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Geographies of Arab and Muslim Identity  
through the Eyes of Travelers

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UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST  
CENTER FOR ARAB STUDIES

**ROMANO-ARABICA**

**XVIII**

*Geographies of Arab and Muslim Identity through  
the Eyes of Travelers*



*editura universității din bucurești*®

2018

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## NOTE

The 18<sup>th</sup> issue of *Romano-Arabica* Journal contains a selection of papers presented at the international conference organized on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Arabic Department, University of Bucharest, on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2017, entitled *Geographies of Arab and Muslim identity through the eyes of travelers*.

Arabs' and Muslims' interest for travel is closely related to their preoccupation for geography and, consequently, to the extension of Islamic territorial domain. Since the Umayyad era, Muslims are gradually developing a naval force and simultaneously a category of scholars studying geography and its related sciences. The genre of travel accounts represents the consequence in the literary field of the constantly developing interest in geography. Therefore, exploring territories and peoples largely contributed to the process of self-representation along with the representation of the other.

Between reality and imagination, travel accounts are precious testimonies about the way in which identities are fluctuating within the very same cultural area and beyond it. The frontiers between the familiar and the unknown are continuously moving, shaping various *in-groupness* and *out-groupness* constructions. The goals of the conference were to explore travel accounts written by Arabs and Muslims and to map out the diversity of representations within the field of identities from different perspectives: cultural, historical, linguistic and social.

The papers included in the current issue of *Romano-Arabica* Journal approach relevant topics to the genre of travel literature in the Arab and Islamic world (the experience of contrast and its role in self-representation; imaginary geographies and Muslim travelers; linguistic, behavioral and environmental exotic identities in Arabic travel literature; theoretical speculations concerning the otherness; the emergence of enduring stereotypes concerning the other; reinterpreting legends and revisiting old travel patterns etc.).

**Laura Sitaru, coordinator of the current issue**

**Organizer of the international conference**

*Geographies of Arab and Muslim identity through the eyes of travelers*

Bucharest, September 15-16, 2017



**I. GEOGRAPHIES OF ARAB AND MUSLIM IDENTITY  
THROUGH THE EYES OF TRAVELERS**





## EYES ON SLAVS, EYES ON SELF; A READING THROUGH "EASTERN INFLAMED GARDENS; A JOURNEY TO THE SLAVS' COUNTRIES"

عين على الصَّقالبة عين على الذات  
قراءة في "جنان الشرق الملتهبة؛ رحلة في بلاد الصقالبة"(\*)

MAHMOUD AL-ASHIRI

Georgetown University – Qatar, Fayoum University - Egypt

**Abstract.** This study is reading through one of the contemporary Arab journeys to the countries of Slavs, as Arabs called them in historical literature. This journey is written by Saeed Khateby under the title of “Eastern inflamed gardens; a journey to the Slavs’ countries” published in 2015 and winner of “Ibn Battuta” prize for contemporary journeys. He toured between Ljubljana, Graz, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Belgrade and Kiev, in an extension of the literary, geographical and cultural heritage of which we got to know the famous journey of “Ibn Fadlan”, under a common ancient history of the Ottoman control and the nationalism and political trends in modern history, as well as the fertile human experience. As the narrator is trying to read the others in this text, he is also trying to discover his self and contemplate a side of its reality; as for what is not present, insight might be present in terms of absence, which can be read by eye and contemplated by insight. As research is questioning this singular work it’s also questioning the documentary type to which it belongs. Is journey literature still capable of producing thrill and excitement confronting the revolution of communications, filmmaking, documentaries and publicity of other types of novels? Did easiness of travel and mobility forfeit journey literature its privacy and flavor? The research is addressing the journey text as a narrative one, hence questioning the nature of this implicit convention by which this belongs to this type and how it is regulated. That is very different from other narrative modalities, like: novels, stories, diaries and confessions. In this context, we discuss some of the questions such as where journey literature text stands between information and imagination. To what extent does focalization intersect with the narrative ideology, and how the different components of focalization: cognitive, psychological and emotional can vary under the ideology of the text.

**Keywords:** *Journey literature, Slavs, narrative convention, ego, the other, narrative ideology.*

### البحث

كثيرًا ما يقع الأدب الذي يتخذ من "الأخر" موضوعًا له، عند ساحة شاسعة من الإدراكات القائمة على المُتخَيَّل، وما تصبح الذات بصدده من إقصاءات أو نكران أو مخاوف قد لا تعود إلى معرفة موضوعية، أو مبادئ عقلانية أو معاينات مُتَبَصِّرَة بوعي أقرب إلى الحرية.

وعندما تتأمل الذات الآخر أو تتأمل ذاتها عبر هذا الآخر فإن العلاقة كثيرًا ما تكون خيالية أو توهميّة، هذا الوهم الذي قد يبدو أشد حقيقيّة من أي صورة أخرى للحقيقة، عنه تصدر التمثلات والأفعال.

ومن ثم ترى الذات هذا الآخر بعين مخيالها وتمثلاتها الغامضة، خاصة في ظل نوايا مضمرة أو غياب أفق تواصل حرّ أو سياق طبيعي غير قائم على نزاع أو احتراب. ولا سبيل إلى هذا بعيدًا عن التعارف الخُر غير المشروط.

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(\*) سعيد خطيبي: جنان الشرق الملتهبة؛ رحلة في بلاد الصقالبة. دار السويدي للنشر والتوزيع/ المؤسسة العربية للدراسات والنشر- بيروت. ط1- 2015م.

كثيراً ما يكون لقاء الآخر قائماً على إرادة الهيمنة وما يؤدي إليها، والرغبة في التفوق؛ بحيث تكون النتيجة دائماً واقعة بين غالب ومغلوب؛ بحيث تنشئ الأنا علاقة تراتبية تُسْتَرَقّ فيها الحضارة الراقية ما عداها من ثقافات وحضارات لانفرادها بالتفوق والسلطة.

ليست الأنا هنا "الأنا" المُستَعْبِدَة التي تطغى على الآخرين، وترى في كل "أنا" آخر منافساً لها أو عقبة أو عدواً، فالمنافسة والإخضاع الفعلي أو الرمزي يستنفد من الإنسانية طاقتها. فلا ترحل الذات إلى الآخر لتتنافس معه أو لتثبت لنفسها أفضلية أو تميزاً، وإنما لتجلو الداخل؛ فترى ذاتها. الرحلة نوع من الفهم لا بحث في الأفضليات، معاينة الذات لتتعرف ذاتها لا أن تغدو نوعاً من الخيلاء الأثمة.

وتأتي هذه الرحلة إلى "آخر"، لم يكن يوماً بينه وبين القارى العربي المعاصر صراع أو مشاحنة أو نفي أو إقصاء، كما أن بينهما من الاختلاف ما يمنع التماهي والامحاء؛ ومن ثم يبقى هذا الآخر آخر تصالحياً، الذات في مسيس الحاجة إليه لتتعرف إلى نفسها، لترى كينونتها في مجلّى الآخر. فتقرأ الأنا نفسها بما هي آخر، وتقرأ الآخر بما هو أنا. فالسفر لدى خطيبي، كما يقرر هو، هو عودة إلى الذات؛ فعلى الرغم من أننا نساfer إلى الخارج لكننا في الواقع نساfer إلى دواخلنا، ليس من أجل تغيير الأماكن؛ وإنما من أجل تغيير الأفكار، على حد تعبير الفيلسوف الفرنسي إيبوليت تين.

فلا يمكن للإنسان أن يكون مكتفياً بنفسه لا طبيعياً واجتماعياً فقط، بل أيضاً على مستوى الوعي بذاته. حيث لا تتعرف الذات إلى نفسها إلا في حضور الآخر ومن خلاله، ففي العزلة لا يستطيع الكائن أن يصدر حكماً على شيء ولا على نفسه، ومن ثم فالذات دوماً بحاجة ماسة إلى هذا الآخر، الذي تنظر إليه فترى نفسها؛ الآخر الذي هو مرآة الذات. يقول تودروف: نحن "لا نستطيع أن نُصدر حُكماً على أنفسنا من غير أن نُخرج من ذاتنا، وأن ننظر إلى ذواتنا من خلال عيون الآخرين، وإذا كان في إمكاننا أن نُرَبِّي كائنًا إنسانياً في العزلة، فإن هذا الإنسان لن يستطيع أن يُصدر حُكماً على شيء، ولا حتى على نفسه، ستنقصه مرآة لكي يرى نفسه"<sup>(1)</sup>.

