains of the adored belle.

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* I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my daughter Salma for reviewing the English version of this paper and suggesting important modifications that have been taken into consideration. I dedicate this paper to her.

[1] Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," originally presented at a conference on style held at Indiana University in the spring of 1958, then revised and published in *Style in Language*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960), 350–377.

[2] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence, First MIT Press paperback edition, 1991. See also: Jakob Norberg, "No Coffee" (Fronesis, 2007), 214–225. Downloaded from eurozine.com (https://www.eurozine.com/no-

coffee/) © Jakob Norberg/Fronesis Eurozine

[3] Martin Heidegger, *What Is a Thing?*, translated by W.B. Barton, Jr., and Vera Deutsch, with an analysis by Eugene T. Gendlin. Gateway ed. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1967. See also: Martin Heidegger, "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 1971, translated by Albert Hofstader, 163–180, Bill Brown, "Thing Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 28.1 (2001): 1–22, and Bill Brown, "Objects, Others, and Us (The Refabrication of Things)," *Critical Inquiry* 36.2 (2010): 183–217.

[4] Maḥmūd Darwīsh, *Dīwān, The Olive Leaves Collection, 1964* **أوراق الزيتون**, *First Works 1* (Beirut: Riad EL-Rayyes Books, 2005), 39–40.

[5] Maḥmūd Darwīsh, *Like an Almond Blossom, or Further …*, **كزهر اللوز أو أبعد ....**, *Dīwān, Complete Works 2*, (Beirut: Riad EL-Rayyes Books, 2009), 177–179.

[6] Qamar Ṣabrī al-Jāsim, *For those Who are Devoid of Hope*, **للعاطلين عن الأمل** (Ḥemṣ: Dār al-Haqāʾiq for Printing, Publishing and Information, 2004), 114–115.

[7] Qāsim Ḥaddād, *The Heart of Love* **قلب الحب** (Beirut: Ibn Khaldun Publishing House, 1980).

[8] Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, *Dīwān Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿAwdah, 2012), 1: 321–323. The poem is dated 20/7/1948.

[9] Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, *Asāṭīr* **أساطير** (al-Najaf: Dār al-Bayān's Publishing, 1950) refer to the Introduction.

[10] Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, "An Ancient Song," trans. Adel Salama, *Journal of Arabic Literature* 3 (1972): 118–119. I have changed some words in the English translation as compared to those used by Salama.

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4

How “Alf Lēla w-Lēla” Was Incorporated into a Song in the Repertoire of Umm Kulthūm

Nobuo Mizuno

Abstract:

“Alf Lēla w-Lēla (A Thousand and One Nights)” (lyrics by Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz, music by Balīg Hamdī) is a representative work among the late songs of Umm Kulthūm (1904–1975), the greatest Egyptian female singer of the twentieth century. This paper explored the depth of her songs by analyzing the lyrics and melody of “Alf Lēla w-Lēla.” By singing the modern Egyptian poem (lyrics) of ʿAzīz for the audience in a way that expressed a deep and rich musical sentiment, Umm Kulthūm awoke the poetic spirit buried deep in their hearts, thereby enhancing the quality of the then-new genre of popular Arab art music. I analyzed the version on her live concert CD, which was recorded at the song’s first performance in Cairo on February 6, 1969.

Keywords: *al-ʿĀmmiyyah* (dialect of Arabic), *maqām* (Arabic melody scale), *ṭarab* (esthetic pleasure derived from music), *ughniyyah* (song), a Thousand and One Nights

The Legendary Singer: Umm Kulthūm

Umm Kulthūm (1904–1975) is considered one of the most legendary singers in the 20th century. Within a few hours of her death on February 3, 1975, news media both within and outside the Arab world were publishing obituaries and portrait, which attests to her fame.

Such worldwide recognition may suggest that Umm Kulthūm crossed the borders of her home country Egypt freely and frequently in order to thrive on the world music stage. However, she actually lived in Cairo, the capital of Egypt, through her entire life, and primarily performed there, excluding a period in her later years.[1] Despite her rarely leaving Egypt, her singing voice was broadcasted live via Cairo Broadcasting Company’s powerful airwaves, and reached across the Middle East and North Africa into every

crevice of the Arab cultural sphere. Regardless of her music's reach, Umm Kulthūm was an Egyptian, through and through, and an Arab singer who continuously devoted herself and her music to her country.

Umm Kulthūm performed well over 350 songs in her life. This vast number of songs included remarkable transitions across various genres, from early songs intended for relatively small indoor settings in the beginning of her career to cinematic musicals during the middle phase and, later, more grand music intended for large concerts. She also sang songs of various styles, including *qaṣīdah*,[2] dance music (*ṭaqṭūqah*, *dawr*, *mawwāl* and so on), *nashīd* (recitative), monologue (song performed by one singer with free rhythm) and *ughniyyah* (long and short song), displaying her diversity.

All the lyrics of her songs are in Arabic, and most are written in *al-ʿāmmiyyah* (meaning, in the context of this study, the Cairo dialect). However, the songs sometimes include poems written in *al-fuṣḥā* (literary Arabic).[3] In particular, she performed *qaṣīdah*-style songs in *al-fuṣḥā* throughout her entire career, as though this particular style were the backbone of her work.

Although the majority of her songs can be classified as modern Arab music, which was popular in Egypt and Middle Eastern countries in the 20th century, their modes and melodies as well as their rhythms and forms generally conform to the laws of the classical Arab musical tradition, except for the fact that they adopted a new style of accompaniment that relied on an orchestra. Umm Kulthūm was by far the most outstanding presence of all modern Arab musicians.[4]

Umm Kulthūm's songs were all recorded live, from the beginning of her career in her 20's to the middle and later phases, and even into her final years. The length of her songs evolved in parallel with the development of sound recording devices. Her early performances were recorded on discs, where a piece of music could be a maximum of 6 minutes long, and her later performances were recorded on master tapes from the Cairo Broadcasting Station that enabled longer recordings.

Under the collective management of Cairo Broadcasting Station "Sono Cairo", the audio recordings of Umm Kulthūm's songs were stored safely and eventually converted to LPs (long playing record) and cassette tapes. Almost all of her recordings have now been converted to CDs, and are available to music fans worldwide. Today, by listening to these audio recordings on CD, one can easily experience her songs in a fully immersive way. However, there is limited video footage of her concerts from her later years.

Later Works and the *Ughniyyah* "Alf Lēla w-Lēla"

Umm Kulthūm's later songs (i.e., those performed in the 1960s and 1970s) are all considered masterpieces.

In the 1960s, Umm Kulthūm experienced several difficult incidents. Many of these difficulties were the result of the Six-Day War between Egypt and Israel in 1967. Further tragedy hit when Gamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, the Egyptian president whom she trusted completely, died suddenly in 1970. These events marked a critical turning point in her work, as relatively short religious and/or patriotic songs began to appear in Umm Kulthūm's repertoire, as well as serious, epic love songs.

By examining the series of songs that were sung by Umm Kulthūm during this particular period, one can see how she unexpectedly began to sing more grand songs known as "*ughniyyah*s" accompanied by orchestras, rather than the songs of various genres that she sang in her 20's and 30's or the short songs, dance songs, monologues, movie musicals, etc. that she sang in her middle years.

The *ughniyyah* that Umm Kulthūm sang in the later phase of her career include renowned masterpieces such as "Inta ʿUmr-ī (You are my life" (1964, written in *al-ʿāmmiyyah*), "Baʿīd ʿann-ak (Away from you)" (1965, written in *al-ʿāmmiyyah*), "Amal Ḥayāt-ī (Hope of my life)" (1965, written in *al-ʿāmmiyyah*), "al-Aṭlāl (ruins)" (1966, written in *al-fuṣḥā*), "Hādhihi Laylatī (This is my night)" (1968, written in *al-fuṣḥā*) and "Aqbal al-Layl (It's night)" (1969, written in *al-fuṣḥā*).

The unique feelings induced by Arab music are frequently described using the term "*ṭarab*." In Arabic, *ṭarab* means "joy" and refers to the esthetic pleasure derived from music. Every single *ughniyyah* of Umm Kulthūm's later period is full of *ṭarab*, regardless of which song we listen to.

Among the noted grand songs of Umm Kulthūm's later work, the *ughniyyah* with the title "Alf Lēla w-Lēla (The Thousand and One Nights)" stands out.[5] This *ughniyyah* was performed for the first time on February 6, 1969.

The Lyrics of *Ughniyyah* "Alf Lēla w-Lēla"

The lyrics of "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" are from a love poem written by Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz in *al-ʿāmmiyyah*.

The phrase "Alf lēla w-lēla" (the verses and melodic phrases) appears in refrains (i.e., a repeated phrase) in the end of each of the four sections.[6]

First section

1. Oh my love! Night and the sky, stars and moon; staying up;
2. you and I. Oh my love! Oh my life!
3. We all are alike in love and passion.
4. Love is staying up making us sip happiness and saying: "To your health!".

(refrain)

5. Oh my love! Let us live in the eyes of night.
6. Let us say to the sun: “Rise in a year, and not before”
7. For tonight is a sweet night of love and is worth a thousand and one nights.
8. It is worth a whole life; How many nights like this one does one get in a whole life?!

Second section

9. What can I tell you, sweetheart, how I was before meeting you?
10. I wouldn’t remember a yesterday, and hadn’t had a tomorrow to wait for.
11. I didn’t even live my day.
12. Then, you took me to love in a moment;
13. and showed me how sweet life is.
14. Night, which was all loneliness, turned by you into safety.
15. Life, which was like a desert, became a meadow.

(refrain)

5. Oh my love! Let us live in the eye of night.
6. Let us say to the sun: “Rise in a year, and not before”
7. For tonight is a sweet night of love and is worth a thousand and one nights.
8. It is worth a whole life; How many nights like this one does one get in a whole life?!

Third section

16. Oh my love! What is better than night and a couple in love, like us?!
17. We rove and don’t know whether life is to be counted by moments or years.
18. All we feel is that we’re in love.
19. Living only for night and love.
20. Oh my love! Love is our life, home and bread.
21. Everyone has got a world of his own, and we have ours.

22. If it is said that lovers melt down in the fire of crave,
23. this fire is our heaven.
24. Love never hurts, and it bears only the fruits of joy.
25. Oh my love! Let us live in the eye of night.

(refrain)
5. Oh my love! Let us live in the eye of night.
6. Let us say to the sun: "Rise in a year, and not before"
7. For tonight is a sweet night of love and is worth a thousand and one nights.
8. It is worth a whole life; How many nights like this one does one get in a whole life?!

Fourth section
26. Oh moon of my night; shadow of my day; my love; my happy days;
27. I have the most beautiful gift for you:
28. The word of love by which you own the whole world.
29. Say it to me;
30. Say it to the birds, to trees, to people, to all the world.
31. Say that love is a gift, not a sin.
32. God is love; goodness is love; light is love.
33. Oh God; let the sweetness of the first shake hands remain in our hands.
34. Let the joy of the first date lit like candles around us.
35. Let time pass by us and cover us with its security.
36. Let us never touch the bitter chalice of parting.
37. Let love never know where we are or come to us.
38. Let our nights see nothing but candles of joy. Oh my love!

(refrain)
5. Oh my love! Let us live in the eye of night.
6. Let us say to the sun: "Rise in a year, and not before"
7. For tonight is a sweet night of love and is worth a thousand and one nights.
8. It is worth a whole life; How many nights like this one does one get in a whole life?!

The Music of the *Ughniyyah* "Alf Lēla w-Lēla"

Next, we will examine the type of music applied to the Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz poem, "Alf Lēla

w-Lēla." The music was initially composed by Balīg Hamdī (1932–1993). In addition to "Alf Lēla w-Lēla," Balīgh Ḥamdī wrote the music for other Umm Kulthūm songs such as "Sīrit il-Ḥubb (The Name of Love)" (1964 by Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz), "Baʿīd ʿann-ak (Away from you)" (1965 by Ma'mūn al-Shinawī), "Fāt il-Mī'ād (It's too late)" (1967 by Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz), "Ḥakam ʿalay-nā al-Hawā (We are ordered by love)" (1973 by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb Muḥammad). All of these compositions are *ughniyyah* from the later phase of Umm Kulthūm's career. "Ḥakam ʿalay-nā al-Hawā" is an especially famous *ughniyyah* from her later years, which was originally sung a mere two years before she passed away.

First, it is necessary to examine the *maqām* (or mode) of "Alf Lēla w-Lēla". The *maqām* of this song is *nahāwand*. This corresponds to the minor key of the Western scale (i.e., it uses notes from the minor scale). In the middle of the piece, the key temporarily changes to *rāst* during the second interlude. It is important to note that the *rāst* key is created by lowering the third note of the *nahāwand* rhythmic sequence by ¼, not by a semitone.

The following excerpt from this song's score shows the rhythmic sequence of *maqām nahāwand* and *maqām rāst*, the latter of which uses the G sound as its main (and final) tone.

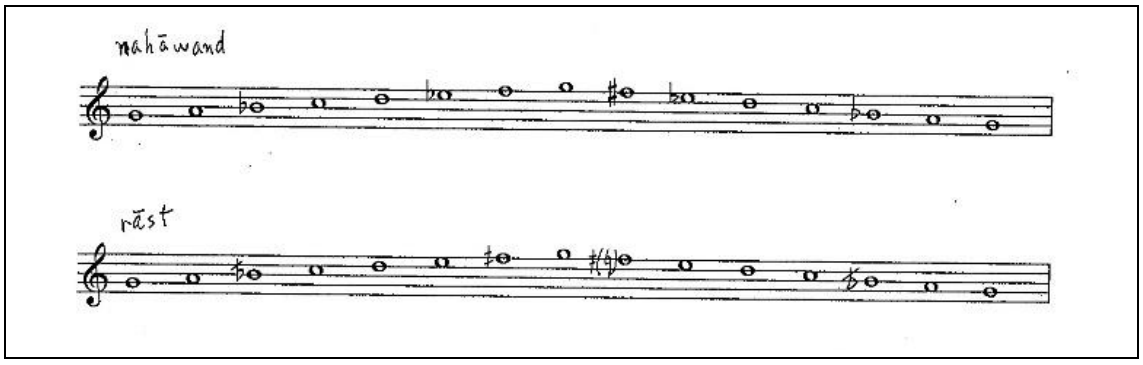

Figure 1. Score example of tone row of *maqām nahāwand* and example of tone row of *maqam rāst*

Next, the flow of the music should be analyzed. In doing so, it is important to first detail the process through which Umm Kulthūm completed each one of her *ughniyyah.* Each time Umm Kulthūm released a new song, she interacted with the composer(s), musician(s), and poet(s) directly and developed it across numerous discussions and iterations long before the song was debuted. After the form of the song was created through this process, it eventually premiered, and it was continuously improved afterward

as well. Each line and/or phrase of the lyrics was repeated over and over again by going back and forth. Furthermore, in response to the reaction of the audience, the entirety of each phrase was sung repeatedly until Umm Kulthūm was satisfied. Only then did the song finally reach its completion. As a result, it took approximately 2–3 hours for Umm Kulthūm to sing a song completely. For this reason, Umm Kulthūm's later music can be compared to the arabesque of flat art.[7]

This meant that the performance time of Umm Kulthūm's *ughniyyah* at a concert hall always went far beyond what was commonly expected. It should be noted that the LPs and/or CDs used to record such live performances from the original master tapes differ from Umm Kulthūm's actual concerts because the performances are typically edited according to the flow of the lyrics as a whole and omit each passage's repetition(s). For this reason, all of Umm Kulthūm's *ughniyyah* are currently available on CDs as single songs that are edited down to approximately one hour in length.

In what follows, the performance of "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" in the album *Jeddah* (41 min 56 sec) will be discussed,[8] starting with the prelude.

Umm Kulthūm's *ughniyyah* are always accompanied by an orchestra (ensemble) known as a *firqah*. *Firqah*s are mainly composed of Western stringed instruments, such as violins, cellos, and contrabasses, which are joined by traditional Egyptian ethnic instruments, such as oud,[9] ney, qanun,[10] darbuka, and riqq. These are sometimes further accompanied by other Western instruments such as accordions and electric guitars. The *firqah* generally plays a prelude to establish the atmosphere of the *maqām*, which extends throughout the song, for the performers and audience. This prelude also signals to the singer (Umm Kulthūm) to start singing.

Each part of the *firqah*'s prelude is long, lasting at least a few minutes (and sometimes up to 10). In other words, the prelude bears strong similarities to orchestral overtures.

The prelude of the *ughniyyah* "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" is 8 minutes and 12 seconds long. After the first ensemble section, the violin, clarinet, electric guitar, and accordion solos are played, one after another. The ensemble section as well as each solo is then repeated two to four times.

The *firqah*'s melody also offers the opportunity for a composer to display his or her skills. The melody is usually created by a composer meticulously to enchant the audience. The melodies in the prelude and interlude of the *ughniyyah* "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" are especially well known. These particular melodies are also often played during belly dancing performances, so much so that they tend to be played independently as an

accompaniment.

The whole flow of the prelude is as follows:[11])

ensemble→ violin solo→ ensemble→ clarinet solo→ electric guitar solo → ensemble→ accordion solo→ ensemble→ (beginning of the first section) [i]

[i] Each part of the ensemble and solo instrument is repeated individually, but that part is omitted here.

The entirety of "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" consists of four sections. Its form is an *ughniyyah*, but its content is like dance music (*ṭaqṭūqah*) in the first to third sections, and its rhythm is light. The final section, Section IV, is a monologue in which the initial pulsating, rhythmic progression gradually shifts to a solemn tune with an irregular beat. This gives the impression in the fourth section that, given the lyrics "God is love" (*allāh maḥabbah*) (Line 32), the love for the lover has converged with the love for God, even before this is explicit in the lyrics. Thereafter, the interjected phrase "Oh, God!" (*yā rabb*) appears frequently, and these words adorn the lyrics solemnly yet vividly. "Oh, God!" (*yā rabb*) is recited 17 times in total, including those instances from the original poem and those added by the singer.

The overall structure of the *ughniyyah* "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" is detailed below.

0′00″ Prelude→8′12″ First section→11′15″refrain（12′01″ "alf lēla w-lēla", six times）→（applause）→ 13′27″Interlude 1→ 14′51″Second section→ 18′57″refrain（19′44″ "alf lēla w-lēla", six times）→（applause）→ 21′02″Interlude 2→23′01″Third section→ 27′35″refrain（28′18″ "alf lēla w-lēla", six times）→（applause）→ 29′24″Interlude 3→30′58″Fourth section→ 39′50″ refrain（40′40″ "alf lēla w-lēla", six times）→（applause）→41′56″ Finish

In this song, the phrase "alf lēla w-lēla" appears around the middle of the refrain and is repeated six times each time the refrain occurs. The melody is sung that descends across the first three appearances, as if a succession. The fourth to sixth repetitions are the same as the first to third repetitions.

Overall, the refrain appears four times in each of the following sections: I, II, III, and IV. This means that the phrase "alf lēla w-lēla" is included 24 times in the entire song.