فبقراءة النص في الآخر وفي نفسه الحرب الأهلية، الإبادة الجماعية، القتل على أساس العرق والدين، الهجرة بعيداً عن الوطن من أجل كسب الرزق بعد أن ضاقت البلاد بأهلها، الديكتاتوريات والحكم الشمولي العسكري. وغيرها. يقرأ حلم الهجرة؛ حيث حلم الشباب في "سربرنيتسا" بالهجرة لانسداد أفق العيش الكريم في الوطن، والارتباط به ومعضلة الغربة. هو نفسه حلم الهجرة في الجزائر والشمال الأفريقي كله، حيث يقايس الشباب حياتهم بحلم الهجرة، وكثير منهم من تتخطفه الأسماك المتوحشة في المتوسط..

ويعابن جانباً مما خلفته الإبادة والتطهير العرقي؛ عبر تأمل مفهوم ما يسمى بالوحدة الوطنية، الذي يحيد كل عوامل النزاع والفرقة ويتجاهلها، عندما يتكى على حجة تاريخية واهية، قائمة على مظنة التعايش والسلام، "فالمسلمون والمسيحيون، صربيون وبوسنيون كانوا يعيشون في سلام معاً منذ قرون، ولكن مجازر عام 1995 شكلت بينهم جدار فصل. وهو ما يستدعي العشرية السوداء في الجزائر وأحداث القتل والذبح؛ مجازر "بن طلحة"، "سيدي موسى"، "الرايس" وغيرها. الجزائر والبوسنة اتفقتا على فترة واحدة لعيش تراجيديا مشتركة. "أن تزور سربرنيتسا؛ فعليك أن تبدأ بالمقبرة".." "سألت نفسي: كم يلزمني من الوقت لأقرأ الفاتحة على كل قبر من القبور؟ ربما شهراً أو شهرين، أو ربما سأنهار قبل أن أكمل نصف العدد"<sup>(2)</sup>. ربما لا تطفر إلى الذاكرة البوسنة فقط، فالمشهد في الجزائر والعراق وسوريا ليس ببعيد عن هذا. وهذه "منارة المسجد السنّي وجرس الكنيسة الأرثوذكسية المتقابلين، لم يتصالح أحدهما مع الآخر، لكنهما لم يمنعا الأهالي من تنفس لذة العيش وخوض تجارب حياتية جديدة"<sup>(3)</sup>. ولكن هذا ربما يدفعنا إلى التساؤل حول هذا التقابل بين دور العبادة المعتاد في بعض مناطق العالم العربي وربما غيره أيضاً، هل هو نوع من التعايش وقبول الآخر والعيش المشترك، أم أنه سباق نحو حيازة المكان والاستحواذ على الفراغ، فبناء يناظره بناء أو يمنع استقطابه وحده بحيزه.

ومشاهدات انتفاضة الميدان في أوكرانيا فبراير 2014 لا تختلف عن مشاهدات الميادين واعتصاماتها في الربيع العربي المُجْهَض، وما سيناريو الالتفاف على الثورات الأوكرانية ببعيد عن سيناريو الالتفاف على ثورات الربيع العربي، كما تظل السلطة الغاشمة المستبدة في توحشها هي السلطة نفسها في إرداء شباب الثورات قتلاً، وسقوط ضحايا الحرية رمياً بالرصاص. بما يدفع نحو التساؤل حول ما إذا كان الزمن العربي يسير على خطى الزمن في البلقان!

<sup>1</sup> ترفيثان تودروف: الحياة المشتركة. ترجمة: مندر عياشي. دار نيوى للدراسات والنشر والتوزيع- دمشق - سوريا- ط1- 2017م، ص 33.

<sup>2</sup> سعيد خطيبي. ص 99.

<sup>3</sup> السابق، ص 93.

## الذات والآخر الثقافي:

تمثل المصادفة التي يجد عندها الكاتب كتابًا لكاتب جزائري مندسًا بين صفوف كتّاب عالميين في محلّ لبيع الكتب القديمة نقطة ضوء على هذه المساحة التي يمكن أن تلتقي عندها الأنا بالآخر، الشرق العربي بالآخر "السلفيني". كان العثور على هذه اللقطة جزءًا من مصادفة غير حُرّة، فقد قادته إلى محل الكتب في "ليوبليانا" عادته التي يراها جزائرية!- في التسكع ومرادة محلات بيع الكتب القديمة، التي يقضي الساعات في تقلب صفحاتها، ولا يقتني في النهاية إلا القليل منها بسبب شح الميزانية الشخصية. لكن تعليقه على هذه العادة الممتعة بأنها، على الرغم من أنها تستهوي الكثيرين من أمثاله، تثير غضب الباعة الذين صاروا يتحرجون من كثرة الرواد وقلة المشترين<sup>(4)</sup>، يفسر نظرة العجوز المشرفة على المحل، التي رمقته بنظرة شاملة من الأسفل إلى الأعلى، دون أن ترد عليه التحية؛ ربما لأن الحال في "سلفينيا" لا يختلف عن الحال في الجزائر؛ رواد مثقفون وشغف للكتب ومحدودية في الميزانية، وبائع عجوز ينتظر رواج بضاعته. ولعلها لم تكن المرة الوحيدة التي يرمقه فيها بائع عجوز لم يشتر منه، فمؤكد أنها حدثت مرات ومرات في الجزائر.

على أن المشهد ينضوي على إشارة هامة أخرى، بدت عبر الفرح الشديد الذي اعترى الكاتب عند مطالعته كتابًا لـ"رشيد ميموني" الروائي الجزائري، مترجمًا إلى السلفينية بين كتاب عالميين مثل "كافكا" و"إيميل زولا" و"إرنست هيمنغواي" يبدو منها هذا الولوج بقاء الآخر ثقافيًا وحضاريًا. بيد أن النص ينطوي على إشارات أخرى قد تجهض هذا الولوج؛ ففي الوقت الذي تنسأل فيه على ذهنه الأفكار حول "ميموني"/الشخص، والجزائر، يعجز عن التعبير عنها بلغة تفهمها البائعة، في حين تنساب كلمات ميموني نفسها على لسان كل سلفيني يقرأ الكتاب. وفي الوقت الذي تتحجب عن هذا القارئ معلومات حول "ميموني" وقيّمته في الجزائر والمحيط المغاربي، وأن ثمة دار للثقافة في الجزائر تحمل اسمه؛ يصبح لديه أفكاره ورؤاه، وهي الأصل المؤسس لهذه المكانة وتلك القيمة في الجزائر، فرصة أن تتداح أعماله وأفكاره في محيط اللغة والثقافة السلفينيتين. ومما سكت عنه النص أن "رشيد ميموني" الذي يكتب بالفرنسية قد لا يكون متاحًا للقارئ العربي! إلى الآن؛ فهذا العي الذي أصاب الكاتب حينما أراد أن يخبر البائعة عن هو "ميموني" هو عي الثقافة العربية، التي ربما لا تتواصل مع ذاتها ومع مكوناتها؛ فالفرنسية التي يكتب بها ميموني هي التي كفلت له أن يترجم إلى لغات أخرى منها السلفينية، وعجزت العربية أو كسّلت عن أن تنقل إليها نصوص أحد أبنائها، وفي الوقت الذي تنسج فيه رفوف متجر قديم للكتب لكتاب لا لا يتسع له صدر الصحف أو دور النشر الجزائرية، حيث الحزب الواحد الذي يفرغ أعماله من أي قيمة أدبية ويجهض مشروعه الجمالي بعد أعماله بعدها مجرد "هجاء سياسي"؛ لإهدار أي قيمة أدبية معتبرة في نصوصه، لما تحظى به من تشهير بالأنظمة المستبدّة.

## الرحلة من الفعل إلى الخطاب:

إذا كان نص الرحلة يمثل "الخطاب" بالنسبة للرحلة بوصفها "فعلًا" في كل ترحال، فإن رحلة ابن فضلان تأتي لتكون هامشًا على "وظيفة" حددها ابن فضلان نفسه في بداية الرحلة<sup>(\*)</sup>، أما رحلة سعيد خطيبي في أغلبها فإنها هي الوظيفة ذاتها. إن فعل الترحال هو الهدف، نوع من الرغبة في الآخر وفي الحاجة إليه، فلا نهائية خلف الفعل إلا إنجاز الرحلة ذاتها. فنحن في الأحوال كلها أمام تشكل لخطاب أدبي، هو محل الفحص والاهتمام. ومن ثم بدأت الرحلة عبر مطار اسطنبول إلى "ليوبليانا" (سلفينيا) ثم إلى "غراد" و"زاغرب" (كرواتيا)، فـ"سراييفو" و"سربرنيتسا" (البوسنة والهرسك)، ثم إلى "بلغراد" (صربيا)، ومنها إلى "كييف" (أوكرانيا).

<sup>4</sup> السابق، ص 26.  
<sup>(\*)</sup> يقول ابن فضلان في مقدمة رحلته: "لما وصل كتاب ألمش بن بطوار ملك الصقالبة إلى أمير المؤمنين المقتدر يسأله فيه البيعة إليه ممن يفقه في الدين ويعرفه شرائع الإسلام ويبني له مسجدًا وينصب له منبرًا ليقم عليه الدعوة له في بلده وجميع مملكته، ويسأله بناء حصن يتحصن فيه من الملوك المخالفين له فأجيب إلى ما سأل من ذلك. وكان السفير له تنبير/الحرسي فَنُذِبْتُ أنا لقراءة الكتاب عليه وتسليم ما أهدى إليه والإشراف على الفقهاء والمعلمين وسبب له بالمال المحمول إليه لبناء ما ذكرناه وللجراية على الفقهاء والمعلمين على الضيعة المعروفة بأرثخمشين من أرض خوارزم من ضياع ابن الفرات." انظر: أحمد بن فضلان: رحلة ابن فضلان إلى بلاد الترك والروس والصقالبة. حررها وقدم لها: شاكرا لعبيبي. دار السويدي للنشر والتوزيع- أبو ظبي- الإمارات/ المؤسسة العربية للدراسات والنشر- بيروت. ط2- 2013م. ص 39: 41.

تجمع رحلة الخطيبي بين محورين؛ محور بلاد البلقان ومحور أوكرانيا، ومن ثم عدّها جميعاً بلاداً سلافية، إذ إن أوكرانيا تقع ضمن هذه البلاد وإن بالعزق، كما أنها هي أول دولة لسلاف (صقالبية) شرق أوروبا، مهد ما كان يسمى في القرن التاسع الميلادي بإمارة "كيبف روس" التي تفرعت عنها: روسيا وأوكرانيا وبيلا روسيا.

وإن كان الكاتب يعرب عن أن رحلته إلى البلقان كانت مصادفة فإن رحلته إلى "كيبف" في نهاية فبراير 2014 كانت بتكليف من مؤسسته الصحفية التي يعمل بهيئتها التحريرية؛ لإجراء استطلاع صحفي عن الوضع العام هناك من وجهات نظر مختلفة؛ ثقافية واجتماعية وسياسية<sup>(5)</sup>.

"وحدها الصدفة قادتني إلى بلاد الصقالبية"، حيلة ذكية يبدأ بها خطيبي نص رحلته، ليلقي عن كاهله فكرة هذا التقليد الأدبي القديم الذي عادة ما ينص على الباعث على الرحلة، وربما هياً بها أيضاً لإفساح الطريق أمام قراءة الدوال واستبطان مغزى المشاهدات.

وكانه هنا يفارق، ومنذ السطر الأول، نص رحلة ابن فضلان، ابن القرن العاشر (قام بها سنة 921)، الذي يشترك معه في جهة الترحال. فإذا كان ابن فضلان قد قام برحلته من أجل قراءة كتاب أمير المؤمنين "المقنن" على "المش بن بطوار" ملك الصقالبية، وتسليمه ما أهداه له أمير المؤمنين من هدايا، والإشراف على أمور الفقهاء والمعلمين الذي أرسلهم أمير المؤمنين بناء على طلب الملك ليفقهوا الناس في الدين- فإنّ خطيبي لم تكن رحلته دعوة أو نشرًا لدين أو تفقيهاً لآخر فيه، أو قياماً على مدد عسكري أو إيصال هدية أو كفالة معلمين أو فقهاء.. فقط وحدها كانت المصادفة ما قاده إلى هذا الاختيار، أو لنقل بالأحرى دافع الترحل في ذاته، أو بالأحرى "معرفة الآخر".

يقول: "عبرت الحدود بحثاً عن الملامح الحقيقية لدول تجمع بينها الجغرافيا وتفرقها الصّدّامات الدينية والإثنية"<sup>(6)</sup>. ولكنها أضحت رحلة في معرفة الذات أيضاً وتأمل بعض جوانبها، عندما تتكشف التفاصيل التي تجمع هذه البلاد، رغم ما قد يبدو من اختلاف ثقافي يحيل البصر بعيداً عن وجوه التشابه والتقاطع. فبين الصقالبية والعرب تاريخ مشترك من الخضوع للدولة العثمانية، التي وصلت هذه البلاد مع نهاية القرن الرابع- بعد معركة "كوسوفو" أو "قوصوة" سنة 1389م، وما زال الأثر العثماني بادياً في مناطقها إلى اليوم، كما هو الحال في العديد من المناطق من العالم العربي. هذا إضافة إلى محورية اللغة في تكوين الهوية لدى كل من العرب والسلاف على اختلاف دولهم المستقلة، حيث كان الدفاع عن مكون اللغة في البلاد السلافية بمثابة الدفاع عن الأرض والتاريخ والحق في الاستمرار، كما يقول الكاتب.

وربما قادت الصراعات السياسية الدينية والإثنية إلى قراءة جانب آخر من واقع العالم العربي وأزماته السياسية الأخيرة، وما آل إليه من خلاف مذهبي كثيراً ما يكون غطاءً للسياسة، ولما تكون السياسة غطاءً له.

وهذه الوجوه من التشابهات بعض أهم ما استقطبت وجهة نظر العمل؛ فراح يتوقف عندها من أن إلى آخر كلما تنقل من مكان لآخر.

## النص والتجنيس:

لربما أمكننا من خلال تلازم صيغتي "الوصف" و"السرد"، المتلازمان بالأصالة في كل خطاب سردي، باعتبار السرد فعلاً زمنياً بالأساس، يتحرك فيه ويتقدم متصلاً به، وباعتبار الوصف فعلاً مكانياً يتوقف عنده الزمن أو يكاد حيث تعانق اللغة المكان- وتضافرهما مع مقولة "الراوي" الذي يرصد تطور الزمن عبر السرد، موضحاً إياه في مكان يجري فيه حيث الوصف، لربما أمكننا من تعانق هذه المقولات الثلاث، وبحث هيمنة إحدى الصيغتين السرديتين؛ الوصف والسرد، أن نؤطر لجنس الرحلة من حيث كونها "خطاباً وصفيّاً" يضع في اعتباره الأول البُعد المكاني في زمن معين<sup>(7)</sup>.

وهنا قد يتموقع نص الرحلة إلى جانب النص الجغرافي؛ حيث معاينة المكان في زمان ما، مقابلاً للرواية في عناقها للنص التاريخي؛ حيث معاينة تطور الزمن في مكان ما.

لكن هذا النص، الذي يقرأ الذات عبر قراءة المكان والجغرافيا، يقدم التاريخ من حيث تقديمه اللحظة بوصفها ثمرةً للماضي وبذرةً للمستقبل. يقدم المشاهدات والأحداث من حيث هي حقائق مستقبلية تتخلق في رجم الآن، حيث

5 سعيد خطيبي: جنائن الشرق الملتهبة. ص 125.

6 السابق: ص 17.

7 د. سعيد يقطين: السرد العربي؛ مفاهيم وتجليات. دار الأمان- الرباط- المغرب/ منشورات الاختلاف- الجزائر العاصمة- الجزائر. ط1- 2012م. ص 171.

يُفضي الحجر بحكاياته ويروي ماضيه أو يحيل إليه. فالآن التي تعابنها الرحلة أنّ موصولة بقوة بماضيها العريق، حيث كل وصف مُتصَمّن بالضرورة لمسرودات طويلة وعريقة.

يشكل الريبورتاج جسد هذا النص حيث نجد تصوير الحياة من وجهة نظر إنسانية عبر منحى استقصائيّ، مع قدر من الالتفات إلى الصياغة وجمالياتها، فهو رؤية خاصة للصحفي تبحث عن المعلومات ووجهات النظر، وإن قدمتها إجمالاً عبر وجهة نظره هو، وإن حفل بالمقابلات والاستقصاءات من حين لآخر. فمن أين يبدأ التقرير وأين ينتهي إلى أدب الرحلة.