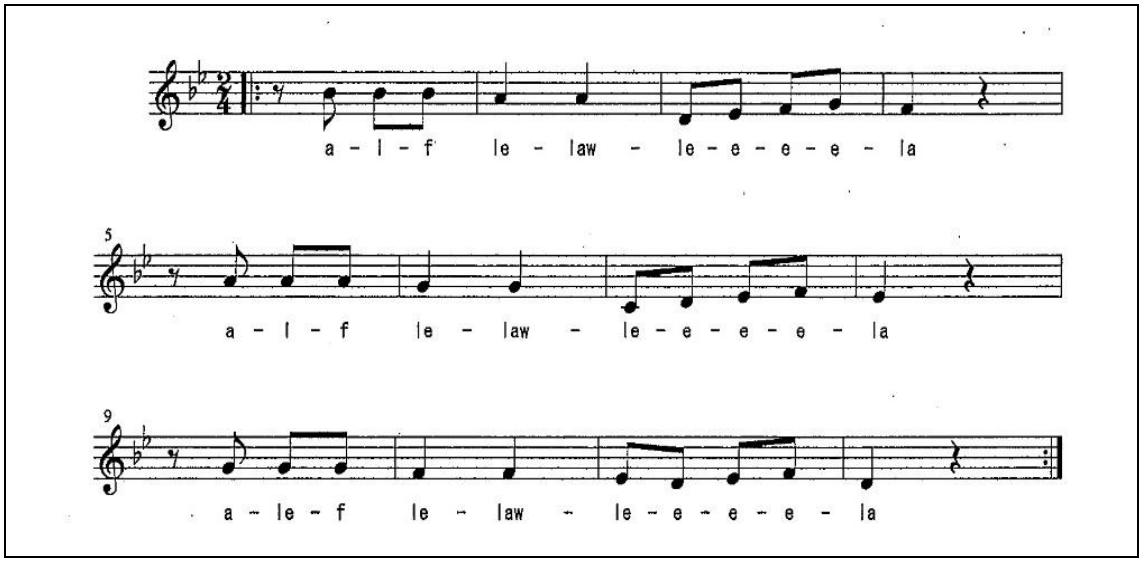

Figure 2. Score of the phrase "alf lēla w-lēla"

The Phrase, "Alf Lēla w-Lēla"

Understanding Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz's poem "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" as with other modern Egyptian poems, seems easy, but is, in fact, difficult. Its content is not intended for a casual audience, who just happen to be at Umm Kulthūm's premiere performance, and this audience cannot be expected to immediately hear, comprehend, interpret, and inevitably be moved and excited by the work. This is despite the fact that it is a colloquial poem, written in *al-ʿāmmiyyah* which is spoken by most of Umm Kulthūm's audience on an everyday basis. Instead, the poem seems to appeal to the audience through the emotion produced by its sound of Umm Kulthūm's song.

Contemporary and modern Egyptian poetry pulsates with a grand history of traditional Arabic poetry that has been passed down, unbroken, from generations beginning with the Bedouins (Arab nomads), as far back as the *Jāhiliyyah* period. *Qaṣīdah*-style poems in *al-fuṣḥā* are a typical example. I once met an old man singing an Arabic poem while playing a rebab[12] at an oasis in the Sinai Peninsula. The poems that he and his people have passed on were graphic and vivid ballads, reminiscent of the *Arabian Nights*, but still full of Bedouin life and history.

Modern Egyptian poets often wrote poems for Umm Kulthūm, a talented and unparalleled genius gifted with musical talent.[13] Such poetical texts hold idiosyncrasies specific to Arabic poetry within them and may seem, at first glance, to tell a simple story. However, such poems do not have a concrete plot. The content is often a complex mixture of simile and metaphor. For example, in the case of a patriotic song, the object of love

may be a lover, every member of the opposite sex, the state (e.g., Egypt), or even God. The speaker of the poem may even transition from a man to a woman over the course of the text. As such, it is often difficult to clearly discern the objects of love to which these poems refer. In the poem "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" (as explained in the previous section), the object of love shifts from the speaker's lover to God in the final section. Furthermore, in this poem, words related to love, which Arabic poems tend to use often, are interspersed throughout. In addition to direct words like "life," "lover," and "god," symbolic words such as "night," "eye," "star," and "moon" are also used.

By performing these modern Egyptian poems for an audience in a way that provided a deep and rich musical sentiment, Umm Kulthūm awoke the poetic spirit lying deep in their hearts, thereby enhancing the quality of the then-new genre of popular Arab art music.

It should be noted that the poet Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz himself described the refrain of his poem/ lyrics "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" as "worth a thousand and one nights" in its effort to figuratively portray the sweet and sensual nights as did the *Thousand and One Nights*, which any Arab person would be familiar with. This can be seen in the underlined text above. In other words, the object of this love song was not to tell the story of the *Thousand and One Nights*, but to place the well-known term "alf lēla w-lēla" at the climax of the refrain in order to write about the theme of love.

Thus, Umm Kulthūm correctly responded to Mursī Jamīl ʿAzīz's intention in the poem and, by repeating and emphasizing the melodic phrase "alf lēla w-lēla," guided this *ughniyyah* to its ideal form: a love song.

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* This is based on the Japanese article by Nobuo Mizuno, "Uta ni yomikomareta Sen'ya Ichiya: Umm Kulthūm no repātorī niyoru," eds. Tetsuo Nishio and Nobuo Mizuno, *Chūtō sekai no ongaku bunka: Umarekawaru dentō* (Tokyo: Stylenote, 2016), 34–53.

1 Though Umm Kulthūm primarily performed in Cairo, Egypt's capital, she also toured in other Arab countries in her later years (i.e. the 1960s–1970s). This included performances in Sudan, Morocco, Kuwait, Tunisia, Lebanon (all in 1968), Libya (1969), and Abu Dhabi (1971).
She also traveled to Paris once, in 1968, and performed at the Olympia concert venue. She also traveled to Moscow in September 1970, intending to perform there and in Tashkent. However, three days after her arrival in Moscow, she received news of the sudden death of Egyptian President Nāṣir. She canceled all her performances and quickly returned to Cairo. As a result, her single performance in Paris became her only performance in a non-Arab country. The live recording of this performance is currently available on DVD.

2 A *qaṣīdah* (which translates to "admired poem," "poetry of praise," or "ode") is a long poem consisting of 10 to 100 lines. It is a style of Arabic poetry and vocal music that dates back to pre-Islamic times, and which continues to be created to this date. This poetic style has avoided

dying out by undergoing regional and temporal changes. The style is characterized by a single rhythm and rhyme, which is repeated throughout (e.g., a couplet), and is composed of three parts: (1) the lamentation of a poet standing in the wake of damage caused by a lover that left; remembering and yearning for this past love that has been broken and lost, which is an experience that involves devotion, reproach, and mourning; (2) a journey in the desert and a difficult experience involving a camel (though this second part began to fall away around the time of the Abbasid dynasty); and (3) *madḥ*, *madīḥ*: praise to the poet's governor, patron, and ruler. Men and women in *qaṣīdah* poems often undergo some sort of fundamental change. Furthermore, an aversion to visual expression in the Islamic tradition has encouraged the use of the *qaṣīdah* form.

[3] *Al-ʿāmmiyyah* means Arabian dialect. Here, it refers to the Cairo-specific dialect, the spoken language in Egypt, and colloquial speech. *Al-fuṣḥā* is standard Arabic, and refers to standard language, common language, classic Northern Arabic, and written language. The Quran is written in *al-fuṣḥā*.

[4] Other modern Arab musicians (composers) who were active in Egypt at this time include Sayyid Darwīsh (1910–1991), Farīd al-Aṭrash (1915?–1974), Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1910–1991), and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Ḥāfiẓ (1929–1977). These individuals were singers and instrumentalists themselves, as well as composers. Their styles relied on the theories, format, and instrument playing methods of classical Arab music theories (in particular, oud). Aside from these factors, it was their traditional vocalization that gave their music its distinctive quality.

[5] Since the song is written with the lyrics in *al-ʿāmmiyyah*, it is hereafter referred to as "Alf Lēla w-Lēla." In standard Arabic, the song's title would be "Alf Laylah wa-Laylah."
Incidentally, Umm Kulthūm's songs do not have elaborate titles. Most of her songs simply use the opening lines as their titles（e.g., "Nāmī Nāmī Yā Malākī (lullaby my angel)"(1937), "Ghannī-lī Shwayya Shwayya (Sing to me a little)" (1945), "Aghadan Alqā-k (Shall I see you tomorrow?)" (1971) and so on. On very rare occasion, some songs are referred by the title such as "Inta ʿUmr-ī (You are my life)" (1964), "al-Aṭlāl (Ruins)" (1966), "Alf Lēla w-Lēla" (1969) and so on.

[6] It should be noted that some existing literature treats lines 26–35 as the fourth section (Section IV) and lines 36–38 as the fifth section (Section V). If that were the case, Section IV would be devoid of a refrain. When listening to the CD, however, it is evident that lines 26–35 and 36–38 do not contain a definite interval. In addition, while several instances of "*yā rabb*" ("Oh, God") are included, the former flows into the latter without faltering. The latter contains many characteristics of a monologue. Therefore, I treated lines 26–38 as Section IV.

[7] See Nobuo Mizuno, *Ongaku no arabesuku: Umm Kulthūm no uta no katachi* (Kyoto: Sekai Shisō Sha, 2004), 134.

[8] Umm Kulthūm, "Alf Lēla w-Lēla," recorded February 2006, track 3 on *Jeddah*, Columbia, compact disc.

[9] Oud (*ʿŪd*), a lute-type plucked string instrument, is the basic instrument of Arab music and has been present throughout its history. In this particular Umm Kulthūm concert, the oud also played an important part as an accompanying instrument, along with the qanun (see note 11). Muḥammad al-Qaṣabjī, who composed many songs for Umm Kulthūm, was always responsible for the oud in the accompanying band.

[10] The qanun (*qānūn*), a zither-type plucked string instrument, performer sits in the middle of the front row of the *firqah* (i.e., right next to the singer), where he or she is always under the direction of the singer, and has the important role of conveying the singer's instructions to all members of the *firqah*. For example, when the prelude has been played once through and the song has reached the moment where singing should begin, and yet the singer cannot bring him/herself to sing or has sung a phrase and wants to repeat it again, it is the qanun performer's job to indicate such changes to the members of the *firqah*.
It has been established that, in the *firqah* led by Umm Kulthūm, Muḥammad ʿAbduh Ṣāliḥ was always in charge of the qanun, since pictures of Umm Kulthūm singing often show Muḥammad ʿAbduh Ṣāliḥ playing the qanun.

[11] Note that each part of the ensemble and solo instrumentation is repeated individually, but those repetitions are omitted here.
[12] A rebab (*rabāb*) is a lute-type bowed string instrument. It usually has two strings, while the Bedouin rebab has one string.
[13] Other modern Egyptian poets whose work Umm Kulthūm incorporated into her music included Aḥmad Shawqī (1868–1932), Aḥmad Rāmī (1892–1981), and Maḥmūd Bayram al-Tūnisī.

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5

Joseph-Charles Mardrus and Orientalism: Re-evaluating His Translation of the *Arabian Nights* in Light of New Findings from Mardrus' Personal Archives[1]

Tetsuo Nishio, Naoko Okamoto, and Margaret Sironval

Abstract

Joseph-Charles Victor Mardrus (1868–1949) is regarded as a notable figure in French literature and culture from the close of the nineteenth century to the start of the twentieth century. His translation of the *Arabian Nights* contributed greatly to the development of the French literary and cultural world of the Belle Epoque. Accordingly, this study re-evaluates the Mardrus translation of the *Arabian Nights* via recent investigations of the newly discovered personal archives of Mardrus (Mardrus Collection Bequest). We argue that the *Arabian Nights* is not meant to be a tool for European Orientalism, as viewed by Edward Said. Rather, it is a global literature to co-create a pluralistic and multi-valued society by acting as a bridge between civilizations represented by the West (Europe), the Middle East, and the East (Japan).

Keywords: Joseph-Charles Mardrus, the *Arabian Nights*, Orientalism, biography, archives, translation, digitalization

Introduction

Joseph-Charles Victor Mardrus (1868–1949), who was born in Cairo and educated in Beirut, is regarded as a notable figure in French literature and culture from the close of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. His translation of the *Arabian Nights* contributed significantly to the development of the French literary and cultural world of the Belle Epoque. Accordingly, this study re-evaluates the Mardrus translation of the *Arabian Nights* via recent investigations of the newly discovered personal archives of Mardrus (Mardrus Collection Bequest). The study shows that Mardrus' translation is, paradoxically, a genuine successor to the *Arabian Nights* as an

inspirational literary narrative. Further, this study argues that the *Arabian Nights* is not meant to be a tool for European Orientalism, as viewed by Edward Said. Rather, it is a global literature to co-create a pluralistic and multi-valued society, acting as a bridge between civilizations represented by the West (Europe), the Middle East, and the East (Japan).

Biography of Joseph-Charles Victor Mardrus (1868–1949)[2]

Origin: Before settling in Egypt, Mardrus testified in a letter to Jean de Bonnefon on February 15, 1913,[3] that his family hailed from the Caucasus. According to the letter, his grandfather, Jean (Ohannès), "was a Caucasian mountaineer, a simple and clumsy chieftain. It is true that his clan was the most noble and purest of the Caucasus and, perhaps, of Christendom [...] The memory of my grandfather Jean (Ohannès) is still celebrated in the songs of their land because he was a comrade of Imam Schamyl, one of the two heroes of the Caucasian War of Independence against the Moscow Invader. The defeat led him to exile himself with his family to Egypt." However, another story goes as follows: the family of Doctor Mardrus emigrated from the Caucasus to the King of Poland, Stanislas I, then to the Court of Louis XV, King of France, following upheavals and revolutionary turbulence in this part of Asia.[4] What can be said with certainty is that the Mardrus family is of Georgian origin and moved to Egypt in the first half of the nineteenth century, before October 2, 1827, when Joseph-Charles' father,

Figure 1. Photo of Mardrus (27.5cm x 20cm) (M0137-2)

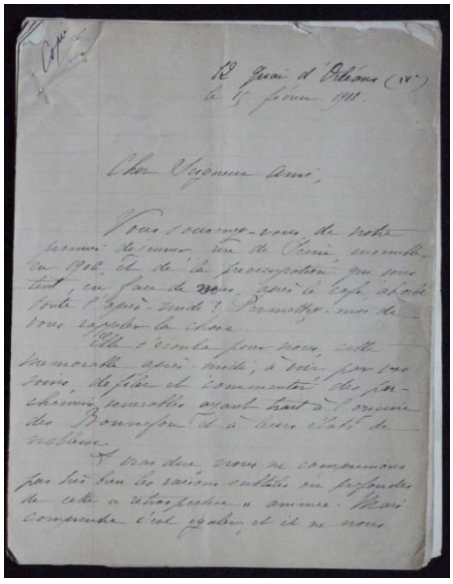

Figure 2. Letter to Jean de Bonnefon from Mardrus regarding the family origin from the Caucasus (22cm x 17.3cm) (M0051)

Fathallah, the second child of Jean, was born.

Jean seemed to assume various roles in Egypt; he was a "diplomatic representative of Khedive and foreign representative" in Cairo. When Jean died, the father of J.-C. Mardrus and his uncle would successively fulfill the same roles. Fathallah held the post of a paymaster in Napoleon's armies. During the campaigns of Italy and Crimea, he returned to Cairo after the fall of the Second Empire and, after his father, succeeded the financial establishment and the role of counselor and sometimes listened to Viceroy or Khedive Saïd Pasha and Ismaïl Pasha. He was also the Land Interest Financial Representative for the Sherif of Mecca.

His grandfather received "a house and a sumptuous pension" from the Khedive Mehemet Ali and his son Ibrahim Pasha. The Mardrus family seemed to receive favorable treatment, given its relationship with the Cairo authorities. Moreover, the father of J.-C. Mardrus, Fathallah, was marked by the Civil Act as a "Roman subject." His family lived between the Muslim and Christian world through his ties with the French colonies of Cairo.

Childhood: Mardrus was born on November 11, 1868, the sixth child of Fatallah and Camilla Mardrus, who had five sons and two daughters. The family lived for about 10 years in the Ezbekieh district of Cairo. Mardrus' nurse, a black slave, used to take him along to the *Zār* ceremony, where he listened to storytellers and attended the meeting of wizards. This formative period influenced his character and disposition, as is clear from his statement in 1899:

> "Eïsha, a nurse, (...) taught me the pure language of the sons of the city; she taught me to drag the antepenultimate of liquid words; she taught me to be passionate about the ancient rites of Arabic essence. I owe her a lot! And my love of precious stones, the shadow of mosques, and the music of water in lustral basins. . ."[5]

In another article, he noted that he celebrated his *Arabian Nights* with gratitude to Eïcha's teaching. Mardrus was eager to emphasize the Oriental atmosphere of his house. While young Mardrus was a Christian, Eïcha helped him understand the Eastern and Islamic culture.[6]

After his father's death, his uncle Nasrallah took charge of young Mardrus. Nasrallah was a captain and conducted business in Port Saïd. He wandered all the seas and dressed in the Eastern style. He often took his nephew along on his journey. Mardrus noted how his uncle loved him so much and had a great influence on growing his interest in traveling and Eastern countries. His world already reflected the air of the *Arabian Nights*, which was to be fundamental to his vision of his work on *Arabian Nights*.

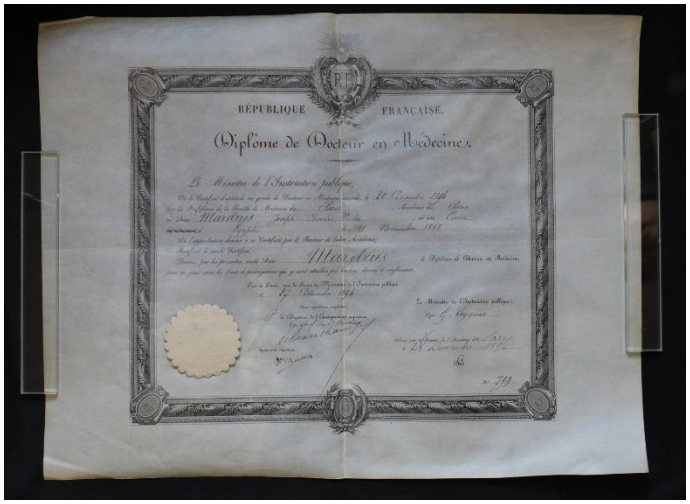

Figure 3. Mardrus' medical degree (1894) (38.7cm x 50cm) (M0147)

School life: Until the age of 10, Mardrus went to a French private college in his district; he probably became bilingual early. He then studied at St. Joseph's College in Beirut. The college system was identical to that of France. Mardrus obtained his Bachelor's degree in literature and science. He stood out as a good student, especially in his dissertation, history, and Latin. However, we have no record of his learning Arabic.

He entered the Faculty of Medicine on October 15, 1888, and studied there until December 1, 1892. He continued his studies in Paris, where he attended the University of Paris and graduated with a doctoral degree on December 20, 1894. His doctoral dissertation is entitled, "Contribution to the study of the treatment of strictures of the urethra by linear electrolysis."

It was at this time that Mardrus became associated with avant-garde literary circles: Gide, Valéry, Pierre Louÿs, Francis James, Max Jacob, and, especially, Mallarmé, who met Mardrus at a Tuesday meeting, organized by Mallarmé himself. Henri Mondor testified to Mardrus' presence on Tuesday, January 3, 1893,[7] when he possibly began the project of translating the *Arabian Nights*. Mallarmé's close friend, William Payne, an English translator of the *Arabian Nights*, asked Mallarmé to seek a French translator of the *Arabian Nights*. Mardrus was probably solicited, and he agreed to do the translation.

Graduation and the translation of the *Arabian Nights*: According to Mardrus' second wife, Gabrielle, after completing his studies in Paris, he returned to Egypt and opened a doctor's office. He inherited a fortune from his father and lived with his mother. However, he soon went back to Paris. According to his first wife, Lucie, France was "his only intellectual homeland."[8] Perhaps he found the cultural (especially, literary) life in

Paris indispensable.