إنّ أدب الرحلة، بوصفه جنساً أدبياً، يواجه تحدياً وجودياً كبيراً مع تطور طرائق التنقل والاتصال والتعبير، وخاصة عندما يعبر عنها عبر أوعية لغوية كالتحقيق الصحفي، أو تواصلية أخرى كالتحقيق المتلفز والأفلام الوثائقية، وكذلك مع تطور السرود التخيلية وتطور تقنياتها كما في الرواية<sup>(8)</sup>. ففي العديد من نصوص الرحلة المعاصرة ومع تطور الفن الصحفي غدا فن الاستطلاع الصحفي<sup>(\*\*)</sup> (الريبورتاج) منافساً قوياً لأدب الرحلة، إن لم يكن وريثاً له في بعض الأحيان، حيث حاز بعض أهم مقومات أدب الرحلة الأساسية وفي مقدمتها الطابع "السردي" والطابع "المرجعي"، فالاستطلاع الصحفي يغطي أحداثاً "راهنة" وينقل وقائع موضوعية، يرى فيه الصحفي موضوعه من خلال تجربته ورؤيته وإحساسه، ومن ثم يبدو فيه العامل الذاتي على نحو لا نجده في نقل "الخبر". وهو مُهيأً للاستفاضة؛ بالتوسع حول الموضوع وعدم الاقتصار على الجوانب الرئيسية؛ بل تُقدّم الأحداث فيه في سياقها العام، وتستعرض تفاصيلها؛ فيجيب على أسئلة من قبيل (ما، مَنْ، متى، كيف، أين، لماذا..)، وإن كان يتوسع في الإجابة على سؤال "لماذا"<sup>(9)</sup>. كذلك يفتح الاستطلاع على أساليب تقديم متنوعة؛ كالسرود (نقل الوقائع)، والوصف (وصف الأماكن والشخص)، والاستجواب (الحوار مع الأشخاص) ونقل وجهة نظرهم، وانطباعاتهم الشخصية (بملاحظة جميع العناصر القائمة على مسرح الحدث وتقديم صياغة خاصة لها)<sup>(10)</sup>.

ولذا فمما يختص به الريبورتاج ويدفع به إلى قلب أدب الرحلات ويميزه ربما عن بقية الأشكال الصحفية هو حضور الراوي/ السارد فيه على نحو شخصي إلى حد كبير. إذ يعبر هذا الحضور عن نفسه في الريبورتاج بأبلغ تأثير ومشاركة. ولأن الصحفي هو "مخبر" (من الإخبار) فإنه لا يتوقف عند مشاهدات العين، وقراءة الوقائع وإنما يتسلح بالقراءة أدباً وتاريخاً واستقصاء. ليكون أكثر قدر على قراءة ما يشاهد وعلى تكوين خبرة أكثر عمقاً بما يجري. وبعمامة يمكن أن نطمئن إلى أنه ربما أمكن لأدب الرحلة أن يستوعب "التقرير الصحفي" دون أن يكون كل نص من أدب الرحلة من قبيل الريبورتاج.

عندما يكتب الصحفي أو المتقف أو الروائي نصّاً من قبيل أدب الرحلات، أين يمكن لتلك الحدود أن تقع بين ما هو أقرب إلى روح الأدب وما هو تقرير ي أقرب إلى الاستطلاع صحفي. سنضرب مثلاً عملياً من واقع نشر هذا النص نفسه، حيث نُشِرت بعض فصول هذا الكتاب في استطلاعات صحفية سابقة<sup>(11)</sup> على نشر الكتاب بوصفه من أدب الرحلة متضمنةً إياها، وبتمتع النصوص معاً تتبدى تلك المقاطع التي رآها الكاتب جملاً إضافياً على نص الرحلة، وتلك التي رأى إضافتها إلى نص الرحلة ربما لم يكن ليستوعبها روح الاستطلاع الصحفي.

فهذه بعض خلاصات الراوي التي يقدمها للقراء، وجهة النظر التي قد لا تحيط بها الأخبار التي تترصد الموضوعية، يقول: "تبدو (ككيفية) حكاية مُمرّقة، تعيش اضطراباً وشتاتاً داخليين، غير قادرة على استيعاب الصدمات التاريخية المتتالية، والتي تزايدت حدتها في السنوات العشر الماضية، في تلك المدينة القلقة التي تتخلف سلفاً يختلفون عن

8 انظر: د. محمد القاضي وآخرون: معجم السرديات. دار محمد علي للنشر- تونس (وآخرون). ط1- 2010م. ص 342.  
(\*\*) الاستطلاع الصحفي أو ما يطلق عليه الريبورتاج أو النقل الصحفي أو التقرير الحي. Le reportage, feature report, color story photo, feature article

انظر: د. المهدي الجنوبي: التحرير الصحفي. نشر قسم الإعلام- كلية الآداب- جامعة البحرين. ص 133.

9 انظر: د. فاروق أبو زيد: فن الكتابة الصحفية. القاهرة- 1985. ص 93.

10 انظر: د. حبيب بن بلقاسم: التقرير الصحفي (وثيقة بيداغوجية)- تونس- معهد الصحافة وعلوم الإخبار- جامعة منوبة- تونس- 2004م.

11 المادة الأساسية للفصل الأخير من الكتاب، الذي عنوانه بـ"شفثينكو يلعب الشطرنج"، هو في الأصل "استطلاع صحفي" أيضاً نشره المؤلف في مجلة الدوحة، عدد (78)، إبريل 2014، بوصفه صحفياً بهيئة تحريرها، تحت عنوان: "أوكرانيا بلاغة الميدان". بعد أن أضاف إليه سرداً خاصاً برحلته إلى كيبف وليلته الأولى فيها. ومن هذا القبيل أيضاً فصل: "الزعيم يقرأ شعرًا"، الذي نشر بمجلة الدوحة تحت عنوان "ساعة في بيت الزعيم... نيتو يقرأ شعرًا". انظر:

<http://www.aldohamagazine.com/article.aspx?n=9F429273-DAA6-4F66-842E-1826901E2955&d=20130941#.WbHEOLKGPX4>

نظرانهم في الجنوب في احتفالهم المستمر بالحياة رغم كل المحن.. وعدم سمة لا يتنكرون لها. فهم لا يعرفون تمامًا أين تسير بهم الأقدار.. مع ذلك فهم مستمرين في الحلم"<sup>(12)</sup>.

هذا المقطع الذي يظهر في نص الرحلة (في الكتاب) ويغيب عن نص الريبورتاج المنشور في (المجلة) يكشف لنا جانباً من هذا (الطابع الشخصي) التي يمكن أن تذهب إليه وجهة النظر في أدب الرحلة. وربما لا ينحو الريبورتاج الصحفي إلى مشارفتها. مسافة من التحليل وعمق شخصي، قد يسمح به أدب الرحلة ولا يسمح به الريبورتاج، الذي هو عمل صحفي في المقام الأول.

وفي المقابل نجد بعض الإضافات إلى النسخة المنشورة بالمجلة تحمل كثيرًا من العناصر التي تربطها بالآني، اللحظي، بطابع التوثيق الذي قد لا نجده إلا في "الخبر" الصحفي، لا الإخبار الأدبي. "إيفان لا يثق بالأسماء التي قدّمت نفسها للترشح للانتخابات الرئاسية الشهر المقبل، مثل يوليا تيموشنكو، ونائبها في الحزب نفسه أرسوني لاتسونيكو، الملاك الأسبق فيتالي كليتشكو، أولغ تيانيبوك أو الملياردير رينات اخميتوف (المُصنّف ضمن قائمة أغنى خمسين رجلاً في العالم). النخبة المُتَّفِقة مُستبعدة من التنظيمات السياسية. وغالبًا حين يبرز اسم مثقّف في الدوائر الرسمية فسندده قادمًا من تنظيم اتحاد الكتاب، وهو تنظيم بوليسي أكثر من كونه أدبيًا، يصرح إيفان، معتبرًا اتحاد الكتاب تنظيمًا سوفياتيًا باندًا وجب حله في أسرع وقت"<sup>(13)</sup>.

وهكذا تأتي الرحلة لتكون نوعًا من تجدد الحياة، مكانًا آخر تنتمي إليه الأنا على نحو مؤقت بوصفها "أنا" مغايرة، تشعر بالاختلاف وتسلم به، تبحث عن وجوهه وتراه في جل ما تقع عليه. مؤمنة بأنها عندما تصوغ تصورًا عن الآخرين، فإنها تصوغ تصورًا عن نفسها، حيث لا يوجد "أنت" إلا حيث توجد "أنا"، ولا توجد "أنا" إلا حيث توجد "أنت".