On August 29, 1895, Mardrus began working as a medical officer of the Messageries Maritimes in Marseille. He enrolled on the board of maritime medical doctors on March 24, 1898. He devoted himself to working on all the seas of the Orient. He visited places such as India, Ceylon, Formosa, China, and Japan. During these long trips, he translated the *Arabian Nights*. At the close of 1899, he sought to resign from Messageries Maritimes for personal reasons. He did not practice professional medicine until the war of 1914.

A Great success: *Le livre des mille nuits et une nuit* was published between 1899 and 1904 in 16 volumes. The first volume was dedicated to Stéphane Mallarmé, who died the year before. Many articles celebrated the publication of this book. His success was great and rapid; the first volume was re-issued four times in only two months.

He married Lucie Delarue, a famous poet, on June 5, 1900. They lived in Paris but frequently moved around the city. In October 1902, Lucie and Mardrus settled at the house of Auteuil, called the Rose Garden, near the Seine. They received, as usual, many celebrities, such as Colette (Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette), Willy (Henry Gauthier-Villars), and Isadora Duncan. Finally, Mardrus finished his last volume of the *Arabian Nights*. His literary and social life in Paris continued until March 1904, when the couple moved to the Middle East.

Travels in Eastern countries: From March 1904, Mardrus assumed a nomadic life to visit various Oriental countries. His mission was assigned by the minister of the colonies, mainly for a new translation of the Koran.

Figure 4. Promenade of Mardrus (right) and Lucie (left) in Ben Metir, Tunisia (7.7cm x 13.1cm) (M0168-20)

1911 to the end of his life: After much traveling, the couple returned to Paris, when the *Arabian Nights* became a theme at a costume ball party, similar to the one given by Paul Poiret in his Butard Castle on June 24, 1911. This legendary evening was called "The Thousand and Second Nights." Three hundred guests were requested to be dressed in Eastern fashion, as Mardrus and his wife arrived on a camel. The content of Mardrus' invitation letter and the illustration of Raoul Dufy can be found in his personal archives.

However, Mardrus and his wife, Lucie, drifted apart. Their divorce was pronounced in 1914. He became acquainted with a friend's daughter, Gabrielle Brabant (born in 1897). She was nicknamed "Cobrette" for her lozenge-like or rhombic face. Cobrette became Mrs. Mardrus on January 31, 1924. On August 2, World War I broke out, and Mardrus resumed his medical profession on the battlefield.

In 1916, Mardrus and Gabrielle settled at 202 Boulevard Saint-Germain. Just above Mardrus' residence lived the poet Guillaume Apollinaire (died in November 1918). Reportedly, the relationship between the two writers was difficult, but Mardrus dedicated his book *La reine de Saba* to Apollinaire. In the interwar period, Mardrus continued to write and translate. After *La reine de Saba* (1918), *Le cantique des cantiques* (1925), *Le koran* (1926), and many works were successively published.

In 1920, after publishing some stories, the couple bought a house in Normandy, where Mardrus finished the translation of the *Koran*, which was published in 1926. From 1911, he limited his travel abroad. In 1927, he returned to Egypt after 17 years since his last visit. He was deeply disappointed by the state of his native country. This visit to Egypt was his last. In 1936, he went to Morocco with a painter and friend, F-L. Schmied, for a conference, which proved to be his last trip.

In 1941, Mardrus and Gabrielle moved to 46 rue de Renne, above the Café des Deux-Magots. He was run over by a car on February 5, 1936, and broke his thighbone in 1947, after which he engaged in little activities. In 1948, however, he took part in his last interview for the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of his translation of the *Arabian Nights*. According to Gabrielle (Cobrette), Mardrus was no longer interested in the news. On March 26, 1948, he died peacefully. Only Gabrielle accompanied her husband to Père-Lachaise.

Mardrus' Personal Archives (Mardrus Collection Bequest) and Its Digitalization

Mardrus' translation of the *Arabian Nights* was only the second translation in French after Antoine Galland. His version was not only a remarkable event in France, especially

among French intellectual elites, but also attained significance throughout Europe. Mardrus had frequent contact with intellectual elites and artists, such as Mallarmé, André Gide, and Paul Valéry. His correspondence with such figures suggests that he contributed greatly to the development of the French literary and cultural world of the Belle Epoque. Nevertheless, his translation was not well received in the academic circle of Middle Eastern studies. In addition to the *Arabian Nights*, he published other important works, such as *Le Koran*, *La reine de Saba*, and *Le cantique des cantiques*, all of which are not the focus of this study. His relationship with contemporary artists hints at an influential role in the artistic world of the time, which warrants an in-depth study.

About 10 years ago, the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) research team began studying documents preserved by the Mardrus family. This collection contains many previously unknown items, revealing much about Mardrus' life and work. The collection was inherited by his niece Marion Chesnais (to whom this article is dedicated), with whom our team has concluded an exclusive contract to study the documents.[9]

Figure 5. A notebook or small dictionary of Arabic words (10.8cmx 5.3cm) (M0006)

We digitized this collection and are now in the process of publishing a catalog of the collection (in French). The new findings from this collection can open new research avenues on the life of Mardrus, his works, and his contemporary French society and its literary milieu. Our forthcoming catalog will help re-evaluate and rehabilitate Mardrus, whose work has been academically neglected even in France despite its value, and will deepen studies on the *Arabian Nights*.[10]

The History of the *Arabian Nights* and Mardrus' Translation

The archetype of the *Thousand and One Nights* or *Arabian Nights* seemed to have been formed in Baghdad around the nineteenth century. The earliest evidence, a paper fragment, only describes the scenario of the first frame story. Due to the scarcity of available documents, it is unclear how the people of the Middle East had welcomed the *Arabian Nights*.

The oldest collection of stories available is a three-volume manuscript, probably written in Syria around the fifteenth or sixteenth century. It was called the Galland Manuscript since they were used as the basic text by Antoine Galland, who translated them from Arabic and introduced the *Arabian Nights* in Europe for the first time. A recent study of this manuscript by Margaret Sironval revealed that the Galland Manuscript circulated among booksellers and private individuals in Syria between 1505 and 1680. The manuscript begins with the well-known frame story and contains many tales. However, it has only 282 nights instead of the 1001 nights. Galland tried and failed to obtain a complete text of 1001 nights. His successors were also convinced that the complete text of "The Thousand and One Nights" existed. It was not discovered or, as is believed, artificially created until the nineteenth century.

In 1704, Galland published a French translation, which gave rise to successive publications and translations into various European languages. In the nineteenth century, when many Europeans explored the Orient, enthusiastic travelers or scholars discovered many Arabic manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights*. Based on these manuscripts, many printed editions successively appeared, such as the first edition of Calcutta, the edition of Breslau, the edition of Bulaq, and the second edition of Calcutta. From these editions came successive translations into European languages, such as the popular English editions of Lane (Edward William Lane), Payne (John Payne), and Burton (Richard Francis Burton), as well as the French edition of Mardrus.

Readers of Mardrus' preface believed that his edition was a novel and complete edition of the "One Thousand and One Nights." Similarly, others believed that the Burton edition was the most faithful to the original text. Insisting that his edition is a "complete and literal translation," Mardrus stated the following: "... only one honest and logical method of translation exists: impersonal literalness... It produces, being suggestive, the greatest literary power. It gives evocative pleasure."[11] The magic formula of a "complete and literal translation" convinced readers that his edition is the most accurate, conveying all the essence of the *Arabian Nights*. However, there is no real, complete translation of the *Arabian Nights* because there is no truly established edition; that is, there is no authentic version of the *Arabian Nights*, as we will discuss later. Indeed, Mardrus' "literal translation" is the subject of criticism. In his essay "The Translators of the 1001 Nights," Jorge Luis Borges, an avid reader of the *Arabian Nights*, reproaches Mardrus' "unfaithfulness."[12] Borges cites an example from the story of the city of brass. The following is a translation of Mardrus:

> “L’eau, pour arriver dans ce bassin, suivait quatre canaux tracés dans le sol de la salle en contours charmants et chaque canal avait un lit d’une couleur pariticulière: le premier canal avait un lit de porphyre rose; le second, de topazes; le troisième, d’émeraudes, et le quatrième, de turquoises; si bien que l’eau se teintait selon son lit et, frappée par la lumière atténuée filtrant des soieries du haut, projetait sur les objets d’alentour et les murs de marbre une douceur de paysage marin.”[13]

The same in the second edition of Calcutta is relatively simpler as follows:

> “…a stream of water coming from below them, the four streams flowing together into a large pool of variegated marble.” (translated by M.C. Lyons)[14]

In the second edition of Calcutta, porphyry, topaz, emerald, and turquoise are obviously not mentioned. Borges, well versed in several languages, demonstrated that Mardrus described details that did not exist in the original after checking the same content in three German translations and two English translations. Borges claims that Mardrus colored and embellished the descriptions, thereby playing the role of an illustrator rather than a translator.

Consider the story of the porter and the three ladies of Baghdad in Mardrus’ translation. In the story, three ladies, all naked, make a bad joke to a porter who came to their luxury residence. Mardrus named these three ladies, Zobéida, Amina, and Fahima. However, neither Burton’s edition, the Galland Manuscript, nor Lane’s edition based on the Bulaq edition mention the names of these ladies. Galland’s translation invented their names as Zobeïde, Amine, and Safie, somewhat different from Mardrus’ names.

The plot of the story is as follows: the caliph Haroun Al-Rachid walked around the city of Baghdad with his chancellor, Giafar, and Massrour, chief of the eunuchs. He listened to the life story of those three ladies to solve an enigma of successive strange events. The caliph observed as one of them, a hostess of the residence, severely whipped a black dog, which reduced him to tears. He also observed another lady singing a love song and fainted with a heavy heart. Each woman told him stories about their strange fate.

In the Galland manuscript and the editions of Burton, Lane, and Mardrus, a young door-keeper lady of the residence tells the story of her fate and her unhappy marriage after the story of the hostess. However, in the edition of Galland, instead of a door-keeper lady, a lady (named Amine) who visited the market with the porter tells the story of her fate and her unhappy marriage.

Further, in the edition of Mardrus, as in other editions, the door-keeper lady who tells the story of her unhappy marriage is also named Amina. Hence, as far as this tale is concerned, Mardrus' edition was not based on the Arabic text, such as the second edition of Calcutta or Bulaq. He likely copied from the French version of Galland, which, in turn, was severely criticized by Gide for being unfaithful to the original text.

Notably, Burton and Mardrus similarly emphasized erotic descriptions. However, their images of women were rather different, as Mardrus expressed the carnal image of women from a different perspective to that of Burton. Some women in Burton's edition sometimes followed their passions, allowing themselves to be carried away by concupiscence. In the Mardrus edition, coquettish women have a naïve and accommodating charm and devote themselves to men with solicitude.[15]

Mardrus did not reveal the basic texts that he used as a source.[16] However, the sources of many of his tales have recently been elucidated. For example, almost all the tales of Baibars and his police captains (nights 937–954) are borrowed from modern Arab Tales published in 1883 by William Spitta-Bey.

This discussion does not aim to examine the possible sources of the translation of Mardrus. It provides a possible explanation for his story-making technique and his literary ability to re-create the *Arabian Nights* for contemporary readership as his predecessor, Galland, had done. Nevertheless, before we answer this question by discussing how the frame story of the *Arabian Nights* ends (i.e., what happened between Sheherazade and King Shahriyar after she finished the 1001 nights of stories), let us consider the history of the *Arabian Nights*.

Hypotheses Concerning the Formation of the *Arabian Nights*

Given the highly complicated history of the *Arabian Nights*, a summary of the preceding discussion is as follows. The prototype of the *Arabian Nights* is believed to have been created in Baghdad around the ninth or tenth century. Later, various stories were incorporated, and the work developed into what it is known today in modern Cairo. The oldest substantial form of the manuscript was created in Syria from the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries. The manuscript compiled in Syria during this period is collectively called the "Syrian manuscript," which includes around 280 stories. Antoine Galland employed the Syrian manuscript.

Meanwhile, in Egypt, various kinds of folklore were recorded in written form in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and thereafter. Collectively called the "Egyptian

manuscript," it included far more stories than its Syrian counterpart. The Egyptian manuscript is divided into two categories: a group of manuscripts that include almost the same stories as the Bulaq edition of 1835, the first printed edition of the *Arabian Nights* in the Arab world, and a group of non-standard manuscripts that include many stories not found in other manuscripts. There are relatively few differences among the versions of the previous Egyptian manuscripts. This group of manuscripts is called the "Zotenberg's Egyptian Recension (ZER)" after Hermann Zotenberg, who identified their existence. The ZER manuscripts were produced in a relatively new period: the close of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century.

The translation of the Syrian Manuscript by Galland established the *Arabian Nights* among European readers, which prompted printings in Arabic in Europe and the Middle East. However, the prints did not necessarily employ the original manuscripts that had been handed down in the Arab world; they comprised stories that had been edited to meet the demand of the European market. Moreover, various Arabic manuscripts that are believed to have been employed as original text for the printed books were often produced or edited to suit views of the Middle East and those of the *Arabian Nights*, as they were affected by Orientalism. Further, researchers indicate the possibility that the stories were arbitrarily selected as manuscripts were acquired by European libraries. In particular, after the Galland edition was published in 1704, many Arabic manuscripts were created. Subsequent studies demonstrated that some of them had been fabricated.

Next, let us confirm the circumstances in which the Egyptian manuscripts are believed to have been independently created in early modern times and, thereafter, influenced by the Syrian tradition.

According to a traveler who visited Egypt in the early nineteenth century, a distinguished sheikh who passed away in 1781 produced the first 200 nights of the *Arabian Nights* on his own and completed a collection of one thousand and one stories by adding known stories of the time. No material that supports this account has been confirmed. However, Muhsin Mahdi argues that the manuscripts used as the original text for the ZER manuscript had been produced in the middle of the eighteenth century or thereafter.[17] In Egypt, before the Galland edition was created, there had been initiatives to produce a collection of stories, including *One Thousand and One Nights*, by collecting and recording folklore different from the Syrian manuscript. After the Galland edition was created, these initiatives were, evidently, accelerated under European and (in particular) Egyptian influences to produce quantities of *Arabian Nights* manuscripts.

Most *Arabian Nights* manuscripts currently possessed by European libraries were

produced in the seventeenth century and after. Earlier, manuscripts were produced and used only by the intellectual elite. Later, as cities grew, an increasing number of wealthy citizens attained private ownership. These trends were conspicuous among communities such as the Syrian and Lebanese Christians and the Egyptian Copts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Notably, privately-owned books are handed down to posterity as a valuable property of the community. In the seventeenth century and thereafter, along with these initiatives, regional cultures developed in the Arab world, as it was ruled by the Ottoman Empire, and the regional characteristics of literature and culture began to gain attention.

Around this time, many people among the urban middle classes became interested in written cultures, and some began to produce written texts. Thus, as urban residents joined the written culture movement, Middle Arabic was created. Furthermore, around the seventeenth century, al-fuṣḥā, or the written language shared by the entire Arab world, started to undergo subtle changes. As the vocabulary and usage of al-ʿāmmiyyah entered al-fuṣḥā, al-ʿāmmiyyah-based oral cultures penetrated al-fuṣḥā-based written cultures. Such circumstances seemed to be behind the increase in the number of texts that recorded folklore in Egypt around the eighteenth century. Thus, the folklore collected during this period led to the compilation of the Bulaq edition.[18]

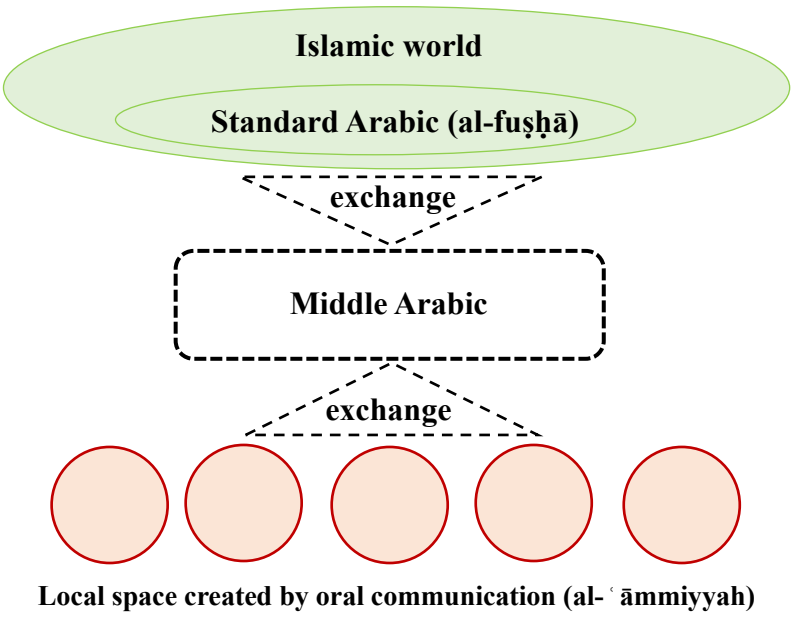

Figure 6. Local space created by oral communication (al-ʿāmmiyyah)

When, after a while, the Bulaq edition was printed under European influences, it

was considered the standard and true version of the *Arabian Nights*. Thus, the age of manuscript production ended, ushering in an age in which only the *Arabian Nights* based on the standard version was reproduced as the orthodox text. Hence, book cultures flourished. This period of the ongoing standardization of text traditions overlapped the period in which different types of non-standard traditions that had previously coexisted were eliminated.

Therefore, we propose two hypotheses regarding the process by which the text tradition of the *Arabian Nights* emerged in the Middle East.

Hypothesis (1): Many Versions of the *Arabian Nights* Created in Egypt

The Egyptian tradition, including stories that are known to the common people who were contemporaries of Galland, comprise stories of uncommon descent from those of the Syrian tradition. The collections of stories handed down by Syrian families were combined with the Egyptian tradition and reproduced as new collections of stories, giving rise to various versions of the *Arabian Nights*. After the Galland edition, all versions converged into a unified structure of stories that suited European tastes, thereby creating the Egyptian standard collection of stories.

Hypothesis (2): The *Arabian Nights* as a Written Form of Popular Culture

In the seventeenth century and thereafter, in Cairo, the middle classes, such as wealthy merchants and craftsmen, began to acquire books. Those who had handed down their culture orally began the culture based on written traditions. During this period, the regional characteristics of cultures became conspicuous, and the Middle Arabic, influenced by colloquial dialects, emerged, thus encouraging popular cultures to be recorded in written form. These social changes influenced the rebirth of the *Arabian Nights*.

Duncan B. Macdonald, who planned to collate the Galland manuscript and classified the Syrian manuscript in detail, believed that the *Arabian Nights*, as a Muslim literary work, provided first-class materials to learn the religious practice and worldview of the common people that one could not learn from law and history books.[19] His basic attitude toward the *Arabian Nights* passed on to Antoine Galland, its first European translator, and then to Edward W. Lane, Sir Richard F. Burton, and even Shinji Maejima in Japan. Recently, however, researchers have been urged to revise the traditional views of the *Arabian Nights* substantially. For instance, Margaret Sironval and Lahcen Daaïf[20] confirmed that the Galland manuscript had been read by generations of Christians in Syria, illustrated manuscripts that are believed to have been produced by Christians have been discovered, and the roles played by Christians in the narrative traditions, such as the

Voyages of Sindbad, have been re-discovered.[21] The approach to the *Arabian Nights*, first employed by the Galland edition, represented a quest for the complete "one thousand and one nights" version of the *Arabian Nights.* At the same time, text traditions were addressed in a veneer of academic terms to reconstruct the *Arabian Nights* as Islamic, Arabic, and popular (folkloric). Such an academic approach, an original authentic textual tradition, should be different from the one that has long existed in the Arab world. It is true that without Galland's translation, the textual tradition of the *Arabian Nights* would have ended. Thus, paradoxically, Galland was a genuine author of the *Arabian Nights*. Galland translated some Syrian manuscripts in his way of adapting the text to his readership in the early eighteenth century in France. Similarly, Mardrus translated to re-activate the text tradition in the literal milieu of his contemporaries. This development means that Mardrus is an authentic successor to Galland. Only by these two translators can we savor the narrative function of the *Arabian Nights*.

After appreciating the place of Galland and Mardrus in the history of the textual tradition, we can now relocate their versions by comparing several texts, with a special focus on how the story ends.

Table 1. The varied endings of the *Arabian Nights*

		King loves Sheherazade?	King healed by the stories?	Child(ren) born?	Sheherazade pleads for her life?	What happens to sister Dinarzade?
Galland ed. (about 480 Nights, 1717)		Yes	Yes	0	No	Nothing
Ibn Nadīm (Bibliographer, 10th cent)		Yes	Yes, but by her *ḥiyal* (cunning)	1	No	Nothing
1001 Nights	Baghdad manuscript (false manuscript, early 19th cent.)	Yes	No, she finishes all the stories she knows	2	No	Nothing
	the 2nd Calcutta ed. (1839-42)	Yes	No	3	Yes	Nothing
	Burton ed. (1885-88)	Yes	No	3	Yes	Marrys Shazaman, Shahriar's brother
	A manuscript owned by Hammer-Purgstall	No	No, he tired of stories and tries to kill her	3	Yes	Nothing
	Breslau ed. (a jumble of 17-18th cent. Manuscripts) (1825) (some other 17-18th cent. Manuscripts. cf. Grotzfeld, 1985)	Yes, but after she instructed what is a king or a woman.	Yes, but she re-starts telling an anonymous story similar to the frame story	0	No	Nothing
	Reinhardt manuscripts (1831)	the same as above-mentioned	the same as above-mentioned	3 (male/ female/ male)	No	Nothing
	Mardrus ed. (1899-1904)	Yes	Yes	3	Dinarzade pleads for sister's life	Marrys Shazaman, Shahriar's brother

At the end of the frame story, several patterns emerge in the versions. In the

Galland version, the Sheherazade story was interesting: the king canceled his plan to kill her after some enlightenment. Sheherazade neither admonished nor induced anyone. Nevertheless, the king who heard the story independently reflected on himself and changed his behavior. In this case, the utility of the story is inherently embodied.

As mentioned earlier, the so-called Galland manuscripts have no such ending. Thus, Galland may have pondered on the best way to end the *Arabian Nights* and may have created his version. After Sheherazade finished telling her stories, the king tried to kill her. Since she had a child, she showed the baby to the king and asked that her life be pardoned. Thus, telling a story for her life was meaningless. This pattern shows that she has moved the man via a "woman's weapon or ruse." It is such a bodily ruse of women that broke the king's heart in the beginning. Further, Sheherazade left aside some versions from the king to bear a child, which amounted to nothing more than superfluous words.

Unnecessary words worsen the situation. Edgar Allan Poe wrote the story of the 1002nd night. After Sheherazade finished telling her stories, the king stopped killing her and forgave everything. The next night, Sheherazade feels happy without any risk of being killed and tells the 1002nd story. However, this story is so boring that the king gets angry and kills her after all.

To the best of our knowledge, this table shows all patterns of the ending. Except for the Galland version and the information given by Ibn al-Nadim, who was the owner of a bookshop in Baghdad in the tenth century and left a catalog of books, all the other versions contain 1001 nights. Which of them do you like best?

The *Arabian Nights* in Japan and Mardrus' Translation

Mardrus knew and loved Japan. He visited Japan twice between 1896 and 1899. He always maintained relations with the Japanese Embassy and the Japanese community in Paris. Few traces of his papers exist, but, among other things, a book on Japan that he annotated is a direct testimony.

Figure 7 shows an illustration that appeared in a work of fiction that was translated into Japanese and published in 1887. At first glance, it seems to be an English novel, as might be expected from the figures dressed like Victorians. The illustration, however, shows a scene from a story of the *Arabian Nights*, with the title "Perusia shinsetsu retsujo no homare" (A New Story from Persia: A Courageous Lady's Honor). The woman in the gorgeous dress is Marjana, the heroine of "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves." Ryūkei Yano (1850–1931), its translator, wrote that "it is absolutely necessary

to enlighten Japanese youth, and pass on to them information about the whole world."

Figure 7. Ryūkei Yano, tr. "Perusia shinsetsu retsujo no homare" (1887)

The *Arabian Nights* was first translated into Japanese in 1875, under the title, *Kaikan kyōki Arabiya monogatari* (Strange and Marvelous Stories from Arabia), by Hideki Nagamine (1848–1927), a teacher at the Naval Academy. It was based on an English version of the *Arabian Nights* prepared from the Galland edition by G. F. Townsend for young readers. Nagamine's translation, however, was an abridged translation.[22]

Nagamine's intention was not to introduce Japanese readers to the Middle Eastern culture. He learned about the world through English books on history and was greatly concerned about Japan's future. Consequently, he concluded that to avoid being colonized by European powers, the reinforcement of the Japanese naval power was indispensable. His motivation for translating books was to break down the island-nation mentality then common among the Japanese by spreading information about other countries. Nagamine considered the *Arabian Nights* as part of the Western culture. Further, he was concerned about the education of women. Thus, he thought that the introduction of Western novels, especially the *Arabian Nights*, would form part of the women's education, suitable for the

new era.

In 1883, Tsutomu Inoue (1850–1928) published *Zensekai ichidai kisyo* (The Strangest Stories in the World). His translation of the *Arabian Nights* was widely read and went through several editions. Thanks to his translation, most of the Galland edition stories were introduced to Japanese readers. Inoue seemed to consider the *Arabian Nights* as entertainment and wrote that "the *Arabian Nights* is famous as a collection of curious stories, offering first-rate entertainment independently of period, nation, and country."[23]

Inoue's *Arabian Nights* had a profound effect on the Japanese literary world. Many writers created their works under such influence. Notably, the reader absorbed in Inoue's version of the *Arabian Nights* was fascinated by a mysterious story developing in a world full of exoticism and never touched the sensual aspect of the story collection. In the Meiji period, Japanese readers were in contact with the *Arabian Nights* in the same way as readers of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. However, since there was almost no contact with the Middle Eastern world in Japan, the Oriental novels that triggered the introduction of the *Arabian Nights* in the West did not emerge.[24]

A fairy story series for children was published (1912–26). Notably, when editing folktales as fairy tales, portions judged to be too folkloristic or unsuitable for younger readers were discarded in many cases in Japan and beyond. As in the case of the West, the leveling of the narrative content progressed in the process of being rewritten for children.

The 1925–1928 period saw the publication of the translation of the Lane version by Sōhei Morita.[25] Morita wrote in the foreword that "*Arabian Nights* is thought to be a book for children, but […] it is something that only an adult can understand."[26] In this period, it became recognized that the *Arabian Nights* had taken on a new face; it was now popularized as a standard for children's books.

Two years after Morita, the translation of the Mardrus version by Kiyoshi Sakai was published. Four years later, a complete translation of the Burton version by Sōichi Ōya was published. Thus, the images of the *Arabian Nights* as erotic literature became widespread among the Japanese readership.

The first translation of the Mardrus version was published in 1927 in the form of an abridged translation. However, the title, the *Arabian Nights*, was hidden, and the number of copies was only 500. To cope with censorship, the name of the translator was not mentioned, and a false place of publication, Shanghai, was recorded, as happened with Richard Burton. Its actual translator, Kiyoshi Sakai, is known as the author of sexual and erotic literature. He published several works such as the "Guidebook for

Entertainment Districts in Paris and Shanghai" (1930) and "Sexual Love Records in the Prison" (1931). His name is now almost completely forgotten.

Sakai graduated from art school and worked on the illustration and bookbinding design. The illustrations attached to his *Arabian Nights* are said to have been drawn by a painter named Leon Gnarle. However, it seems to be by the hand of Sakai himself. Comparing the original text of Mardrus and Sakai's translation reveals him as a translator of excellent quality.[27] Thus, Sakai's *Arabian Nights* was banned.

Two years later, *Gahu senya-ichiya* (Illustrated Stories of Thousand and One Nights) was published by Yaso Saijō, a famous poet, and Gen'ichi Yanome, who was in charge of providing commentaries. Yanome translated Beckford's "Vathek" and left works inspired by the *Arabian Nights*, such as "Thousand and One Nights in South Europa" and "Thousand and One Nights as Bedtime stories." Judging from its preface, Saijō and Yanome, as well as Sakai, seemed to be indignant or, frankly, felt angry about the way the *Arabian Nights* was regarded as "a large fairy tale collection."

Their translation of the *Arabian Nights* was not a complete rendition. It was published in the art collection style, using the illustrations included in the Mardrus version, published by Fasquelle in France during the 1908–1912 period. However, the Fasquelle edition illustrations stem from miniature images in the style of India (Mughal Empire) and are unrelated to the Arab world. In Japan, the visual impression from the *Arabian Nights* is notably compounded with the one from India because Japan accepted the images of the Orient held by Europeans without any criticism, given the Japanese traditional worldview since the medieval times (as we discuss next). This translation was also banned as obscene.

In France, the Mardrus version was favorably received among literary circles. In Japan, many authors and literary writers came to adore the French text of the Mardrus version. Bin Ueda (1874–1919), famous for his translation of Verlaine, and Shintarō Okuno (1899–1998), a famous scholar of Chinese literature, were fans of the Mardrus version. Moreover, a famous scholar and writer of French literature, Daigaku Horiguchi (1892–1981), translated a part of the Mardrus version in 1923.

In 1940, the publication of a full translation began. This translation was done by a team of talented university scholars of French literature: Yoshio Toyoshima, Kazuo Watanabe, Masa'aki Satō, and Masataka Okabe. The publication of the entire volume was completed in 1959. Therefore, it took nearly two decades.

In addition to the Burton version, the Mardrus version was vital in fixing the image of the *Arabian Nights* as belonging to a literary genre of erotic and sexual literature. At

least, on the surface, Japan faithfully transplanted the *Arabian Nights* into its culture in the same way as the process of acceptance in Europe.

The *Arabian Nights* and Orientalism in Europe and Japan

In pre-modern times, common people could also access world maps based on Western information through popular encyclopedias. However, the Three Realms Worldview, based on Buddhism, also had a strong influence. This traditional interpretation of the world specifies three areas—Tenjiku or India, Kara or China, and Honchō or Japan—as forming the central areas of the world. According to this worldview, the so-called Western Asia (Persia) is located in a marginal region far beyond India. In due course, however, with the increasing influence of Western maps, widely circulated among the general public, Europe occupied a larger area in the map as India lost its importance. In turn, Western Asia or the Middle East faded far beyond Europe, similarly driven away into obscurity.

The Japanese view of the Middle East can be summarized as follows: (1) Until the Edo Era: A world far beyond China and India from the Three Realms Worldview. (2) After the Meiji Era: A world far beyond Europe from a modernized or westernized worldview. Therefore, the Middle East or the Arab world came to be realized as a world of fantasy. The Japanese people considered the Middle East to be an exotic locale, a suitable place for fantasies. The *Arabian Nights*, widely read after the Meiji Era, reinforced the imaginary Middle East as a fantastic setting.

As discussed, in Japan, a genre of juvenile literature was established under the influence of Western culture. In Europe, during this period, both Burton and Mardrus editions, each of which deliberately emphasized eroticism, were widely read. Moreover, both their translators induced the *Arabian Nights* readership to be divided between two genres: juvenile literature and pornography. In Japan, however, except for intellectual elites, the complete versions were unknown; thus, the *Arabian Nights* was a perfect subject for juvenile literature.

In Europe, after the Galland edition appeared, “Oriental stories” became popular. In Japan, however, with little link to the Middle East, the same kind of “Oriental Stories” was not produced. However, the fantastic stories in the Galland edition fascinated young readers.

Therefore, the *Arabian Nights* as juvenile literature was transformed without paying attention to its cultural or ethnographic background, especially regarding native life in the Middle East. Instead, it was adapted such that Japanese children could accept

the stories with no reference to the Middle East.

Talented illustrators made many romantic pieces to accompany the flourishing juvenile literature. However, they often misportrayed clothing or commodities in the Middle East. Women's clothing sometimes seemed Indian. The fantastic Middle East vision, which hinged on the Three Realms Worldview since the Edo Era, remained influential in Japan.

As in Europe, Japanese people have come to hold two extreme images of the *Arabian Nights*: juvenile literature for children, and pornographic literature for adults. However, unlike the situation in Europe, the *Arabian Nights* never played a role as a literary work containing ethnographic references to real life in the Middle East or the Arab world.

As a typical example of introducing the *Arabian Nights* into Japan, we will briefly discuss Takarazuka revues.[28] The Takarazuka Revue Company was the first to introduce revues to Japan. The first performance occurred in 1914. In 1950, they presented the first revue of the *Arabian Nights*; it had a very long run. Its opening scene was a gathering place for people in the poor quarter in Paris on Bastille Day (July 14). The hero, while sleeping there, dreams of Arabia. His dream is based on "Maʿrūf, the Cobbler," probably based on the Mardrus version. In his dream, he gets involved in a strange accident with his friends, and he is nearly executed. However, just at the very time of his execution, he wakes up.

Takarazuka's *Arabian Nights* repertoire distinctly shows the historical situation of the acceptance of *the Arabian Nights* in Japan. Generally, the story that faithfully traces the *Arabian Nights* is alien to the flavor of the Takarazuka revues. When a story or theme from the *Arabian Nights* is chosen for the play, its content is skillfully arranged to be suitable for the style of Takarazuka revues. In the Takarazuka stage, the cultural background of Arabia or the Middle East, which is necessary to understand the *Arabian Nights*, is omitted to focus on the entertainment. However, in performances to emphasize the fantastic quality of the program, the Middle Eastern setting is chosen to stimulate the imagination. Similarly, when an Arab appears on stage setting in Japan or Europe, the foreignness is highlighted. Likewise, Arabian characters sometimes serve as go-betweens for the East and West. Arabia is a fantastic stage, where an inexplicable fate ruled. Any explanation of the unfamiliar culture was omitted to increase the degree of amusement. By intentionally excluding essential information concerning Arabia, exoticism vividly increased, as the visual aspect of Arabia is emphasized.

Both the Burton and Mardrus versions bore the characteristic of "emphasizing

sensuality." Erotic scenes in the stories are recorded in the Galland manuscripts, but description akin to modern hardcore porn is not found. However, it is undeniable that the anticipation or expectation that "it should be more erotic indeed" has expanded due to some thoughtless augmentative translation by Galland.

The *Arabian Nights* furnished its stories in two different worlds—the Middle East and Europe—and according to their historical circumstances and cultural milieus. It may be true that the editors of the Galland manuscripts and a group of manuscripts regarding the Bulaq, Burton, and Mardrus editions prepared the *Arabian Nights* to reflect their own culture.

However, the *Arabian Nights*, reproduced by the overwhelming powers of modern Europe, have ignored portions of the story collection that was passed down in Syria and expanded in Egypt. Otherwise, such stories have been distorted to deliberately emphasized other parts due to inadequate knowledge. Further, the stories have experienced unwarranted imaginary additions. The *Arabian Nights* for Europe presents a different magical world. It played the role of an amplifier of the Eastern (Orient) image, where glory and fate, sensuality, and cruelty formed a harmonious whole.

Thus, by encountering other cultures of the East (Orient) and texturizing the others, a literary space was created where people reflected on their own self-culture because of literary activities. This situation is the literary genesis of Orientalism. Such a literary space gave birth to the *Arabian Nights* for Europe and by Europe.

In his epoch-making book on Orientalism, Edward Said describes the West (the Occident) as "those who see" and the East (the Orient) as "those who are seen or what is seen."[29] He connects this view toward the East, given that others are mainly in the age of Imperialism from the nineteenth century, with its resultant self-contained interpretation of others.

The self-recognition system through the binary conflict between "those who see" and "those who are seen" describes a relationship with others universally found in human cultures. However, during the Imperialism period, the controllable differentiation by indexing others occurred against a background of overwhelming difference regarding the power relationship. In other words, from the modern Orientalism view, as noted by Said, the East for the West is an entity that is obliged to serve the establishment of Western identity. The Orient is nothing but the "unspeakable others," exposed to unilateral gaze.

The *Arabian Nights*, deeply involved with modern Orientalism, sometimes became its symbol, changed variously according to the Orientalism, and sometimes served Western dreams. However, from the viewpoint of literary contact between the

Arabian Nights and Europe, we cannot ignore promoting universalization and the leveling of this story collection through the intercultural encounter (creation of Orientalism literary space) in the milieu of Orientalism.

For example, through contact with Europe, the *Arabian Nights* established itself as a new genre of juvenile literature or children's literature. The Arab world does not give scope to the juvenile literature reference. However, it is adequate to say that mainly because of the socio-linguistic problems in the Arab world (the enormous difference between literary language and spoken regional dialect), no reading material for children existed until later times. For example, the first Egyptian children's magazine, published in the 1950s, was launched by a French publishing company, and the first publication was an adaptation of European stories. Significantly, after its introduction into Europe, the *Arabian Nights* were accepted by civil society as juvenile literature. Hence, the original cultural code dropped out by acquiring readership for children, thereby opening the door to the world literature.

To be sure, the sensuality of the *Arabian Nights* is unnecessarily emphasized by Mardrus and Burton. However, this fact may lead to two interpretations. Even though both the Mardrus and Burton versions are eroded by the European fantasy of the others, due to their popularity, the leveling of the story was advanced because of the cultural transplanting of the story. A gigantic literary space beginning with Galland's translation includes the Calcutta first and second editions, the Lane and Burton versions, and the Mardrus version. They shaped the images of the others that had been captured by Orientalism. These images were then disassembled and further fused.

The encounter of modern Europe with *Arabian Nights* resulted in unfortunate prejudice. However, after following the formative process of *Arabian Nights* in this article, the literary space created by Orientalism serves as a place to gain momentum toward transforming the literature that had been passed down in a specific area or culture.

Finally, we would like to raise the question of why only *Arabian Nights,* among many other literary works produced in the Middle East, became such a literary phenomenon worldwide. One answer is that the book expresses universal essence distilled from the universality of Islamic civilization. Moreover, it is global literature resulting from communications across civilizations that encompass many regions and ethnic groups with different cultural backgrounds. Finally, it can be considered a universal work with an essential narrative function because it is devoid of artificial lessons that can be read regardless of age, gender, and nationality. Thus, the *Arabian Nights* is essentially timeless and will continue to entertain all people for many years to come.

[1] This paper is a revised version of the one presented at the conference, French Orientalism and Its Afterlives in Japan and the Middle East (7 & 9–10 February 2018, Maison de la Culture du Japon à Paris), organized by Hatsuki Aishima, Yuriko Yamanaka, and Tetsuo Nishio in collaboration with the Center for Modern Middle East Studies, the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, and Maison de la Culture du Japon à Paris. This study is supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science KAKENHI [Grant Number 16KT0098, 17H02330, 19K00488].