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<sup>12</sup> سعيد خطيبي: جنائن الشرق الملتهبة. ص 134، 135.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.aldohamagazine.com/article.aspx?n=77FFF112-BE8F-4EEF-BD09-11657086865B&d=20140401#.Wka05FUjTX5>

**DISCOVERING THE LOCAL:  
KHALİL AL-KHŪRĪ'S WAYY. 'IDAN LASTU BI-'IFRANĠIYY (ALAS, I'M NOT  
A FOREIGNER) 1859-1861, AND LITERARY GEOGRAPHICAL WRITING**

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**Abstract.** The development of geographical writing was one of the important factors that facilitated the transition from classical writing to constructive narrative fiction. Changes in local identity in Syria and Lebanon first occurred during the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the name of local patriotism, and were promoted through geographical writing. This paper discusses the literary geographical writing of Khalīl al-Khūrī (1836-1907), one of the leading intellectuals of the Nahḍa period, in his narrative fiction *Wayy. 'Idan Lastu bi-'Ifraṅḡiyy* (Alas, I'm not a foreigner), published in his newspaper *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār* between 1859 and 1861. This article will demonstrate that al-Khūrī's writing can be considered a continuation of the genre of '*Adab al-Riḥlāt*' (travel account), but at the same time it was an innovation as al-Khūrī was among the first to transform this classical genre into clearly defined narrative fiction, which I term 'geo-literature'. This term refers to literary and patriotic writing containing a number of geographic locations designed to make readers aware of them and encourage them to visit these sites. Al-Khūrī uses some motifs of the canonic genre of '*Adab al-Riḥlāt*' in constructing a tale, making the traveller a central character in the plot. He created a kind of literary tour guide that revealed the close historical and cultural ties between past and present, while at the same time implicitly disseminating his views on modernization, 'Europeanization', and the preservation of the local Arab identity  
**Keywords:** *Geo-literature, Khalīl al-Khūrī, 'Adab al-Riḥlāt, Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār, Nahḍa.*

## **Introduction**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is seen by many scholars as the period of the Arab Renaissance. This consisted of a wave of political, national and cultural events that led to several insights among Arab intellectuals, particularly in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. These insights touched upon the essence of the life of the Arab living under Ottoman rule, suffering from cultural and even existential stagnation. These insights were also heightened vis-à-vis Western culture; many Arab intellectuals visited Europe during that period, and came to understand the depth of the gap between the daily and cultural existence in the West and their own daily and cultural existence. They also sensed a profound need to change the existing situation in their own countries, a change that ought to have derived from internal processes but, at the same time, had to rely on cultural, political and social models of the West in order to speed up the change process to a desirable level.

Naturally, this reliance on the West was problematic. It created an encounter between two different cultural approaches or ways of thinking. We might say that, in general, it



brought Western secularity together with Eastern spirituality, an encounter between scientific thinking that allows for the slaughter of sacred cows and the elimination of social and religious taboos, and subjective traditional thinking unable to handle such deviation from conventions. Consequently, in most cases, the Arab intellectuals sought to find balanced formulas that could be adapted to the change processes about to take place in their countries.

A direct outcome of the search for change was a renewed search for a new identity (Sheehi 2004: 90), or at least an opening of the circles of affiliation that would suit the global and local circumstances of the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the circles that was important for leading the desired change was that of national affiliation. However, it must be said that in the period there was, as yet, no consolidated national thinking in Beirut, Damascus or Cairo. Fruma Zachs (2005: 2) identified a proto-national Syrian model of affiliation that served the changing life in Beirut from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century on. This model perceived Lebanon and Syria as a single, unique identity with a shared history and language. This model would, for example, allow religious minorities to coexist under an umbrella of shared historical and cultural elements. Lebanese journalist, poet, and literary critic Khalīl al-Khūrī (1836-1907) was one of the prominent intellectuals who espoused such a model. As we shall see, he believed in the need for calculated change that would not dismiss Arab heritage, but yet would nevertheless promote substantive changes that would not clash head-on with traditional Arab and Islamic legacy values.

Al-Khūrī used his newspaper, *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār* (1858-1911), as a vehicle through which to promote the implementation of the changes which he believed would lead his people towards a positive future. He wanted his periodical to be a multicultural meeting place, and with that in mind, he regularly allotted space to translations (mainly from French), thereby juxtaposing Arab and Western cultures and how they are expressed. This juxtaposition launched a profound process of change in Arabic literature; in particular, it paved the way for the emergence of the genre of original fictional narrative and hence the original modern novel in Arabic.

### ***Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār* – a pioneering cultural laboratory**

The publication of any periodical is, in and of itself, an indication of essential cultural needs that coincide with equally essential political, economic and urban needs. It is a move that contributes, either directly or indirectly, to the dissemination of different values and ideologies regarding the individual and the collective. *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār* constitutes, I believe, an important building block in the chain of events that led to the Renaissance in certain Arab countries, especially Lebanon and Syria, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The importance of this lies primarily in the cultural awareness that adheres to the notion that there is an existential need for balance and coordination in all processes of modernization and innovation. The importance of this coordination lies in not eliminating any part of this equation of life in the shadow of modernization, i.e., tradition as represented by the Arab-Islamic cultural legacy, on the one hand, and modernization as represented by the cultural influences coming from the West, on the other. This eclectic approach supports the vital need to recognize both sides of the equation in order to sustain a truly balanced process,

and thus it creates convincing local alternatives that march safely in the direction of change. Anyone tracing the journey of *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār* will find that it did, in practice, implement this approach.

As a result of local and external interactions in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a bourgeois middle class of intellectuals and merchants developed in Beirut. Most of these intellectuals strove diligently to promote and develop Arabic and Arab culture, and at the same time, at the national-political level they were encouraging local Syrian and Arab nationalist sentiments. Khalīl al-Khūrī was one of the most prominent of these thinkers who, in my opinion, did not receive proper recognition and who has not been adequately researched, despite his great contribution to local ideological-conceptual development through his support for a local Syrian-Arab identity on the one hand, and on the other, his literary writing which, despite its limitations, relative immaturity and weak artistic technique, was an early model of Arabic narrative fiction, and influenced the development of both canonical and non-canonical works that were to follow.

### **The Literary and Linguistic Aspects of *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār***

Arab cultural literary interactions developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century within the context of general historical and political circumstances (for more information about Al-Khūrī and his historical and cultural endeavors, see: Bawardi 2008: 170-195; Zachs 2004: 27-39; Zachs 2005: 88-89, 157-159, 171-173). Consequently, the literary aspect of *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār* is inseparable from contemporary political, social and economic developments (on the diachronic and synchronic process and its impact on literary design, see: Snir 1998: 87-121; Snir 2001: 3, 49), especially since literature constitutes a complementary and necessary expression of changes in general concepts. Al-Khūrī regularly made room for literature in his periodical, sometimes allocating it a third of its overall space. He was undoubtedly aware of the role of literature in educational and national processes, in addition to its commercial and economic importance in widening his readership. At the same time, he realized that modernization also had to be applied to the Arabic language itself. Speaking about international interest in his periodical, especially from European scientific societies, Al-Khūrī mentioned his goal of development and regeneration of Arabic that would “train it in the new semantic fields, and put it on an equal footing with modern languages that abound in information and arts of every kind [...], because now it is a poor language that can hardly express any meaning that progress and civilization have created in all fields of human knowledge.” (*Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār*, 40 4/22, December, 1858). This message voiced the crisis of Arabic, with its stylistic shortcomings and inability to keep abreast of modern developments. Hence his use of the periodical to generate new styles of expression that could benefit the general advancement of the nation.

Al-Khūrī's general criticism of contemporary Arabic linguistics related to all areas of culture covered by the language. Western languages were an essential component of modernization, which suggests that one of the important elements of Arab Oriental backwardness lies in the inability of Arabic to express the various dimensions of modern culture. Consequently, Al-Khūrī attempted to expand the realm of Arabic beyond its familiar traditional religious-theological sphere and to expose it to the challenges of modern

daily life. He used the translations of French novels he published to give his readers an alternative linguistic taste. That alternative might be key to the development of new styles of writing that could help Arabic make the necessary leap forward to overcome its limitations of expression and hasten a smooth change in its writing concepts, which, in turn, would contribute to the creation of original Arabic narrative genres. While the development of a new literary genre was not declared an end in itself, it was the result of the awareness of the new strata of readers, as we shall show.

In general, the literary publications in the periodical can be divided into two main parts:

- a. Translations of original French narrative works.
- b. Classical Arabic literary works including poetry, biographies of poets and classical Arab literary figures, as well as the publication of literary works by contemporary authors.