[2] See: Émile-François Julia, *Les mille et une nuits et l'enchanteur Mardrus* (Paris: Société Française d'études Littéraires et Techniques, 1935); Hiam Aboul-Hussein, *Le docteur Mardrus traducteur des Mille et une nuits,* Thèse principale pour le doctorat d'État (présentée en novembre 1969, Sorbonne: 1970); Dominique Paulvé and Marion Chesnais, *Les mille et une nuits et les enchantements du docteur Mardrus*, préface de Frédéric Mitterrand (Paris: Musée du Montparnasse, Éd. Norma, 2004), for basic information on his biography.

[3] The letter is digitized in our collection of Mardrus' Personal Archives, which we address in the next chapter.

[4] *La semaine égyptienne* 32–33 (1929), 19.

[5] *Le matin* (journal quotidien français) juin 21 (1899).

[6] Mardrus came back often to Egypt from Beirut to see his nanny. To be sure, Mardrus loved Eïcha very much.

[7] Henri Mondor, *Vie de Mallarmé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1942), 654.

[8] Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, *Mes mémoires* (Paris: Gallimard, 1938), 115.

[9] Mardrus settled in Paris at the end of the war and married Gabrielle Bralant, known as "Cobrette." They bore no children. Mardrus came to adore the young sister of his wife, Madeliene, who was then 8 years old and considered her his adopted daughter. Thus, when Cobrette died in 1997, Madeleine, inherited Mardrus' manuscripts and various records and her daughter, Marion inherited them when her mother died in 2006. Unfortunately, Mardrus has left limited traces of his work, as many were lost in the 1930s during a fire in a property he occupied in Noisy-le-Grand in the Paris region. Mardrus also destroyed many of his drafts.

[10] We are preparing for the publication of *Catalogue de fonds Josephe-Charles Mardrus, traducteur des mille et une nuits* (Paris: La Librairie Abencerage).

[11] Joseph-Charles Mardrus, *Le livre des mille nuits et une nuit*, tome I (Paris: Edition de la Revue Blanche, 1899), XX.

[12] Jorge Luis Borges, "The translators of *The 1001 Nights,*" in *Borges: A Reader*, eds. E.R. Monegal and A. Reid (New York: Dutton, 1981), 73–86.

[13] Joseph-Charles Mardrus, *Le livre des mille nuits et une nuit*, tome VII (Paris: Éditions de la Revue Blanche, 1901), 34.

[14] Ursula Lyons, trans. *The Arabian Nights: Tales of 1001 Nights*, 3 vols. (London/New York: Penguin Books, 2008), vol.2, 539.

[15] Moreover, Morgiane is a slave of his brother, Cassim, in the edition of Galland (Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves). In the edition of Mardrus, she is a girl adopted by Ali Baba. Since Ali Baba's original Arabic manuscript is not verified, it seems to be an adaptation of Mardrus. For the second part of the sixth and seventh voyage of the Seven Voyages of Sinbad, regarding the sailors, Mardrus mixes the two texts (old and new), which differ greatly.

[16] When we compare the number of stories of the second Calcutta edition with that of Mardrus' translation, surprisingly, no more than 45% of the texts are identical.

[17] Muhsin Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights* (Leiden, New York, and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1995).

[18] Regarding the relationship of the *Arabian Nights* and urban middle-class culture, see: Tetsuo Nishio, Shizuka Nakamichi, Naoko Okamoto, and Akiko M. Sumi. "The Arabian Nights and Urban Middle-class Cultures in the Arab World: Revisiting the Formation of the So-called Egyptian Recension," *Minpaku Anthropology Newsletter* 44 (2017): 5–9.

[19] Duncan B. Macdonald, "A Preliminary Classification of Some Mss. of the Arabian Nights," in *A Volume of Oriental Studies: Presented to Edward G. Browne on his 60th birthday*, eds. T. W. Arnold and R. A. Nicholson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 304–321.
[20] Margaret Sironval and Lahcen Daaïf, "Marges et espaces blancs dans le manuscrit arabe des *Mille et Une Nuits* d'Antoine Galland," in *Les non-dits du nom. Onomastique et documents en terres d'Islam. Mélanges offerts à Jacqueline Sublet.* eds. Christian Müller and Muriel Roiland-Rouabah (Beyrouth: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2013), 85–126.
[21] Tetsuo Nishio and Naoko Okamoto, "L'*Histoire de Sindbad le Marin* est-elle de la littérature populaire?: Une approche nouvelle des relations entre tradition littéraire et culture populaire au Moyen-Orient," in *Sur la notion de culture populaire au Moyen-Orient: Approches franco-japonaises croisées*, eds. Dominique Casajus, Tetsuo Nishio, François Pouillon, and Tsuyoshi Saito (Senri Ethnological Reports) (2021, in print).
[22] Regarding the introduction of the *Arabian Nights* into Japan, see: Hideaki Sugita, "The Arabian Nights in Modern Japan: A Brief Historical Sketch," in *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism: Perspectives from East and West*, eds. Yuriko Yamanaka and Tetsuo Nishio (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 116–153.
[23] Cited from the introduction of Tsutomu Inoue, trans. *Zensekai ichidai kisho* (Tokyo: Hōkokusha, 1883).
[24] Many novels inspired by the *Arabian Nights* appeared. For example, the story of the "three apples," one of the mystery-laden stories in the *Arabian Nights,* was adapted by the famous novelist, Kōyō Ozaki.
[25] As mentioned earlier, Lane omitted all the erotic scenes; however, it contains plenty of annotations on the background knowledge necessary to read the story set in the Middle East. The Morita version translated all the notes of the original work and is highly regarded as the first academic *Arabian Nights* translation in Japan.
[26] Sōhei Morita, trans. *Sen'ichiya monogatari*, 4 vols. (Tokyo: Kokumin bunko kankōkai,1925), vol.1, 2–5.
[27] Naturally, there were mistranslations and misreading; however, it seems be easy to read. Since Mardrus deformed the Arabic original text considerably and arbitrarily in many cases, even if Sakai's translation is faithful to the Mardrus edition, it sprinkled a somewhat excessive seasoning on the Arabic original, rather pale white text.
[28] Regarding the Takarazuka revues and the *Arabian Nights*, see: Tetsuo Nishio, "The Takarazuka Revue and the Fantasy of "Arabia" in Japan," in *Scheherazade's Children: Global Encounters with the Arabian Nights*, eds. Marina Warner and Philip F. Kennedy (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 347–361.
[29] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

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III. The Formation of the Collective and the Public

6

Cadavers and Homeland: Kateb Yacine's Poetics of Collectivity

Satoshi Udo

Abstract

This article aims to discuss how Kateb Yacine (1929–1989), one of the fathers of Algerian francophone literature, conceived of the people not only as a poetic figure of the future nation but also as a constituent of his own existential identity. To these ends, this paper examines his poems and poetic prose such as "Le peuple errant" (1950), *Le cadavre encerclé* (1954), and *Le polygone étoilé* (1966). 'People' in his work are often symbolized as "cadavers" or a "vulture" (an invocation of totemic tribal imagery), and it is only through their affinities with the maternal archetype that individuals are able to overcome the "trap" of the modern ego and to realize the ontological vision of the collective. Kateb's ambivalence in discovering the horizon of collectivity demonstrates not only a nostalgia for the premodern way of being but also an insight into the rebirth of humanism.

Keywords: Kateb Yacine, Algerian literature, Francophone literature, Arab poetry, homeland

Poetic Awakening in the Prison

Compared to the literary innovation in other Arab countries such as Lebanon and Egypt, Modern Algerian Literature has emerged relatively late, not including the activities of European authors who have been published since the beginning of the twentieth century in Algiers as well as in Paris (these writers are also grouped under the name *algérianisme* or *école d'Alger*). It was around the end of the French colonial era that several Muslim authors suddenly emerged to reclaim Algerian Literature for the indigenous population.

The first flowering of this post-colonial literary renaissance occurred in the 1950s when a series of young Muslims started publishing genuine original works mainly in French, most of which are now regarded as modern classics. Among these founding authors are Mouloud Feraoun, Mouloud Mammeri, Mohammed Dib, Assia Djebar, and

Kateb Yacine himself, who is now known for his masterpiece *Nedjma* (1956), which was considered the first modernist novel in Algeria.

Kateb began his career as a young francophone poet shortly after his expulsion from *collège de Sétif* in 1945. In May, a parade celebrating the French victory against the German Nazis in Sétif, a local town in Eastern Algeria, turned abruptly into an insurrection fighting for Algerian independence, which was met with fierce retaliation by the French military and the settlers' militias against Muslim 'subjects.' A young Yacine, who was then barely 16 years old and a student at boarding school, was also arrested and temporarily imprisoned by the colonial authorities, while his mother, who lived in another city called Guélma, believed reports of his death and lost her mind. He explains later that he was shocked by how the disaster undermined his naively held identity as the brilliant son of a prestigious Muslim lawyer attending a French school, and, after being released, he sought refuge in French poetry:

> Après la répression, j'ai traversé une période d'abattement, je restais enfermé dans ma chambre, les fenêtres closes, plongé dans Baudelaire ou dans Maldoror. Mes parents' inquiétaient, mon père m'a envoyé à Annaba. (*L'Autre Journal*, n° 7 juillet–août 1985)[1]

> After the repression, I went through a period of depression, I locked myself in my room, the windows closed, immersed in Baudelaire, or in Maldoror. My parents worried, and my father sent me to Annaba. (All English translations are by Satoshi Udo.)

He also recounts that, during his time in prison, he was awakened to "poetry and revolution":

> C'est alors en prison qu'on assume la plénitude de ce qu'on est et qu'on découvre les êtres. C'est à ce moment-là que j'ai accumulé ma première réserve poétique. Je me souviens de certaines illuminations que j'ai eues… Rétrospectivement, ce sont les plus beaux moments de ma vie. J'ai découvert alors les deux choses qui me sont les plus chères, la poésie et la révolution. (*Nouvel Observateur*, 18 Janvier 1967)[2]

> It is in prison, then, that we encounter the fullness of what we are and that we discover the beings. It was at this moment that I accumulated my first poetic reserve. I remember certain insights that I had ... In retrospect, these are the most beautiful moments of my life. I discovered the two things that are most precious to me, poetry and revolution.

Kateb's discourses are sometimes colored by Marxism, but what he realizes in this moment is actually that poetry is the key to seizing himself and the world in which he lives; poetry is an ontological path to a full existence and the term "revolution" references his poetic consciousness seeing 'people' as a collective mode of being rather than a political ideology.

Africa, or an Island Surrounded by the Cadavers

One of his earliest poems, "Le peuple errant," evidences this poetic positioning of Kateb's. This poem was published in 1950 in *Alger-républicain*, a leftist newspaper that Albert Camus and Mohammed Dib had worked for, but it was written earlier, just after the killings committed throughout Madagascar in 1947, when the French repressed the Madagascan people's uprising for independence, resulting in the massacre of 80,000 to 100,000 people.

> (1) Le soir en compagnie /Des infirmes et des enfants /Sur le pont d'Alger /Quand l'aube /Dévorée de feux /Brise les eaux /Et ronge les étoiles /Je rêve au milieu /Du peuple éveillé /Aux terres désertes /De l'Afrique /où rôdent les paysans /Blêmes tels des cadavres /De leurs profondes tombes chassés (2) Peuple errant /Sous les décombres de tes gîtes décimés /Je te connais /Pour avoir saigné dans tes forêts /Peuple malgache /De cette barque au port d'Alger /Je revois /Nos pays murés dans l'esclavage (3) Et les héros de l'Afrique /Sous une pluie de sang /Marchent /Si loin des huttes /Flambant sous le vent /Si loin /Que dans leur île exilés /Nos frères nous retrouvent /Vivants après la mort (4) Fils de l'Atlas /Quant vous mouriez /Brûlés dans les cavernes /Et vous Malgaches /Quand vos corps éclatés /Roulaient sur nos rivages /C'est le même crime /Et la même souffrance /La vieille Afrique /Au cœur percé de flèches (5) Que croûlent les prisons /Et que soient honorés les ancêtres /La

potence dressée /Sur une îls africaine /Ce n'est pas la première /Que nous renverserons /Debout pour libérer /La vieille Afrique /Au cœur hérissé /De flèches et de fleurs.[3]

(1) Evening-time in the company/Of disabled people and of children / On the bridge of Algiers / When dawn/Devoured by fire/Breaks the waters / And gnaws at the stars / I dream in the middle / Of the awake people / Of the desert lands / Of Africa / where peasants roam / Pale as cadavers/Expelled from their deep tombs

(2) Wandering people/Under the rubble of your decimated houses / I know you / having bled in your forests/Malagasy people / From this boat to the port of Algiers / I see again / Our countries walled in slavery.

(3) And the heroes of Africa / Under a rain of blood / Walk / So far from the huts / Flaming under the wind / So far / That in their island [they are] exiled / Our brothers find us again / Living after death

(4) Son of the Atlas / When you die / Burned in caves / And you Malagasies / When your bursted bodies are burst / Rolled on our shores / It is the same crime / And the same suffering / The old Africa / Pierced at the heart by arrows

(5) May the jails crumble/And may the ancestors be honored / The gallows is set up / On an African island / This is not the first / That we will overthrow / Stand up to liberate/ The old Africa / With the heart bristling / From arrows and flowers.

We observe here that the main theme of this poem is the political solidarity of Algerians and Malagasies against French colonialism, and, curiously, this alliance is conceived of in the name of Africans. The "cadavers," the destroyed bodies of Malagasies, are delivered by sea to the Algerian shore of hospitality, and the figure of Africa appears to be surrounded by the dead. The solidarity imagined here exists among people who are, first, bleeding or burned to death, and, above all, "awakened" to a certain consciousness. They are "expelled from their profound tombs" of ancestry and are now "wondering in Africa."

The cadaver is a poetic motif to unite, sympathetically, the victims of Sétif with those of Madagascar, representing "people" as a collective subject into which the poet wishes to integrate himself. He says: "I dream in the middle of the awakened people," that is, amid wondering peasants "as pale as cadavers," and he calls the Malagasies "our brothers," telling them: "*I* know *you*, that *you* have bled in the forest, Malagasy people."

Then, he calls the Algerians "sons of Atlas [mountains]," saying: "When *you* were dying, burned in caves, And *you* Malagasies, When your broken bodies, Were rolling to *our* shore." And, because of their similar suffering, the Algerians and the Malagasies are integrated into an *us*; the interaction between the two collectivities, 'we Algerians' and 'you Malagasies,' finally culminates in 'we Africans', another collective level of being.

Street of the Dead, the Life of People

Several years later, Kateb Yacine tries to take his experience at Sétif to the stage, writing a poetic drama, *Le cadavre encerclé*. It begins with a long monologue delivered by the protagonist, Lakhdar, a leftist activist who has survived the massacre:

> Lakhdar: Ici est la rue des Vandales. C'est une rue d'Alger ou de Constantine, de Sétif ou de Guelma, de Tunis ou de Casablanca. Ah! l'espace manque pour montrer dans toutes ses perspectives la rue des mendiants et des éclopés, pour entendre les appels des vierges somnambules, suivre des cercueils d'enfants, et recevoir dans la musique des maisons closes le bref murmure des agitateurs. Ici je suis né, ici je rampe encore pour apprendre à me tenir debout, avec la même blessure ombilicale qu'il n'est plus temps de recoudre; et je retourne à la sanglante source, à notre mère incorruptible, la Matière jamais en défaut, tantôt génératrice de sang et d'énergie, tantôt pétrifiée dans la combustion solaire qui m'emporte à la cité lucide au sein frais de la nuit, homme tué pour une cause apparemment inexplicable tant que ma mort n'a pas donné de fruits, comme un grain de blé dur tombé sous la faux pour onduler plus haut à l'assaut de la prochaine aire à battre, joignant le corps écrasé à la conscience de la force qui l'écrase, en un triomphe général, où la victime apprend au bourreau le maniement des armes, et le bourreau ne sait pas que c'est lui qui subit, et la victime ne sait pas que la Matière gît inexpugnable dans le sang qui sèche et le soleil qui boit… Ici est la rue des Vandales, des fantômes, des militants, de la marmaille circoncise et des nouvelles mariées ; ici est notre rue. Pour la première fois je la sens palpiter comme la seule artère en crue où je puisse rendre l'âme sans la perdre. Je ne suis plus un corps, mais je suis une rue. […][4]
>
> Lakhdar: Here is the street of the Vandals. It is a street in Algiers or in Constantine, in Setif or in Guelma, in Tunis or in Casablanca. Ah! this space wants to showcase in all its perspectives the street of the beggars and the cripples, to hear the calls of the virgin sleep-walkers, to follow the coffins of children, and to receive the brief

> murmur of the agitators in the music of the brothels. Here I am born, here I crawl again to learn to stand up, with the same umbilical wound that there is no longer time to sew; and I return to the bloody source, to our incorruptible mother, the Matter [Matière] never in defect, sometimes generating blood and energy, sometimes petrified in the solar combustion that takes me to the lucid city in the fresh bosom of the night, a man killed for a seemingly inexplicable cause as long as my death did not bear fruit, like a grain of durum wheat fallen beneath the scythe to wave higher under the assault of the next area to beat, joining the crushed body to the consciousness of the force that crushes him, in a general triumph, in which the victim teaches the executioner how to use the arms, and the executioner does not know that he is the one who suffers, and the victim does not know that Matter lies impregnable in the blood that dries up and the sun that drinks ... Here is the street of the Vandals, of the ghosts, of the activists, of the circumcised brat and of the new brides; here is our street. For the first time, I feel it throbbing like the only flooding artery where I can return to the soul without losing it. I am no longer a body, but I am a street. [...]

"The street" (*la rue*) is the space that represents the reality of Lakhdar, his vision seized in a poetic manner in front of the "cadavers." The stage direction above the monologue indicates that the space is a death-ridden field covered in remnant corpses. Here, Lakhdar is an individual speaking in the first person 'I,' but at the same time, his existence seems to be connected to a deeper level of being. It is his 'umbilicus' that allows him to maintain ties with the root of existence, although its cord remains cut. Lakhdar is a sort of "fetus" that has not yet completely separated from his mother. So, the vision is fulfilled with blood: "I return to the bloody source, to our incorruptible mother, the Matter never in defect." This archetypal 'Mother' is the matrix of existence that could generate Lakhdar's being in the world, and the mode of his being beyond individuality makes it possible to integrate himself into the dead. Seemingly, death implies a potential revival, as "a grain of durum wheat"' can survive after being cut down. Death and life are thus inexplicably linked by blood, and, in this unity of opposites (concordia oppositorum), the "killer" can be replaced by the "victim." Similarly, subject, here, can alternate with object; at the outset, 'I' may be one of the dead bodies on "our street," but, ultimately, Lakhdar declares "I am a street" (*je suis une rue*). And, because the street, and his whole world, is experienced as if it were an "artery," the dead bodies, the diverse array of people

described above (Vandals, beggars, the lame, virgins, children, fantoms, activists, circumcised brats, and newly married women) are all conceived of as the 'blood.' Therefore, from this perspective, *I* am the dead, *I* am the people, and moreover, *I* am the world. This mystical vision might have been the epiphany that Kateb Yacine had in prison; in his poetic imagination, the cadavers become, paradoxically, the symbol of life, the life of people.

Nostalgia for the Horizon of Collectivity

The motif of 'people' is present on several levels, representative of victimhood in the face of colonialism, political solidarity among the oppressed, and the collective reality of the world we live in. When he expresses his political insight regarding Algeria, Kateb Yacine actually employs the term of 'nation,' and the heroine of his works, Nedjma, is often regarded as the literary figure of the future nation. In the novel, *Nedjma*, a *sheikh* of the tribe explains: "we are not a nation, not yet, you have to know that: we are just decimated tribes" (nous ne sommes pas une nation, pas encore, sache-le: nous ne sommes que des tribus décimées). Thus, the Algerian people are conceived of as being in transition from a collection of 'tribes' to a cohesive 'nation.' As we have just seen, the 'Mother' figure is situated at the root of the existential wholeness of beings, and it is, of course, not without relation to his real mother. After independence, Kateb concluded his later work, *Le polygone étoilé* (1966), which was composed of miscellaneous fragments (poems, stories, plays), with an impressive episode about his "second rupture of the umbilical cord," which is regarded as autobiographical:

> Quelqu'un qui, même de loin, aurait pu m'observer au sein du petit monde familial, dans mes premières années d'existence, aurait sans doute prévu que je serais un écrivain, ou tout au moins un passionné de lettres, mais s'il s'était hasardé à prévoir dans quelle langue j'écrirais, il aurait dit sans hésiter: « en langue arabe, comme son père, comme sa mère, comme ses oncles, comme ses grands-parents » Il aurait dû avoir raison, car, autant que je m'en souvienne, les premières harmonies des muses coulaient pour moi naturellement, de source maternelle.
>
> […]
>
> Tout alla bien, tant que je fus un hôte fugitif de l'école coranique.
>
> […]

Pourtant, quand j'eus sept ans, dans un autre village (on voyageait beaucoup dans la famille, du fait des mutations de la justice musulmane), mon père prit soudain la décision irrévocable de me fourrer sans plus tarder dans la « gueule du loup," c'est-à-dire à l'école française. Il le faisait le cœur serré:

— Laisse l'arabe pour l'instant. Je ne veux pas que, comme moi, tu sois assis entre deux chaises. Non, par ma volonté, tu ne seras jamais une victime de Medersa. En temps normal, j'aurais pu être moi-même ton professeur de lettres, et ta mère aurait fait le reste. Mais où pourrait conduire une pareille éducation? La langue française domine. Il te faudra la dominer, et laisser en arrière tout ce que nous t'avons inculqué dans ta plus tendre enfance. Mais une fois passé maître dans la langue française, tu pourras sans danger revenir avec nous à ton point de départ.

Tel était à peu près le discours paternel.

[…]

Ma mère était trop fine pour ne pas s'émouvoir de l'infidélité qui lui fut ainsi faite. Et je la vois encore, toute froissée, m'arrachant à mes livres — tu vas tomber malade! — puis un soir, d'une voix candide, non sans tristesse, me disant: « Puisque je ne dois plus te distraire de ton autre monde, apprends-moi donc la langue française... » Ainsi se refermera le piège des Temps Modernes sur mes frêles racines, et j'enrage à présent de ma stupide fierté, le jour où, un journal français à la main, ma mère s'installa devant ma table de travail, lointaine comme jamais, pâle et silencieuse, comme si la petite main du cruel écolier lui faisait un devoir, puisqu'il était son fils, de s'imposer pour lui la camisole du silence, et même de le suivre au bout de son effort et de sa solitude — dans la gueule du loup.

Jamais je n'ai cessé, même aux jours de succès près de l'institutrice, de ressentir au fond de moi cette seconde rupture du lien ombilical, cet exil intérieur qui ne rapprochait plus l'écolier de sa mère que pour les arracher, chaque fois un peu plus, au murmure du sang, aux frémissements réprobateurs d'une langue bannie, secrètement, d'un même accord, aussitôt brisé que conclu... Ainsi avais-je perdu tout à la fois ma mère et son langage, les seuls trésors inaliénables — et pourtant aliénés![5]

Anyone observing me, even from a distance, in my small family world during my first years of existence, would probably have foreseen that I would become a writer, or at least an enthusiast for words. But had he ventured to foresee in what language I would write, he would have said without hesitation: "in the

Arabic language, like his father, like his mother, like his uncles, like his grandparents." He should have been right because, as far as I can remember, the first harmonies of the muses flowed for me naturally, from a maternal source.

[...]

All was well, as long as I was a fugitive guest of the Koranic school.

[...] However, when I was seven years old, in another village (we traveled a lot in our family because of the mutations of Muslim justice), my father suddenly took the irrevocable decision to throw me, without delay, straight into the "mouth of the wolf." That is, into a French school. He did so with a tight heart.

— Leave Arabic now. I do not want you fall between two stools like me. No, by my will, you will never be a victim of Medersa. Normally, I could have been your languages teacher myself, and your mother would have done the rest. However, where could such an education lead? The French language is dominant. You will have to dominate it, and leave behind you all that we have inculcated in your tenderest childhood. However, once you have mastered the French language, you can safely return with us to your starting point.

Such was almost the paternal discourse.

[...]

My mother was too delicate to be unmoved by the unfaithfulness thus enacted towards her, and I still see her, all crumpled, tearing me from my books — you will get sick! Then, one evening, in a candid voice, not without sadness, she said to me: "Since I no longer have to distract you from your other world, teach me French language ..." Thus the trap of Modern Times will close in on my frail roots, and now I'm frustrated by my stupid pride, by the day that, with a French newspaper in my hand, my mother sat down at my desk, far away as never before, pale and silent, as if the small hand of this cruel schoolboy had charged her with a duty, because he was her son, to impose on herself the camisole of silence for him, and even to follow him till the end of her effort and solitude — into the mouth of the wolf.

I never stopped, even in my days of success around the teacher, feeling in the depths of me this second rupture of the umbilical cord, this internal exile, which would not bring the schoolboy closer to his mother anymore and would only tear them apart, every time a little more, the murmur of blood, the reproaching shivers of a language banished secretly, by the same agreement, broken as soon as reached... So I had lost all at once my mother and her language, the only inalienable treasures

— and yet alienated!

We find lots of dichotomies here: Arabic and French, the Koranic school (*kuttâb*) and the French school, *Medersa* (the educational institution for the colonial Muslim court) and the "wolf's mouth," the maternal source and paternal discourse etc. Additionally, the domination and hegemony of the French language seems to be the criteria that determines the hierarchical vision of the world. Thus, from a postcolonial perspective, Kateb Yacine apparently criticizes and tries to reverse the master/slave relationship in the colonial context, and Arabic seems to be the lost heritage that he would have inherited if Algeria had not been under French rule. However, this situation should not be understood too simplistically.

Kateb's father was an indigenous intellectual, working as *an oukil* (*wakîl*), lawyer in the colonial court for the Muslim population. His mother was a literate woman with profound Arabic knowledge, which was very rare at that time in 'French Algeria.' Despite the exceptional milieu of his family, cultivated in Arabic, what Kateb laments is not the loss of classical Arabic culture that he would have mastered had he been educated in the language, but rather the oblivion and deprivation of his childhood. When his father says: "leave behind everything that we have hammered into you in your tenderest childhood," Koranic education might be also implied here, but what was truly lost is the innocent world that Kateb shared with his mother, as education would soon suppress his childhood and force him to forget it. The world is fulfilled with the "harmonies of the muses" flowing out of "maternal source," which is incarnated surely in colloquial Arabic (*son langage,* his language) and described as "theater"; "she had a particular talent for theater. What am I saying? Her alone, she was a theater. I was her sole and enchanted audience," (*Elle était surtout douée pour le théâtre. Que dis-je? Elle seule, elle était un théâtre. J'étais son auditeur unique enchanté.*)

Since the "second rupture of the umbilical cord" is paraphrased as "the trap of Modern Times," this conception of 'motherhood' could be rooted in the premodern sense of being. In addition, this must be the reason why the figures symbolizing collectivity in Kateb's writing are always ambivalent; the poet sympathizes with 'people' into whom he tries to infiltrate through the bloody vision of cadavers, and Lakhdar goes on to die and reincarnate as a vulture, the ancestral totem of the tribe, in another play *Les ancêtres redoublent la férocité* (The ancestors are doubling the ferocity). The theme of 'awakening' also comprises several phases; "Le peuple errant" are awakened to the political

consciousness that leads them to be expelled from their ancestral tombs (*De leurs profondes tombes chassés*), which suggests that the awakening of the 'modern ego' induced a separation from tribal collectivity as well as a political repression. Lakhdar was, first, awakened for political activism as a modernized individual, but the cadavers of the massacre would awaken him further to the ontological reality of being part of a collective. Because the 'umbilical cord' that connects him to the Mother is already injured, he could never return to the "maternal source" of existence without destroying his individuality, his personal self, and, finally, he would die to become a "vulture," the totemic being of his tribe "Keblout." This is the tragedy of the impossible return to the homeland of the dead.

The political aspects of Kateb Yacine's works have been studied extensively so far, but his poetic fascination tends to remain hidden in this metaphorical shiver of ambivalence as he encounters the horizon of collectivity. His perspective on nostalgia for the premodern way of being can offer us new possibilities for cross-cultural reading between different literary traditions in different historical contexts.

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[1] Kateb Yacine, *Le poète comme un boxeur* (Paris: Seuil, 1994), 17.
[2] Ibid., 109.
[3] Kateb Yacine, "Le peuple errant," *L'Œuvre en fragments* (Paris: Sindbad, 1986), 79–80.
[4] Kateb Yacine, "Le cadavre encerclé," *Le cercle des représailles* (Paris: Seuil, 1959), 15–16.
[5] Kateb Yacine, *Le polygone étoilé* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 17–182.

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7

The Personal and Public Spheres in the Works of the Egyptian Intellectual, Yūsuf Zaydān: Novels and Essays

Jaroslav Stetkevych

Abstract

The Egyptian intellectual Yūsuf Zaydān (b. 1958) presents in part the persona of a philosophy- trained and Ṣūfī-inclined university academic. As head of the manuscript division of the Library of Alexandria, he published close to thirty catalogs of manuscripts of Islamic cultural heritage. He researched Islamic medicine with studies on Hippocrates and Galen. Between literature and philosophy, he published an important study on the allegory of body and life, Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān. His other persona, however, is unabashedly and aggressively public. His journalistic interventions and essays, especially *Shujūn miṣriyyah, Shujūn ʿarabiyyah, Shujūn turāthiyyah*, and *Shujūn fikriyyah: iʿādat bināʾ al-mafāhīm* (Branching Distresses: Egyptian/Arab of Cultural Legacy/Intellectual), lay bare contemporary Egyptian and broadly Arab social, cultural, and political inadequacies. As novelist, Yūsuf Zaydān combines the personal and the public to dig deeply into Hellenistic Late Antiquity, which also serves as an allegory of modern Egyptian self-questioning (*ʿAzāzīl*). His most cruelly provocative trilogy – *Muḥāl* (Absurd), *Gwāntanāmū* (Guantanamo), and finally, *Nūr* (Light) – shows how innocence becomes impossible in a time of political paranoia and cruelty. It is on this aspect of Yūsuf Zaydān's work that the present study will focus.

Keywords: Yūsuf Zaydān, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, public intellectual, Modern Egyptian novel, Modern Egyptian essay, Modern Egyptian thought, public sphere, private sphere, *ʿAzāzīl*, allegorical novel, historical novel, cultural revolution, contemporary Arab thought, feminist novel, Arab feminism

Introduction: The Personal and Public Spheres in the Works of the Egyptian Intellectual, Yūsuf Zaydān

As an example of a modern public intellectual, I propose to highlight Yūsuf Zaydān, the Egyptian academic, librarian, publisher of decades of catalogues of medieval manuscripts,

and editor of manuscripts who is also a prize-winning novelist, devout literary book reviewer, host of intellectual and literary salons, and untiring observer of his nation's and society's behavior and attitudes: a public intellectual.

Born in 1958 in central Upper Egypt, Yūsuf Zaydān grew up in the city of Alexandria which he never fully exchanged for the country's capital, Cairo. Yūsuf Zaydān's intellectual formation intensified early in his studies at Alexandria University's philosophy department, where he graduated with honors. His doctoral degree (1989) directed him toward Islamic Ṣūfī mysticism, which remains central to the formal professional part of his life and is reflected strongly in his less formal, multifaceted dynamic involvement as his country's (and culture's) public intellectual and spokesman. Even in the present, with maturity and years of great intellectual accomplishment, Yūsuf Zaydān lives a life of intellectual restlessness. His discussion groups over time have evolved into reclusively selective salons. His partial shift of domicile to Cairo occurred relatively late and only heightened his peripatetic restlessness, with Alexandria still remaining his favored home.

Yūsuf Zaydān's life is a mosaic of most diverse revelatory outbursts that are intellectually and esthetically contemplative as well as societally creative, and that do not shy away from the starkness of the political plane. In the beginning, formal academic discipline was, to him, all-absorbing. As head of the manuscript division of the Library of Alexandria, he published close to thirty scrupulously researched and annotated catalogs of manuscripts of Arabic Islamic cultural heritage. He researched the history of Islamic medicine with studies on Hippocrates and Galen. Between literature and philosophy, he also published an important study on the allegory of body and life, *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān*.[1]

The Novel

Yūsuf Zaydān also essays himself as a novelist. He delves into the conundrum of the archetypal symbol of womanhood in his 2006 novel *Ẓill al-ʾafʿā* (Shadow of the Serpent).[2] From there, he approaches the clarity of the genre of historical novel in his *ʿAzāzīl* (2008).[3] The novel captures the moment of violence, more than of melancholy, of the cultural sunset of Hellenistic Late Antiquity, mostly of Alexandria, and extends from there, ending before entering Aleppo. In the same year, there appeared his other historical novel, *al-Nabaṭī* (The Nabatean),[4] presenting scenes of Bedouinity and problematics of early seventh century while referring, with allegorical transparency, to modern Egyptian self-questioning. His most cruelly provocative trilogy – *Muḥāl*

(Absurd) (2012),[5] *Gwāntanāmū* (Guantanamo) (2014),[6] and *Nūr* (Light) (2016)[7] – shows how innocence becomes impossible, almost heroic (*Nūr*), in times of political paranoia and cruelty. It is on this latter aspect of Yūsuf Zaydān's work that the present study will be largely, but not ultimately, focused.

In this state of intellectual restlessness, being struck by the novelistic muse was to Yūsuf Zaydān something that had to happen as an unstoppable psychological outgrowth. His strong feelings about the degradation of womanhood in Egyptian society, as a deeply ingrown cultural-historical phenomenon, made him write his first novel, *Ẓill al-ʾafʿā*. This work will cast a long "shadow" to culminate in his later novel *Nūr*, so titled to infer its heroine's luminous final choice of intellectual and moral independence.

His second novel, *al-Nabaṭī*, is for the most part about the endless, tiresome journey, or caravan transportation, of a bride out of Egypt, to be wedded to an ill-boding tribal, mercantile-Bedouin groom. The misbegotten, not acting but observing-absorbing heroine, however, develops into not so much a character as a pronouncedly transferrable social template. The hollowness and tedium of the endless camel transportation through the desert is only the beginning of the introduction for the bride to the utterly dispirited and disheartening events of the marriage ordeal. The elder brother of the bridegroom, whose name the novel carries (Nabatean), is the almost mystical counter-figura, but by being quasi-unbodied and endowed with only a hidden, never-revealed thoughtfulness, he exerts none of his latent charismatic nobility upon either bride or groom. In the meantime, the Islamic conquest enters wholly uneventfully and unnoticed, except as a passing, more tribal than militant, movement.

Yūsuf Zaydān's third novel, *ʿAzāzīl*, by virtue of being awarded the Arab Booker Prize in 2009, brought to Yūsuf Zaydān not only recognition as a writer, but also retroactive identification as a public intellectual with voice and audience in the Egyptian s*ocium.* Ironically enough, however, in that specifically Egyptian *socium*, the quality of the novel was not the issue, as much as the adverse sensitivities it awakened in Egyptian Coptic ecclesiastic circles, for bringing out themes that the *socium* would prefer to—even historically—forget. This was despite the obvious fact that the novel's offensive and painful themes are being re-narrated as drastically cruel events through multiple allegorical means, bypassing the contemporary Coptic condition, reflecting instead on the condition of contemporary Egyptian culture. This Coptic ecclesiastic sensitivity was, however, entirely misplaced. The particular scenes and sentiments of early Christians in Hellenistic Alexandria, together with their ideological dimensions, that so stirred the ire of Coptic ecclesiastic circles, were intended on the allegorical level to dig deeper into and

harshly criticize the contemporary Egyptian Muslim majority's "neo-ecclesiastical" sensibility, which is quite capable of re-enacting the abhorrent events of 5th century Alexandria in its Late Antiquity agony.

Viewed broadly, like almost all Egyptian novels aspiring to social relevance, Yūsuf Zaydān's novel *ʿAzāzīl* shows the almost irresistible tendency of allegorization—albeit having developed its own internal narrative forces. This becomes evident when the novel's hero-narrator, the wandering Upper-Egyptian monk Hybā, finally solves the enigma of who ʿAzāzīl is to him and in him and realizes what it means to him to have uncovered *him* and discovered *himself*. For ʿAzāzīl, as described throughout the novel, is the Demon that inhabits the wandering monk's persona. It, or he, was the same Demon that inhabited (preoccupied) the "church fathers," the desert anchorites, and the wandering monks of Late Antiquity, in the death throes of Hellenism.

In their final encounter, the Demon ʿAzāzīl shares with Hybā a thought (which he himself had also entertained), to withdraw into seclusion and write down his story of struggle with himself and with ʿAzāzīl. Having done that, having reached that enlightened moment of the last encounter, Hybā decides to bury the scrolls with the written down story at the gates of a monastery near Aleppo, the spot where he found himself at the end of this stage of his peregrination. To seal his confession, Hybā writes: "So here, with this, I am burying my hereditary fear and all my ancient, delusory imaginings, after which, I shall travel on, as the sun rises—free!"[8]

In the context of our essay on Yūsuf Zaydān as a public intellectual with a mission, this statement is to us the author's—Zaydān's—own, public pronouncement of will: his proclamation of the birth of an engaged, Egyptian *public* intellectual, that breaks out of the literary genre into the public sphere with a Demon-liberated, almost apostolic message. For a modern Egyptian novel that clamors to be of generally Arabic literary relevance, its emphatic earnestness of closure is bound to remain as a rare example of a writer's supreme control of the genre.

The second trilogy of Yūsuf Zaydān's novels, which follows closely the chronological order of the first, is, however, completely and jarringly, different. Its voice is not "novelistic," rather, it is "journalistic" in style, delivering mere events glaringly and harshly as a procession of places and occurrences, but never expressing a purpose or message. The first, and almost the only remaining impression of the first novel, *Muḥāl*, is that of finding oneself in the nervous, very often irritatingly absurd over-reality of inappropriate, dry journalism; but, that is where Yūsuf Zaydān wants us to be. Then one reads oneself into this absurd over-reality of the word-and-style of journalism, and indeed

realizes that this is the reality which is being cast upon all other semblances of things as they are meant to be known, or—*absurdly*—felt.

Muḥāl is, narratively, almost a sheer skeleton of situations that happen to fall together into events which are stated, that is, reflected in some sort of broken mirror, but not told, and therefore, appear by purpose and intent almost as a journalistic scrapbook. At first, this may appear as an imposition on the reader, but then, almost too slowly, the reader is drawn into the sequenced chain of dryly cut-out events of a young man's life. The man is Sudanese with family ties to Egypt, engaged in some commerce, and by the plainest coincidence happens to witness and have a passing acquaintance with Bin Laden, as a merchant engaged in camel trading. This becomes the beginning and the foretokened end of the young Sudanese-Egyptian's undoing. He becomes a journalistic, technical photographer-operator, and in that capacity is hired as member of a newspaper team and sent to Afghanistan, where the American/allied campaign against al-Qāʿidah is already underway. In the meantime, he has also gotten married, but has left his wife behind. However, while waiting for normal journalistic involvement, he is inexplicably abandoned in an Afghan allied camp, only to be scooped up by U.S. military or C.I.A. investigators. Totally uninterested in his story and professional documentation, his unidentified holders ready him to be flown to–he knows not where.