Translation ventures into the realm of the ‘other’, with which it conducts an explicit or implicit dialogue. The significance of this dialogue lies in the fact that, ultimately, it constitutes a modern cognitive tool, by way of comparison, can engage the parties in reflecting about how they think and how they live. In the context of the 19<sup>th</sup> century renaissance of Arab literature and culture, we may say that translation constituted an important building block in its cultural interaction with the West. In addition to local and social, political, cultural, and national moves, this interaction played a key role in facilitating the march of Arab progress. The translation of literary works contributed greatly to the development of Arabic prose and poetry alike, in a manner that more readily enabled them to incorporate Western influences. In other words, these 19<sup>th</sup> century Arabic narratives integrated new Western influences that reflected modern development with traditional Arab narrative techniques deriving from canonical and popular literature alike (Hāfiz 1992: 270-271; Moosa 1971: 200; Allen 1992: 180-192).

### **A new geo-literature - *Wayy. 'Idan Lastu bi-'Ifraṅṅiyy (Alas, I'm not a foreigner)***

As mentioned earlier, the genre of Arabic geo-literature (for more information concerning this term, see Bawardi and Zachs 2007: 203-217) gained momentum in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as intellectuals journeyed to the West and introduced their Arab readers to this new world of places, customs, and behaviors through their rich descriptions of what they had encountered on their travels. Al-Khūrī, however, took this genre in a new, pioneering direction with his important work *Wayy. 'Idan Lastu bi-'Ifraṅṅiyy*. This is a local Arabic narrative fiction, which represents, in my opinion, the embryonic stages of the evolution of an Arabic narrative genre that preceded the attempts defined by critics or referred to as the first Arabic fictional narrative attempts, specifically the works of Fransīs al-Marrāsh (1835-1874), and Salīm al-Bustānī (1846-1884). In this pioneering work, Al-Khūrī adopted certain narrative techniques combining traditional Arabic narrative discourse with the Western narrative styles that were reflected clearly in the works translated in his newspaper. Al-Khūrī published this story consecutively from issues 93 (3/1, November, 1859) to issue 151 (7/23, March, 1861), as a reaction to the contemporary local social and educational developments. It was a type of social observation that was accompanied by severe criticism of hollow and false Westernization/ Europeanization, which he feared would likely lead to Arab cultural

decline. In his treatment of the theme of 'the encounter between East and West' he recognizes the necessity of finding a balance between the two cultures while preserving an Arab identity in order to achieve real and desirable modernization. The commenting *omniscient narrator* is a mask for the author, who takes advantage of the literary framework to preach and spread different values and concepts. The narrator travels between several Syrian cities (Syria and Lebanon, today) in order to observe the signs of European influence in every city. He begins his fictional journey by directing severe criticism at the signs of "Europeanization" (*tafarnuj*) in Beirut (cf. Hoblos 2002: 43-58), which, in his opinion, is the most influenced by this phenomenon. One aspect of this trend is the abandonment of traditional Arab clothing, and wearing European dress in a funny way that does not suit the Arab atmosphere. Moreover, these 'Europeanized' people were abandoning Arabic, speaking European languages as a sign or suggestion that they belong to a high social status. The narrator also visits the Lebanon Mountain region where the people still preserve their Arab traditions. With his visit to Aleppo, however, the direction of the novel changes and assumes an internal narrative frame through which the narrator relates the story of a family man from Aleppo, who adopts the European identity through clothes, language, and foods, and scorns his Arab culture. He even refuses to let his daughter marry the young Arab with whom she is in love, and tries to force her to marry a foreigner who has come to visit the city against her will. The foreigner, who has Arab roots, despises the 'Europeanized' Aleppo father and tries hard to leave the girl to her Arab love. Al-Khūrī's message seems to be that the preservation of one's roots is the ideal solution in this case. For him, acquaintance with the West does not mean "marrying" it and abandoning or dismissing one's Arab identity. On the contrary, it means that one should be open to others without taking the "other" as the only resort or solution to one's problems. The foreigner who comes from a different culture will not stay here, but will soon leave, because he came here just to visit, enjoy his time, or get more information and knowledge about the people and the place, but not to marry. The foreigner appreciates Arab culture and emphasizes its achievements. The great ancient past indeed deserves acknowledgement, being an important part of the human knowledge.

The question that arises after reading the novel is this: Is al-Khūrī against modernization and development, or is he against the acceptance and adoption of European phenomena and culture? The answer is that neither of these is the case. In fact, Al-Khūrī introduces an independent reconciliatory attitude towards modernization and cultural changes. He says in his introduction to the book: "Every people has a tendency to a certain type of culture, which suits their morals and manners in such a way that they cannot replace them with other types [...]; we like the English to be English, the French to be French, and the Arab to be Arab" (see: *Ḥadīqat al-'Akhbār*, 93, 3/1, October, 1859). Al-Khūrī says at the end of the book: "We should not marvel at everything because it is European, and should not approve of everything because it is Arab [...]. So limit yourself to European sciences and arts, and work hard to revive the Oriental culture in a way that suits the spirit of the nation, and has been rooted in its intellectual literature and arts for forty generations,

and be a civilized Arab, rather than an incomplete European” (*Ḥadīqat al-’Akhbār*, 151, 7/23, March, 1861).<sup>1</sup>

## Discussion

The narrative fiction *Wayy. ’Idan Lastu bi-’Ifraṅṅiyy* deals with the essence of the social identity of Arabs and Syrians at the start of the Arab Renaissance. Without overtly touching upon the ensemble of complications concerning the emerging bond between East and West, the story presents geographical writing similar to Arab travel literature, but conceals within it a variety of questions and issues pertaining to people’s existence during that period. In this case, the geographical writing is an outer shell through which the author touches upon the essence of how the Arab and the Syrian lives, raising questions about moral and social aspects of daily life, pondering the circles of affiliation in the shadow of the encounter with the Western ‘other’. In fact, it examines the components of the emerging life of the Syrian and the Arab who have just begun to sense the cultural and scientific progress of that western ‘other’. Descriptive geographical writing was familiar to the local reader’s eye and thus it was a convenient literary framework that did not clash with Arab canonical literary taste, although in this case it allowed the author to enlist it to disseminate his key social and existential opinions and messages.

The author takes advantage of the narrative framework and the dialogue to construct a journey that encompasses a structured story with a narrator, characters and a conflict. This narrative fiction does not just describe local places, but rather offers questions pertaining to the value set of the local Syrian and the Arab in that era. This framework differs from the journeys made by Arab intellectuals who had traveled to western countries and described them for the Arab reader. Because of his proto-nationalist motives, Al-Khūrī draws the readers’ attention to domestic tourism, to Syria, rich in wonderful archeological and historical sites. In so doing, this geographical writing serves the circles of affiliation that Al-Khūrī seeks to promote. Syria and Lebanon are countries with a rich history that has left behind much geographical testimony of their former greatness. Al-Khūrī takes pride in that past and thinks that many of his countrymen remain ignorant of it. Thus, his writing also serves to educate his readers about their own history, thereby strengthening the bond with their own cultural identity, balancing the tendency towards ‘Europeanization’.

The journey begins in Beirut, which he accuses of serious westernization, evident in how people dress and speak, and in the use of another language in order to elevate social

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<sup>1</sup> It should be referred to a previous comment by Al-Khūrī in issue 24 (1858), in which he called for the consolidation of a high-level Oriental Arabic literature, which would be no less important than European literature in sowing the seeds of Oriental civilization and modernization as a sound, healthy entity. He stated that: “the European people were surprised at Arab writers who followed the European writers, and were surprised at some Syrians who followed to some extent the art of European theater, as if they [Europeans] did not know that the Oriental Arab skill and talent are able, if this art is developed in our country, to introduce writers of the people of the country, who are more entitled to be considered as equal to Molière and Racine.” See *Ḥadīqat al-’Akhbār*, 24 (19/7, June, 1858).

status. Beirut is the symbol of the deviation from the healthy authenticity needed to build a clear identity in a healthy society. We see here a traveler of a different kind, one who does not just provide descriptions and information about the places he reaches, but rather one who takes on the role of omniscient narrator describing a story with a structured plot. The role of the traveler becomes literary as it deals not only with the transfer of information, but also with discussion of the social mores and values of the local society. The genre of travel literature is thus upgraded. It is now a structured work of fiction based on the components of a story. It contains its own 'cover' story; the general setting is the tour of Lebanon and Syria, while the inner story is one that takes place in the city of Aleppo.