In the document-like sequel novel *Gwāntanāmū*, the sustained absurdity, now heightened to the total distortion of reality, nevertheless continues in an altogether eyewitness-account style, behind which there is the author's strong, strictly objectivized, but also transparently personal, intent to present the confused photo-journalist as "non-hero," or rather, as a "glaring victim" who is now completely at the mercy of a machine-like, procedural mindlessness, which, itself devoid of purpose, pretends to search in the victim for a political "culpability," where there is no culpability, and for a terrorist-disposition, where there is none—all this in the hellish camp of Guantanamo.

As Yūsuf Zaydān narrates, one reads mechanically through pages of imposed absurdity of the would-be political investigation, never able to escape the sinking entrapment of a Kafkaesque nightmare. The prose, however, as authorial exhausting "journalese", very often hardly more than expository text, may even be trying to plant, some rare moments of precisely anti-Kafka and anti-absurdity sobriety: rare chances of shaking oneself clear of the tolerance of un-reality—imagining that there must still exist at least a semblance of another world.

But to this Yūsuf Zaydān himself barely manages to reach this moment of sobriety at the very end of the third novel of this revelatory trilogy. *Nūr* (Light), a potential sequel

to *Muḥāl* and *Gwāntanāmū*, came out in 2016. Once again, the Arabic title (*nūr*/light) that intends to be something other than a "title" will in itself, even before the onset of any narrative explanation and validation, set the tone, if not the ultimate revelatory road that the story will have to take. The title *Nūr* points to the "light" that will emanate from two sources: the giving and the receiving, to the child-girl from the mother, even though the mother will paradoxically, as we shall see, become the receiver as well. The mother's name is *Nawr* or *Nawrah,* a Flower, but the mother, in naming her daughter *Nūr/*Light, determines the course of her own freedom. The mother attains freedom through three agonizing trials, the first of which involves a man exercising his "tradition-given" entitlement to possess her and rule over her, whom she rejects. Her second trial is against the man who was once the ideal, although premature, figure whom she met in her own miracle-searching moment, the birth of her daughter Nūr, but the man's descent into fanatical subservience to mindless ideology only merited her disgust. The third trial is against a man of wealth and power who offers her comfort and security, but at the price of moving to an alien land, totally dispossessing her of herself. This final trial culminates in her own moral as well as intellectual victory and in her refusal to empty herself "of herself" or abandon all striving of the mind. With this final refusal and revelation, the mother Nawrah, the mere decorative flower, becomes the daughter Nūr, the light, the true self.

In all these respects, the novel *Nūr* is a "modern," new Egyptian woman's experience of struggle and escape out of every archaizing, archetypal symbolism, as was the case with Yūsuf Zaydān's first novel, *Ẓill al-ʾafʿā*. *Nūr* is also a glaringly modern correction to his second novel, *al-Nabaṭī*. As a story with a distinct cultural and social message, in terms of genre, *Nūr* constitutes an almost step by step arrival at the ultimately *feminist*, fully matured choice, that makes out of it a contemporary Egyptian *feminist* novel. Furthermore, in a resounding way, the woman-protagonist's final choice of *being free* mirrors that of the Egyptian fifth-century monk Hybā's in *ʿAzāzīl*. In his novels, Yūsuf Zaydān thus emerges as one of Egypt's strongest voices of clear, frequently radically phrased, formative statements. Again and again, echo after echo, his voice resonates publicly with the ideas he embraces. He so frequently controls the waves of the public sphere, that his quiet, otherwise library-withdrawn, almost monk-like scholarly persona as Egypt's foremost manuscript cataloger and a formidable text editor, escapes the attention it fully deserves in that quiet world of intellectual achievement.

The Essay: The *Shujūn* Series

The public intellectual persona of Yūsuf Zaydān, however, is unabashedly aggressive and unapologetic. In large part originated, or provoked, by his participation in ongoing topical debates in Egyptian social, cultural, and political media, his journalistic interventions and essays, especially the *Shujūn* series comprising *Shujūn miṣriyyah* (2015), *Shujūn ʿarabiyyah* (2015), *Shujūn turāthiyyah* (2016), and *Shujūn fikriyyah: iʿādat bināʾ al-mafāhīm* (2017) (Branching Distresses: Egyptian/Arab of Cultural Legacy/Intellectual: Rebuilding Cultural Concepts),[9] originally in the form of multimedia airings and newspaper publications, have laid bare contemporary Egyptian and broadly Arab social, political, and intellectual-cultural pitfalls and inadequacies.

With a strong Ṣūfī proclivity, Yūsuf Zaydān is a free, though not steadfastly worldly, spirit. There is no doubt about his knowing the world, as he has observed it at length from a universalist, intellectualized, and—I would say—eminently ironic distance, which is countered by involvement that is bitingly satirical. This involvement may be the result of a hidden clash between his two dominant proclivities: his disposition toward Ṣūfīsm, and his razor-sharp, perhaps even intellectual syncretism. In both respects, he displays an impressive, controlling mind. At times, if not often, he turns pessimistic, or rather melancholy, when with the Egyptian poet Amal Dunqul, he bemoans "the waning of the once intimate concord of this homeland, this gentle and decorous Egypt of his (*ulfatu hādhā –l-waṭan*)".[10] Then, however, he remembers his proud, intellectual, social-societal self-sameness, and quotes, not just to himself, verses such as those from the Palestinian Maḥmūd Darwīsh's poem "al-Farāshah" (The Butterfly):

The butterfly's trace is not seen,
The butterfly's trace never fades
It is the attraction of what is hidden that baits the meaning,
Then, when the way is clear,
Moves on.
It is the perpetual slightness of the everyday,
And cravings for the uppermost,
And a beautiful radiance.

أثرُ الفراشةِ لا يُرى
أثرُ الفراشة لا يزولُ.

هو جاذبيةُ غامضٍ يستدرجُ المعنى ويرحل،
حين يتضح السبيلُ.
هو خفَّةُ الأبديِّ في اليوميِّ
وأشواقٌ إلى الأعلى،
وإشراقٌ جميل.

Yūsuf Zaydān's comment to this quotation is self-possessed, aware of his own agony: "I read these verses, as though in them the poet was symbolically speaking of the role of the intellectual (*al-muthaqqaf*) in every society, pointing out the ideas pertinent to the intellectual-cultural stand."[11]

However, to reach this "intellectual-cultural stand/act"—to this *al-fiʿl ath-thaqāfī*—in a direct way through personal experience, Yūsuf Zaydān needs another medium, other than his ancient and medieval manuscripts and scrolls, even, to a degree, more direct and incisive than his novels. He needs a medium that, itself a paradox, is only "half-literate," as it is never quite certain whether it is *singular* or *plural*, and which we are cringingly forced to misuse as our "singular/plural" so-called *media*, no longer in need of a singular *medium*, and which we wield heedless of where it takes us. Yūsuf Zaydān, however, became the master of "these/this" unabashed public *media*, plunging into its toxic miasma. However, at its outer limit of effectiveness, he broaches in tone, or rubs elbows with, select European Salon (Enlightening) emissaries, if not apostles, of culture. Out of that Salon of post-French milieu of Enlightenment, armed with the already brilliantly Egyptianized/Arabized thematic orientation of the term *tanwīr* (enlightenment), Yūsuf Zaydān, once again, with a zeal of new, not just self-distancing ironic, but body-to-body sarcastic, *enlightening* spirit, aims for levels of discourse of neo-French encyclopedists, against the brashness and crudeness of today's "*media"* vertigo of a "free for all" communicative onslaught.

This he achieves in his sequence of *Shujūn* volumes, whose title *shujūn*, (s.) *shajan*, is a double entendre meaning both "distresses" and "branch", that became a stylistically purified literary phenomenon. To the reader, these volumes are no less than an Arabic re-introduction of a thematically combative, intellectually engrossing, formally polished art of the mature essay. In this "spirit of the essay," beginning with the opening collection of subjects in his primary Egyptian, *Shujūn miṣriyyah* (2015), Yūsuf Zaydān also pursues the mostly tangential subsequent *Shujūn* collections, focusing on distresses generally Arab (*ʿarabiyyah*) (2015), Cultural (*thaqāfiyyah*) (2016), and Intellectual

(*fikriyyah*) [Dissatisfactions] (2017). These distresses, too, are pertinent to the Egyptian social and cultural environ, but are now actuated and lying as open questions, as his other "ever-branching-out distresses." They will all raise problems of their own, which, if not generated in Egypt, will be in different manners and for differing reasons associated with Egypt.

He begins with the Egyptians—as an anthropological mass—being habituated to wonders and marvels: their *iʿtiyād al-ʿajāʾib* (being accustomed to wonders). They have accepted Herodotus' generalized observation-become-statement that "Egypt is the gift of the Nile." This insightful, but facile and somewhat epithetic phrase, has subliminally sunk into the Egyptians' psyche about their land being "a gift," and their "country and state," their "economy" and, eventually, their very "everyday," being a manifestation of that epithetic "gift." Yūsuf Zaydān, however, is more than apprehensive, that Egyptians, in accepting their being "a gift of the Nile," would thereby absolve themselves of responsibility for the way they conduct their lives. The concept of possessing such an almost ontological GIFT, living by it, especially on the popular and folk level, would prove nationally debilitating.

And yet that "gift of the Nile," even if not in the way in which it may have impressed Herodotus, and through Herodotus, impressed itself, in the single-minded simplicity of being an all-covering motto or catch-phrase that avoids further explanation, on much of the post-Herodotean imaginings of the vast temporal extent of historical Egypt and historical Egyptians, would, in Yūsuf Zaydān's view, deprive Egypt, "the land of the Egyptians," that is, the land and its historically uninterrupted owners and inhabitants—otherwise the "Egyptian nation"—of shaping and controlling their historical identity (not necessarily according to what would-or-might-have-been Herodotus's knowledge of Egypt's history). In reality (*aṣlan*), Egypt is neither "the gift of the Nile," because "the Nile is not the gift of Egypt," nor is the Nile a gift to the Egyptians, as the Egyptians are not a gift to the Nile.

> It is a land and a *country*, whose history extended and perdured over thousands of years, and which to the fullest lived through countless moments of glory as well as of shame. Egyptian civilization, in its ancientness, is not an item of *gift*. It was molded by efforts of many right-ruling kings and conscientious dependents, and creative individuals. In particular historical moments, the country did not witness abrading wars or aggressive assaults from neighbors or droughts that burned down

soil and those on it. And it is in that wholesome time of calm, which in ancient Egypt extended over hundreds of years, that the unified country was ruled by the first dynastic families, in whose days the early seedlings of civilization ripened. Therefore, there should be no words wasted about 'a gift', then about the search for the 'gift-giver'—whether it was the Nile, or the Egyptians.[12]

And yet, even at present, in this promising post-revolutionary, new historical moment, there seems to *linger* on in Egypt, as though in a strange Herodotean afterlife, the enticement of the promise of the great "gift," of the Nile—even if the Nile is no longer mentioned, and other stranger "substitutes" for "the promise" have set in a kind of "expectation of a magic solution for [all] economic troubles," and something even more dangerous, "a pretense," says Yūsuf Zaydān pitifully, "that makes us always say 'patience is the key to joy after sadness' (*aṣ-ṣabru miftāḥu –l-faraj*)".[13] However, even that archaizing (still Herodotean?) "*patience* of *ṣabr* (*jamīl*, et cetera)", as would be the "waiting for the Nile", is sarcastically rejected by Yūsuf Zaydān's calculus—while it is also in total disagreement with another Egyptian personality-trait of sudden and almost grotesquely radical "changeability" or "fickleness," which he terms the Egyptians' *taqallub*.

This total incongruence of social and ultimately intellectual Egyptian general attitudes, especially as that incongruence was put to extreme stress during the days and early months of—and after—the January revolution of 2011, was patently obvious to Yūsuf Zaydān. He also had an early insight and deeper reaching explanation, if only to himself, of the systemically saddening scenes that unfolded before him; and thus, to him:

The common Egyptian disinclination to political participation and actual social action during the sixty years of the Free Officers regime, and especially during its final thirty years of "Mubārakism"—adding to it the lack of developed educational methodologies, a [resulting] miserable education, the absence of cultural vision and planning in the acquisition of knowledge, as well as other reasons—led to common ignorance and political brainlessness. Together they contributed directly to the overall fumbling about, and thus led to this self-contradictory taking of positions.[14]

Yūsuf Zaydān thus ends his Herodotus-provoked essay by proving that Egypt is not to be

set adrift on Herodotus's facile maxim, nor is it to be exculpated of responsibility for its own mis-measures and historical vicissitudes.

The next essay subject in the *Shujūn miṣriyyah* is once again Yūsuf Zaydān's response to a categorical provocation–the appearance of a Gallup poll, "revealing" that "the Egyptians are the most *religious* of all the nationalities in the world" (p. 50). Or is it that he precisely welcomes categorical provocations. He is easily provoked and irritated when statistics, such as Gallup's, and especially in the matter of religion—in Egypt—claim to be telling the obvious, which is not obvious at all, and when an institution is only programmed to gather the "objectively collectible" truth. That statistical "truth," however, falls short of being the actual Egyptian truth about religion or religiosity—especially when those statistics are not programmed for irony, or worse. He titles his essay, *Al-Dīn wa al-tadayyun wa al-madyūniyyah* (Religion, Religiosity, and [National] Debt-Compromat), and sees the Gallup poll in his own ironic light, or rather in the light of what could well be that of the Egyptian communality:

> The outcome of the opinion poll that asked people in our country, "Is religion an important part of daily life?" was one hundred percent. That is, all of those who answered, answered "yes," although there were one thousand persons answering! There was not among them a single person who said "no," for only the *devil* himself, among us, would be the one that says "no." Because a person is *obligated* to say "yes." An Egyptian must say "yes," because he has been accustomed to saying it since the day of the referendum about the "*retention"* of the president, for the result [of the referendum] to become 99.9. That is, one out of a thousand was allowed to think. As for today, 100%, or, using the colloquial expression, "*miya miya,*" means, they *don't think*, because the business of thinking leads to differing points of view, and makes unanimity an impossibility, and gives reasonableness to majority thought—and then to the feasibility of democracy. However then, things being as they are, that is, being "one hundred percent" (*miya-miya*), it shows that there was no democracy, nor was there majority or minority, not even rationality or thought … nor humanity. Because a "human being," in his definition is a being that thinks.[15]

To conclude this bitterly, not just humorously ironizing the subject of popular Egyptian sincerity, not so much toward religion (something he always "prefaces" defensively) as toward their "religiosity," Yūsuf Zaydān turns back to the essay's title *al-*

madyūniyyah, meaning "debt-compromat". He associates, in his own special way, without claiming etymological connection, *dīn* (religion) and *dayn* (debt) and thus establishes a connection among all three parts of the essay's title: Religion, Religiosity, and [National] Debt-Compromat. He addresses this conundrum even further by introducing a fourth element, that of *takhalluf* (backwardness), in stating unabashedly that, if there is a real connection between excess of backwardness (*takhalluf*) and religiosity (*tadayyun*), … there is also a strong connection between religiosity (*tadayyun*) and "indebtedness" (*istidānah*), because, as falling into debt involves abasement, the inability to liquidate a debt is a scourge, and in both cases seeking "refuge" (*al-lujūʾ*) into the external show of religiosity (*tadayyun*) becomes the only escape. This way, *al-ʾākhirah* (the afterlife) stands for the hope of finding what cannot be attained in *ad-dunyā* (this world)."[16]

The subjects of other essays in *Shujūn miṣriyyah* vary widely, including topics such as *Manẓūmat al-qiyam* (Rank of Values), which sort out general concepts and standards. However, Yūsuf Zaydān always returns to Egypt in the definitions of, and attitudes toward, social, political, and, above all, cultural values—especially when they are plagued by gross contradictions. In *Manẓūmat al-qiyam*, Yūsuf Zaydān presents as his *al-qiyam al-kubrā*, three major or rather supreme values: Truth (*al-ḥaqq*), Good/ness (*al-khayr*), and Beauty (*al-jamāl*). These prime, but also "primary" values, that are virtues for being "essential" (*al-faḍāʾil al-ʾasāsiyyah*) must always be present evidentially, not merely as "philosophical abstractions." It is from them that the practical virtues and values (*al-faḍāʾil al-farʿiyyah*) "branch out," concretize, and become "functional." Among the most fragile of these *al-qiyam al-farʿiyyah* (branching) among today's Egyptians, Yūsuf Zaydān finds to be the virtue of *aṣ-ṣidq*, not "truth" but "truthfulness." This perversion is, however, engendered in Egyptian political practice as its "tool of *iʿlām*," the institution of "information", and even worse, of "guidance". Here, too, *al-ṣidq* inclines further toward the social and political abuse of the readiness to provide a path to *iṣlāḥ*, the never-tiring claim to "reform," whose weakest link appears to be *al-ʾiṣlāḥ ad-dīnī*, the "religious reform" that borders on categorical impossibility. The "harmonizing," *at-tanāghum* of *al-qiyam al-kubrā* (which to him still are the values of "truth," "good," and "beauty") into *ḥubb* (love) and *ikhlāṣ* (loyalty, faithfulness, sincerity), becomes instead a testimony of social "disharmony."

The highest in aspiration and the lowest in the "scale of values," in the Egyptian situation, is the value of freedom (*al-ḥurriyyah)*. Here, Yūsuf Zaydān turns to the pretense of *al-ḥurriyyah fī –l-ʾIslām* (freedom in Islam)—always minding how carefully and at what distance from the sloganeering use of that particular concept of *al-ḥurriyyah* one

has to tread, even with a quotation such as "*fa man shāʾa fa–l-yuʾmin wa man shāʾa fa–l-yakfur"* (Qurʾān: 18:29. Whoever so wills, let him believe and whoever so wills, let him reject). As he continues after this Qurʾānic quotation, however, he does not contain himself, but adds, "*fī nihāyati –l-maṭāf, "dīnun," fa huwa lā yaʿrifu –l-ḥurriyyata iṭlāqan,* …" (When all is said, *religion* absolutely does not know *freedom*, …), and that Islam, like any other religion, invokes freedom's opposite, *al-ʿubūdiyyah* (enslavement), and that the words "*ẓillu Allāhi fī –l-ʾarḍi*" (the shadow of Allah/God on earth) represent none other than *al-Ḥākim*: the [political] Ruler. Should one, therefore, [not] be wary of absolutes?[17] A fascinating, very intimately self-referential essay, thus originates, drenched in melancholy, from a poem by the Palestinian poet Maḥmūd Darwīsh, titled by Yūsuf Zaydān as "Athar al-Farāshah" (Trace of the Butterfly).[18] Embracing this title came about because the writer had become uncomfortable with the essay's original title, *ʿAlāqat al-muthaqqaf wa as-sulṭah* (The Intellectual's Connection with Power), though, in effect, that was what the essay's subject was actually bound to reflect on. As such, however, "Trace of the Butterfly" also became Yūsuf Zaydān's psychological, entirely self-referential reflection of his *persona* (*Gestalt*), in confrontation with *as-sulṭah*. As a modern Egyptian culture-warrior—perhaps a Quixotic one—the "persona" thus reechoed that "total" Gestalt and stance of the Palestinian poet Maḥmūd Darwīsh himself as "trace of the butterfly."