Here, Al-Khūrī makes use of the framework of the classical travel tale to develop a bold cultural dialogue with the Western 'other' on an equal footing, with no sense of inferiority of East versus West. The fictional story, which appears right after the criticism against two poets who visited Aleppo, touches upon the essence of the lives of those who Al-Khūrī claims have lost the healthy way to build their identity. The father from Aleppo, who thinks that his Western style of dress and eating will turn him into a proud Westerner, discovers to his amazement that he does not belong to the West at all. The Westerners themselves, represented by the young man whom he wants his daughter to marry, in fact scorns his lifestyle, which denies his true roots. The discussion the traveler presents does not debate directly with the West on this occasion, but rather with broader Syrian society, parts of which have lost their compass. Thus, the journey becomes a geographical genre that turns the one-directional transfer of information into a complex polemic space that attempts to truly understand the essence of the Syrian and Lebanese Arab, the ensemble of musings and existential questions that he feels at this sensitive turning point in the meeting of East and West. The non-acceptance and subversiveness of the author are implicit in the tragic end to the story, which does not reconcile with the status quo, but rather sends harsh messages to the readership of the periodical in order to effect a profound existential change. The nature of Arab geographical writing was neutral, not usually seeking a catharsis within the reader. What Al-Khūrī did, in fact, was to take a genre that was reluctant to change, preferring to remain in the realm of transferring information, and turn it into a genre that is controversial, provocative, and dares to ask tough questions about aspects of local life in Syria and Lebanon. Thus, ironically, either intentionally or unwittingly, he adopts an essentially European contemporary format of the travel genre as a platform that enables the author to offer a social critique of his own countrymen, as we find in works of Fielding, Swift, Voltaire or Manzoni, for example.

The dramatic, dialogic nature of the narrative fiction enables Al-Khūrī to divide the figures into two groups; those who believe that they are Western and those who see the West as a source of scientific and social inspiration while preserving the historical Arab heritage. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope experienced by each side is existentially different. Chronotope refers to the essential reciprocity relative to time and space, such that there is no separation at all between the dimensions of time and space. In this narrative fiction, the figures are divided in such a way that the two groups experience their lives in different existential spaces and times. The term 'chronotope' is of interest here because of the reciprocity between the two groups and the dialogue between them; a dialogue in which they can intersect, confront each other and show understanding. Bakhtin emphasizes that chronotopes can be inclusive of each other, coexist, intertwine,

interchange, confront each other or maintain a more complex reciprocity (Bemong 2010: 3-17; Ladin 1999: 212-236). In this narrative fiction, the relationship is sharply confrontational and polar, and the dialogue is one of challenging what the other represents. Examination of the chronotope represented by the second group sheds light on the legitimization of offering an alternative existential narrative that proposes an order digressing from the familiar, normative narrative path. This chronotope is typically dynamic and does not purport to accept convention. The sharp criticism demonstrated by the narrator during the early Arab Renaissance expresses a different and subversive existential stance, and also indicates a different space and time that the speaker and his group represent. The refusal is expressed here in the strong resistance towards the spaces and times of the first group. Any attempt to shake up the chronotope of the first group means a complete upheaval of its existence. The chronotopic dialogue in this context indicates a deep schism between the two narratives, but it also indicates the legitimacy of critique, of expressing opinions that are essentially different. The importance of texts such as this one by Al-Khūrī lies in that first and foremost they protest the existing situation, and this protest enables discussion. The very fact of the discussion is a serious attempt to break through the epistemological framework. It is not about imposing opinions, but about exposure to a different kind of thinking.

The concept of chronotope in fact symbolizes the highlight of the traveler, i.e. there is no choice but to be the Arab who is proud of his country and its geographical and historical sites, and to live within a clear identity, with no denial of who you are. It is not possible to live with the other western group unless you establish personal defense mechanisms that prevent fatal identity blindness.

## Conclusion

The contents of Al-Khūrī's work reveal the role of literature in refining the modern thoughts and concepts that Al-Khūrī chose to publish in his journalistic endeavors. We can summarize the pioneering role of this narrative work: that of having preceded all the Arabic narrative attempts at the time of its publication.

In this field, Al-Khūrī prepared the way for the establishment of a new Arabic narrative discourse that derives its techniques from the non-canonic Arabic narrative heritage. He also prepared the atmosphere to get rid of artificial and traditionally accepted prose writing styles. By this, he also constituted a stepping stone for a new generation of Arab authors in Syria and Lebanon, who developed what he started. These authors include Fransīs al-Marrāsh (1836-1873), Salīm al-Bustānī (1848-1884), Nu'mān Qasāṭlī (1854-1920), and Jurjī Zaydān (1861-1914).

In this work, al-Khūrī developed the traditional role of the Arab traveler, raising him higher on the literary ladder, and turning him into a narrator that takes part in the structured plot. In my view, al-Khūrī influenced the writings of al-Bustānī, who developed this type of writing and created what we call, "geo-literature". The 'traveler' has changed from being merely a 'describer' who relays information into a romantic traveler who is aware of his collective role regarding the necessity of calling for adherence to the great heritage and for

a more careful, conscious imitation of the Western model. It has become the voice of the common history and collective wisdom that originate simultaneously from the individual and collective self (Compare the development of this role at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century regarding the novelistic self with Selim 2004:112-113).

The author's pioneering awareness of the reader's role in the narrative process appears clearly in this work. The author addresses him/her directly and is aware of the needs of readers who are still in the process of evolution. This awareness of the reader's role in the text leads the author to adopt modern writing techniques, which he exploits to promote his newspaper, like those he mentions in the course of the plot in Aleppo. This was an attempt to increase the sale of the newspaper in a city that was still in need, it seems, for this inserted advertisement wrapped within the plot of the novel, so that it would increase readership and sales.

Al-Khūrī's work falls within the confines of reproduction, rather than those of detachment from traditions. Using the words of Hans Robert Jauss, Al-Khūrī worked on developing the "horizon of expectations" (Jauss 1982: 22) regarding a renewed quality of Arab narrative discourse. This narrative discourse was not detached from the general aspects of the Arab traditional narrative, but served as a precursor of another game that differed from the traditional Arabic narrative heritage.

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# JOURNEYS ANCIENT AND MODERN: THE WRITINGS OF IBN BATTUTAH AND TIM MACKINTOSH-SMITH

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**Abstract.** A work of travel literature, in the modern sense, is not a specialist study but a mix of history, geography, sociology, anthropology and more as experienced by the author. Enduring works of travel literature provide, additionally, the sense of a personal quest and a measure of entertainment. This is true of the writings of one of the most famous Arab travellers, Ibn Battutah, whose 14<sup>th</sup> century journeys through the Islamic world and beyond spanned nearly thirty years. However, some early writers exaggerated or even fabricated adventures to satisfy readers' expectations, and, in the absence of proof, the accuracy of their accounts may be questioned. For example, doubts were cast on whether Ibn Battutah had in fact reached China as he reported. Thus, a modern phenomenon is the 'replica' traveller who seeks to recreate a historical journey because of a fascination with its story and curiosity as to how far it is achievable and authentic. Part of Ibn Battutah's travels were replicated by the Arabist and writer Tim Mackintosh-Smith, whose trilogy of works on his travels complements Ibn Battutah's account and verifies many of his claims. This paper will discuss the contributions of both Ibn Battutah and Mackintosh-Smith to travel literature in very different eras, and show how their works provide not only a comprehensive account of the countries and cultures encountered but also an insight into their character and motivation.

**Keywords:** *Ibn Battutah, Tim Mackintosh-Smith, travel literature, replica journey, culture, Arabia, Asia.*

## Introduction

Abu Abdulla Muhammad Ibn Battutah's travels through Africa, Europe and Asia, conceived with the aim of making the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, spanned 29 years, beginning in 1325 and ending in 1354, and nearly 75,000 miles. On his return, at the request of the Sultan of Morocco, Abu Inan Faris, he recorded his experiences, relating them, as was customary at that time, through a professional writer, Ibn Juzayy; this was possibly, as Tim Mackintosh-Smith surmises, "to empurple the Tangerine's [Ibn Battutah's] prose" (2002a: 43). The resulting book is known as Ibn Battutah's *Rihla*, or *Travels* (the full title, translated, is something like "The Precious Gift of Lookers into the Marvels of Cities and Wonders of Travel" (Mackintosh-Smith 2002a: 4). The book was first known in the West in about 1800, though the first translation into English, by Gibb and Beckingham for the Hakluyt Society, did not appear until the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: xiii). There have been various abridgements, with one school of thought decrying any shortening of the original; this article uses Mackintosh-Smith's abridged translation, in which, while acknowledging the arguments against omitting material, he points out that there are many

lengthy sections which add little to the story and others which were not Ibn Battutah's work but were added by Ibn Juzayy (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: xiv).