The essays that follow, titled *Rumūz al-muʿāṣarah* (Symbols of the Present Times),[19] are in the form of recollections of people he knew, respected, and befriended. Altogether, these recollections are as though extractions of mood out of a different privacy. They are his respite from melancholy and pessimism. The people whom he knew intimately, both socially as well as intellectually, become his refuge from his other, all-invasive surroundings, against which he has to muster his own "defensive" aggressiveness of the private figure that had to confront the externality of his country and people.

A separate essay, of a different kind of indebtedness, Yūsuf Zaydān then devotes to the formative figure in the Egyptian cultural revival (al-Nahḍah), Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī.[20]

Not disconnected in spirit from Rifāʿah al-Ṭahṭāwī comes the final essay of Yūsuf Zaydān's *Shujūn miṣriyyah* with the now very specific title of *Ath-Thawrah ath-Thaqāfiyyah* (The Cultural Revolution).[21] It is not that most of his preceding chapters/essays had not dealt with his most recurring dream and nightmare – Egypt's need for a Cultural Revolution – however, in *Ath-Thawrah ath-Thaqāfiyyah,* he describes this leading idea of his in more precise but very simple words, as "the social movement that

rejects, or discards and hides, or objectifies ("*al-ḥarakah al-ʾijtimāʿiyyah ar-rāfiḍah al-hādifah*"). It implies—with complete necessity—that "the self," that is, the individual, be a thinking "self"; and that the "thinking be of, about, and in society"; and ultimately, that cultural-revolutionary thinking be "in" and "of" the world. Thus, cultural revolution does not vociferate, nor call for violent confrontation.[22] By this definition, cultural revolution must still "reject, or discard, and hide as well as objectify." It shares to a high, although not absolute, degree the meaning and general circumstance of what is understood by *revolution* of political power-change. The cultural revolution may even be a participant in such a revolution but only, or mainly, as that other revolution's final purpose, guidance, or upshot. It cannot allow itself to be heedlessly drawn into street-sloganeering, that is, to "act" like political revolutions, beyond its own aims.

Furthermore, the subtitle *Tashwīh al-mafhūm* (Distortion of Understanding) implies "the conceptual *distortion* of cultural revolution". He adduces as classical examples of our times two cases of monstrous consequences of misuse of the term and concept of "cultural revolution". Against them he invokes the crime of *tashwīh al-muṣṭalaḥ* (distortion of the "technical term").[23] First, there was the Maoist revolution, officially termed the Cultural Revolution of 1966. Yūsuf Zaydān exposes it as "fully opposite to being a cultural revolution" ("*al-muḍādd al-tāmm li-th-thawrah ath-thaqāfiyyah*").[24] It is followed by the Iranian, Khomeini revolution of 1979, which, in accord with the Chinese terminological model, also claimed to be "*the* Cultural Revolution."[25] Both revolutions, in contradiction to Yūsuf Zaydān's definition of what a cultural revolution categorically presupposes, were street-vociferous, slogan-driven to the extreme, and were mass-murderously bloody. However, both were—and still are in their extension—the product of a singular charismatic leader, who then, under not entirely different conditions, achieved permanence (or duration) for institutionalized dictatorships. Yūsuf Zaydān is, therefore, inclined to term both as not "cultural revolutions", but *fī wāqiʿi –l- amr ḥīlatan sulṭawiyyatan* (in reality, a power stratagem), with crude ideology, instead of culture, and equally crude religion/theology as the illegitimately usurping, not just foregrounded, factors.[26] This abuse and distortion, beginning and ending in misappropriation of the meaning and purpose of "cultural revolution", reflects itself negatively in Egypt's own 2011 Spring Revolution—in which the cultural factor failed to stand its ground, and was superseded by the pre-organized, culture-hostile, political machinations of a systemic, power-minded "religion-factor". Thus, the possibility—or even the likelihood—of the 2011 Revolution to ever lead to the birth of a cultural revolution, is, because of its distortion, preempted, or rather "stillborn" (*malīṣ*).

Yūsuf Zaydān closes his argument, and his essay on *Ath-Thawrah ath-Thaqāfiyyah*, on a most forcefully phrased, though ill-boding note—a wakeup call and a warning to Egypt's present-day Neo-Nāṣirites:

> In spite of all that was said before, I [still] say: Egypt must have its cultural revolution. For, otherwise, the hands of our clock will turn back sixty years, and we will return to 1952—or rather more precisely to 1954—that means, repeating the Nāṣirite experience, that is, returning to grief.[27]

After this chilling halt, I shall not stop at Yūsuf Zaydān's *Shujūn ʿarabiyyah* and *Shujūn turāthiyyah*, inasmuch as their diverse topicality was already touched upon as being part of the core Egyptian *Shujūn miṣriyyah*. Instead, to round off this leading Egyptian public intellectual's "*ṣhujūn*"-confessional voice, I shall turn directly to his *Shujūn fikriyyah* [28] and, in particular, to its last thematic essay, *Mafhūm al-buṭūlah wa ishkāl Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī* (The Understanding of Heroism and the Problem of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī). Yūsuf Zaydān's last "*shajan*," and apparently even quite properly "singled out distress", becomes also something approaching a summation of a public intellectual's self-assured stance of intellectual courage. Almost with a sigh of relief, unburdening himself of intellectual responsibility both as a scholar and as a public intellectual, he broaches the subject, which for decades had weighed upon his sense of conscience and responsibility. However, in the end, even this act of relief had to be a provoked circumstance, to be unburdened not entirely by chance.

As Yūsuf Zaydān recounts, in an almost provocative manner, in a drawn-out interview on one of Cairo Television's programs (early Summer 2017), the interviewer asked him what he thought of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī. Yūsuf Zaydān's response was brief and precise: "[*Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī*] *innahu wāḥidun min aḥqari –sh-shakhṣiyyāti fī tārīkhinā* (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn was one of the basest figures in our history). The simplest way to describe the effect of Yūsuf Zaydān's unabashed statement would be, a veritable hell of hostile public uproar. Cairo's religious as well as broadly academic voices of authority volunteered or felt obligated to react in total and unforgiving outrage. Voices on the internet were threatening, with their multiple inventions of punishment. To that entire wing of opinion, to have offended the mythicized, national hero Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, was a national and cultural outrage, and indeed, according to an overzealous sheikhly religious authority, even a crime against a "new prophet."[29]

As had become clear to Yūsuf Zaydān, in present-day Egypt he needed great civil and intellectual courage to declare openly, on Cairo's main television station and other media, his "unspeakable" counterview of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī. The onslaught of hostile threats, however, found Yūsuf Zaydān well prepared. He was, after all, that other academic literary "persona": a perfectionist librarian and formally, astoundingly well-informed, active university academic, also in possession of a liberated, agile intellect, thus a perfect scholar and an equally perfectly equipped "public intellectual". He remained unperturbed by the threats, and appeared to enjoy parrying the ill-informed or opinionated accusations from both the academic and religious sides with his own well-documented, unquestionable authority.

With ease, he produced challenging images of a non-mythicized Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī, of his disloyalty and betrayal toward his patrons and benefactors, such as Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd, the Sunnī sultan of Syria, who sent him to Egypt to give the Fāṭimid Caliph al-ʿĀḍid support against the Crusaders. Instead, al-ʿĀḍid effectively became the objective of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's own expansionist plans, without regard to anti-Crusader obligations.[30] Yūsuf Zaydān further sets out Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's revolting abuse of the hospitality and patronage extended to him by the Caliph al-ʿĀḍid. At that time only twenty-one years old, al-ʿĀḍid had opened the caliphal palace to Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, hosted him, appointed him his *wazīr*, even gave him his ceremonial steed, and tolerated his entering the caliphal palace, mounted on horseback.

Yūsuf Zaydān then singles out dramatic episodes in the precipitous downfall of al-ʿĀḍid and, with him, of the Fāṭimid Shīʿī Caliphate of Egypt. The degrading progression toward the downfall, as though by evaporation, of Fāṭimid authority, and with it, personally, of the Caliph al-ʿĀḍid, Yūsuf Zaydān sums up in one, depressingly unforgettable passage:

> After Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-ʾAyyūbī fraudulently obtained control over the Fāṭimid Caliph, stripping him of all possessions, he robbed him even of the last ceremonial steed, on which the Caliph would ride from his palace to the Friday prayer. At the same time, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn ordered the removal of the Caliph al-ʿĀḍid's name from the Friday Sermon, thereby indicating his removal from the Caliphate. Then, suddenly, the Caliph died. Word had it that it was because of the excessive grief inflicted upon him by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn. It was also said that he committed suicide by licking a poisonous stone that was in his ring. It was further said that his health declined in just a few days, although he was only twenty-one years old, and that he died from

> [Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's] mistreatment. According to the narrative of historians, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, together with a group of other men, were at the mosque of ʿAmr Ibn al-ʿĀṣ in Old Cairo when news reached them of the Caliph's [al-ʿĀḍid's] death. With a smile on his face, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn looked, toward al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, and said: "Had we known that he was going to die today, we would not have tormented him by removing his name from the Friday *Khuṭbah* Sermon"; and al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil added, "My Lord, if he had not known that his name was going to be removed from today's *Khuṭbah*, he would not have died." And everyone present laughed.[31]

As comment on this pitiable scene, Yūsuf Zaydān only remarks: "These were the morals of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and of his friend al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, the first of the historians to write his biography."[32]

In calling attention to the misdeeds of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, Yūsuf Zaydān suffices with mentioning only the more glaring facts, that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn destroyed the Fāṭimid library Dār al-Ḥikmah with its wealth of manuscripts and, furthermore, that it was he, who (in 1091) ordered the execution of the great Illuminationist (*ishrāqī*) philosopher-scientist and mystic al-Suhrawardī (Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyā, known by the honorific al-Maqtūl).[33] Furthermore, what makes Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's character morally, politically, and humanely even more repulsive (*aḥqar*) to Yūsuf Zaydān, appears in his detailed dwelling on the role that Qarāqūsh, the Sultan's malevolently resourceful, eunuch vizier and governor of Cairo, played in the methodic extermination of every possible Fāṭimid dynastic pretender: man, woman, or child.[34] The same Qarāqūsh also ruthlessly devastated entire popular areas of Cairo. It therefore remains incomprehensible to Yūsuf Zaydān, that with such a moral burden on Egypt's conscience and historical memory, the truth about Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn should be silenced, or worse, that he be mythically transformed into a celebrated Egyptian national hero.

Such is the role and place of Yūsuf Zaydān as a most daring and deep-reaching public-intellectual voice of today's Egypt.

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[1] Yūsuf Zaydān, *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓān, al-nuṣūṣ al-ʿarbaʿah wa mubdiʿūhā* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2008).
[2] Yūsuf Zaydān, *Ẓill al-ʾafʿā* (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 2006).
[3] Yūsuf Zaydān, *ʿAzāzīl* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2008).
[4] Yūsuf Zaydān, *al-Nabaṭī* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2008).

[5] Yūsuf Zaydān, *Muḥāl* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2012).
[6] Yūsuf Zaydān, *Gwāntanāmū* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2014).
[7] Yūsuf Zaydān, *Nūr* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2016).
[8] Zaydān, *ʿAzāzīl*, 368.
[9] Yūsuf Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah* (Cairo: Nūn lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzīʿ, 2015).
Yūsuf Zaydān, *Shujūn ʿarabiyyah* (Cairo: Nūn lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzīʿ, 2015).
Yūsuf Zaydān, *Shujūn turāthiyyah* (Cairo: Nūn lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzīʿ, 2016).
Yūsuf Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah: iʿādat bināʾ al-mafāhīm al-ʿāmmah* (Cairo: Nūn lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzīʿ, 2017).
[10] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 107.
[11] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 95.
[12] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 15.
[13] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 21.
[14] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 43.
[15] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 51–52 [originally published in the journal *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, 2009].
[16] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 57.
[17] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 85.
[18] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 89–100.
[19] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 103–145.
[20] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 149–167.
[21] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 171–196.
[22] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 173.
[23] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 176.
[24] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 176.
[25] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 177.
[26] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 178.
[27] Zaydān, *Shujūn miṣriyyah*, 196.
[28] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 123–169.
[29] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 123–129.
[30] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 139ff.
[31] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 161–162.
[32] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 162.
[33] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 159.
[34] Zaydān, *Shujūn fikriyyah*, 153.

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Notes on contributors

Hassan El-Banna Ezz El-Din (M.A. American University in Cairo, Ph.D. Ain Shams University) is a Professor of Classical Arabic Literature and Literary Criticism at Zagazig University, Egypt, and Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia. He is the author of *Al-Shiʿr al-ʿArabī fī Aʿmāl Jaroslav Stetkevych: Sīrah Istishrāqiyyah Muʿāṣirah* (King Saud University, 2013) (*Arabic Poetry in the Works of Jaroslav Stetkevych: Contemporary Orientalist Biography*). He has published another six books on classical Arabic poetry, and more than twenty articles in literary journals. He also translated five literary articles and chapters from English into Arabic, and eight books including Irena R. Makaryk (General Editor and Compiler)'s *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms* (1993) in three volumes (Cairo: The National Center for Translation, 2016).

Nobuo Mizuno (Ph.D., Osaka University) is a Professor Emeritus of Hyogo University of Teacher Education. He is a specialist in Ethnomusicology and focuses on the songs of Umm Kulthūm, who is considered one of the greatest Egyptian singers in the 20th century. He has a series of books and articles in Japanese. Among his studies in English are "The *Sāqiya*, the Lyre, and the *Qasīda*: A Sketch of the Egyptian Soundscape" (*Cultural Change in the Arab World*, Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2001) and *Complete Texts of Umm Kulthūm's Lyrics* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2017). He is also the supervising editor of CD-ROMs, including *Egypt, Echoes of the Nile: Aspects of Egyptian Music* (Barre, VT: Multicultural Media, 1997).

Tetsuo Nishio (Ph.D., Kyoto University) is a Professor at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka & the Graduate University of Advanced Studies, Japan. His main interests are Linguistic and Cultural Anthropological study of Arab Bedouin Society. His publications include *The Arabian Nights: Stories Generated among Civilization*s (Tokyo: Iwanami-Shoten, 2007 [in Japanese]), *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism: Perspectives from East and West* (I. B. Tauris, 2006), and "The Takarazuka Revue and the Fantasy of 'Arabia' in Japan" (Philip F. Kennedy & Marina Warner eds., *Scheherazade's Children: Global Encounters with the Arabian Nights*, New York University Press, 2013). He has recently published, for the first time in Japan, the complete translations of Antoine Galland's *Mille et une nuit*.

Naoko Okamoto (Ph.D., Université de Tours) is a part-time Lecturer at Jissen Women's University, Senzoku Gakuen College of Music, and International Christian University High School, and a Visiting Researcher at the National Museum of Ethnology. Her main interests are French Literature and Music in Symbolism, and J.-C. Mardrus. Her publications include *La critique musicale par trois écrivains – Romain Rolland, André Suarès, Jacques Rivière* (Atelier national de reproduction des thèses, Thèse de doctorat de Lettres Modernes présentée à Université François Rabelais de Tours, 2007), and "Debussy et la littérature – autour de la critique musicale par Romain Rolland –" (*Etudes de langue et littérature françaises*, volume 96, 2010). Her translation works include Simon Jargy's *La musique arabe* (Hakusui-sha, 2019) (co-translator).

Margaret Sironval (Ph.D., l'Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle) is a former Researcher at l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Texte (CNRS). She is also formerly a Visiting Professor at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka. Her main interests are Philological and Comparative Literary study of the *Arabian Nights.* Her publications include *Album Mille et Une Nuits* (Gallimard, 2005), *Les Mille et Une Nuits* (Citadelles et Mazenod, 2011), and *Kay Nielsen. Les Mille et Une Nuits* (Taschen, 2018). Her article about the textual transmission of the so-called Galland manuscript is an outstanding contribution: "Marges et espaces Blancs dans le Manuscrit arabe des *Mille et Une Nuits* d'Antoine Galland" (Presses de l'Ifpo, *Les non-dits du nom, Onomastique et documents en terres d'Islam. Mélanges offerts à Jacqueline Suble*).

Jaroslav Stetkevych (Ph.D., Harvard University, 1962) is a Professor Emeritus of Arabic literature at The University of Chicago and a research affiliate at the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. His many publications in English and Arabic include his books: *The Modern Arabic Literary Language: Lexical and Stylistic Developments* (The University of Chicago Press, 1970/Georgetown University Press, 2006); *The Zephyrs of Najd: The Poetics of Nostalgia in the Classical Arabic Nasīb* (The University of Chicago Press, 1993); *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough: Reconstructing Arabian Myth* (Indiana University Press, 1996); *Arabic Poetry and Orientalism*, *English and Arabic text* (St. John's College Research Centre, Oxford University, 2004); and *The Hunt in Arabic Poetry: From Heroic to Lyric to Metapoetic* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2015). His most recent work includes: "The ʿAyniyyah of Abū Dhuʾayb al-Hudhalī: The Achievement of a Classical Arabic Allegorical Form," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 51 (2020): 273–324. He is the co-winner of the Sheikh Zayed Book Awards: Cultural Personality of the Year 2019, Abu Dhabi, UAE. https://chicago.academia.edu/JaroslavStetkevych

Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych (Ph.D., The University of Chicago), a specialist in Classical Arabic poetry, is Sultan Qaboos bin Said Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., and Ruth N. Halls Professor Emerita of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, where she taught for many years. Her many publications in English and Arabic include: *Abu Tammam and the Poetics of the Abbasid Age* (Brill, 1991); *The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual* (Cornell University Press, 1993); *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender, and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode* (Indiana University Press, 2002); and *The Mantle Odes: Arabic Praise Poems to the Prophet Muhammad* (Indiana University Press, 2010). Her latest book, *The Cooing of the Dove and the Cawing of the Crow*, on the Late Abbasid Poetics of Abu al-ʿAlaʾ al-Maʿarri', will appear shortly. She is the winner of the Middle East Medievalists Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017 and a co-winner of the Sheikh Zayed Book Awards: Cultural Personality of the Year 2019, Abu Dhabi, UAE. https://georgetown.academia.edu/SuzanneStetkevych

Akiko Sumi (Ph.D., Indiana University) is Professor of Arabic Literature at Kyoto Notre Dame University, Japan. She is the author of *Description in Classical Arabic Poetry:* Waṣf, *Ekphrasis, and Interarts Theory* (Brill, 2004). This book was translated into Arabic by Professor Hassan El-Banna Ezz El-Din, as *Al-Waṣf fī al-Shiʿr al-ʿArabī al-Kilāsīki: al-Waṣf, al-Ikfrāsīs, wa-Naẓariyyat Tadākhul al-Funūn* (Arar, Saudi Arabia: Jāmiʿat al-Ḥudūd al-Shamāliyyah, 2017). She has published a number of articles, including "The Tyranny of the Anecdote: Alternative Reading of the Pre-Islamic Poet, al-Muraqqish al-Aṣghar's Poem and Its Anecdote" (*Annals of Japan Association for Middle East Studies* 29.2, 2013). Her research interests also include learning and teaching Arabic language as foreign language. Among her recent publications is "Teaching and Learning Arabic in Japan" (*Handbook for Arabic Language Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century*, Volume II, Routledge, 2018).

Satoshi Udo (Ph.D., The University of Tokyo) is an Associate Professor of French Culture at Meiji University, Japan. He has published a number of articles, including "Présence maghrébine au Japon: Contextes historiques de traduction et d'interprétation" (*Expressions maghrébines*, 15.1, 2016), "Toucher les souffles marginaux: réflexions sur quelques reflets de la banlieue parisienne au Japon" (*TTR: Traduction, terminologie, rédaction*, 31.1, 2019), and "Résonances d'un récit fantomatique «Le Talisman» dans le contexte du Japon" (*Europe*, juin-juillet-août 2020).