Mackintosh-Smith was first attracted towards the journeys of Ibn Battutah on discovering a copy of his *Travels* in a Yemen bookshop, which duly led to the urge to recreate part of his itinerary in a journey of his own. He finds Ibn Battutah to be a remarkably modern and accessible writer, which adds to his fascination with his experiences. Ibn Battutah's *Travels* provide numerous instances of this assessment, while Mackintosh-Smith's trilogy recording his travels six centuries later is written with a similar eye for detail and astute perception of human nature.

Travel literature, in the modern sense, does not simply focus on a specific field of study but does much more, providing a range of social, anthropological, geographical, historical and other information. Further, it usually presents the traveller as a distinct personality, as is true of both Ibn Battutah's exaggeration and fabrication works. The latter's trilogy not only enhances the observations of Ibn Battutah but is a multifaceted and highly readable work of travel in its own right. Both works provide a fascinating array of facts and insights into the cultures experienced as well as portraits of the two authors, while Mackintosh-Smith's work additionally illustrates the significance of the undertaking of a 'replica' journey.

## Literature Review

Numerous researchers on Ibn Battutah comment on the significance of his journeys and subsequent written account. In one such work, Roxanne Euben, discussing both Muslim and Western travellers, aims to "investigate the connections among travel, theory, and knowledge in several representative texts of the *rihla* genre...in which the association among travel, theory, and political wisdom is particularly salient" (2006: 14). She addresses the key question of the reliability of Ibn Battutah's work:

Attempting to make sense of his often inconsistent dating and confusing chronologies, for example, some scholars have concluded on the basis of historical, geographical, and archaeological evidence that Ibn Battuta (and/or Ibn Juzayy) simply lied about several of his trips, fabricated encounters, and heavily plagiarized earlier travel accounts. One scholar has attributed these failings to a combination of laziness, dishonesty, and a "certain slovenliness of mind." Others suggest that for Ibn Battuta, accuracy was simply less important than adhering to certain literary rituals, exaggerating his own accomplishments, or providing a Maghribi audience with the range of tales and journeys they would expect and enjoy. (2006: 46-47)

L.P. Harvey observes that exaggeration and fabrication were almost expected features of the travel narratives of Ibn Battutah's time and suggests that one has to regard these as a tradition rather than a deliberate falsification:

A late medieval travel writer such as Ibn Battuta (or Marco Polo) was, in his day, catering for a readership with certain expectations – for example that those who went voyaging to distant climes would encounter marvels. The modern reader who enjoys

travel writing of the modern kind does not know what to make of a narrative which, while truthful in part, contains accounts of marvels such as could never exist (2007: 5).

One can only imagine the reactions of the readers or listeners of Ibn Battutah's day, and these would have been influenced by the fact that they had little means of establishing the truth or otherwise of his reports. D. Waines surmises that

By their very nature, travel narratives of distant, unfamiliar, even unknown places would have stirred mixed reactions among their audiences, who absorbed these accounts by reading or by listening to them read aloud. Some received them, as intended by their authors, as diversionary entertainment; others felt they had learned about exciting new and mysterious worlds. But there were inevitably the sceptics (2010: 5).

Today, travellers are well aware that any inaccuracy, however remote the setting, is likely to be discovered and raise comment, and that, whether as a result of their own travels or the mass of information available through all kinds of media, modern readers are usually vastly more critical. Early travellers may have felt a greater obligation to supply facts and details which today would be largely superfluous as being already well documented, but on the other hand they had scope for exaggeration and even fabrication with little likelihood of exposure. Mackintosh-Smith, while acknowledging that there are many unexplained incidents in Ibn Battutah's writings, does, however, succeed in establishing the authenticity of certain of his claims through his research and subsequent journeying.

Ross Dunn, in his analytical work *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta*, sees a multifaceted approach in Ibn Battutah's travels, describing him as at once a pilgrim, a mystic and a scholar, "an educated adventurer" (2005: 11). He makes apposite comments on Ibn Battutah's apparent intention of projecting a particular persona (2005: 312) and also on the possibility, as Euben too mentions, that Ibn Juzayy had made extensive use of existing works of travel to describe Ibn Battutah's recollections (Dunn 2005: 313-4).

### **Mackintosh-Smith's motivation for his journeys**

Mackintosh-Smith discovers on his first reading of the *Travels* the essential humanity in Ibn Battutah's account, which displays his character "a soft heart, a big head, a huge libido" (Mackintosh-Smith 2002a: 10) as well as physical problems such as blisters which are "curiously modern, a well-trodden topos of current travel literature" (Mackintosh-Smith 2002a: 10). He is led inexorably towards making the repeat expedition: "But I knew that cerebral travel was not enough: from those very first words – 'My departure from Tangier, my birthplace...' my feet had been itching for the physical, visitable past" (2002a: 11) and he mulls over his ideas:

I began to think of my journey as a sort of Proustian, inverse archaeology. Instead of recreating past lives by examining objects and places, I would start with a life – IB's – and go off in search of its memorabilia, fragments of existence withdrawn from time (2002a: 12).

Mackintosh-Smith's journey is necessarily selective in its length and destinations; he comments, with typical humour, "I have left gaps, and sometimes big ones. I only wish I had the odd thirty years to spare, and IB's enviable knack of extracting large amounts of cash, robes and slaves from compliant rulers" (2002a: Prefatory Note). Whereas Ibn Battutah's route covered over forty countries, Mackintosh-Smith visits relatively few. The project nevertheless achieves his aim of living Ibn Battutah's journey rather than just reading about it. One underlying objective of his subsequent writings, according to an interview with Justin Marozzi, is to combat "Western ignorance of the great variety of the Arab world" (Marozzi 2006).

### **Ibn Battutah's and Mackintosh-Smith's writings**

Ibn Battutah's *Travels* contains a wealth of detail, a mixture of factual description and poetic prose, an emphasis on religion and morality, with a certain amount of judgment as to the social practices he encountered, accounts of dreams and their interpretations, and a number of anecdotes of varying degrees of plausibility. As with typical travel works, it is multi-purpose in nature, offering the reader historical information, architectural description, an insight into customs and beliefs, an element of moral guidance, and a profusion of character sketches and comments on human nature. The largely chronological narrative juxtaposes the significant with the mundane, and there is a measure of repetition, for instance in the descriptions of clothing and food, but overall the freshness of the reporting (despite the lapse of time between the events and the writing, and the fact that he was not the writer) is striking.

The meticulous detail in many of Ibn Battutah's descriptions provides a photographic-like image of people and places. He specifies the dimensions of a lighthouse in Alexandria with mathematical precision:

The breadth of the passage in its interior is nine spans; and the breadth of the wall ten spans; the breadth of the lighthouse on each of its four faces is 140 spans. It is situated on a high mound and lies at a distance of one farsakh [three miles] from the city on a long tongue of land" (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 7).

On other occasions, in contrast, he breaks into poetic diction, as in this comment on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem: "it glows like a mass of light and flashes with the gleam of lightning; the eyes of him who would gaze on its splendours are dazzled" (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 27). Elsewhere, he describes Alexandria as "a unique pearl of glowing opalescence" (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 6). Whether in recording exact proportions or presenting an overall impression of a scene, his words serve as the visual aids unavailable (other than in paintings) in his time; he conveys not only facts but also a sense of beauty and wonder. Food is often given detailed attention; for example, he explains the taste and composition of a mango, a fruit probably unknown to most of his audience (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 90).

Mackintosh-Smith shows a similar attention to detail, for example in reporting information from a “Tamil coconut consultant” whom he meets on a train: “In Tamil Nadu the yield was 150 n.p.p.a. (nuts per palm per annum), in Kerala currently only 80 n.p.p.a. owing to a beetle-borne disease. A council of insecticidal war was to be held at the Coconut Research Station, where a bunch of like-minded experts hung out” (2005: 250). However, the intention here is clearly to parody the earnest consultant in a typically tongue-in-cheek manner. Elsewhere, his descriptions are visual and atmospheric rather than scientific, as in the following: “Latouche-Mumtaz House, a building as eclectic as its name: Andalusian horseshoe arches topped with Dutch gables and finished with Mughal crenellations formed a large pink quadrangle, divided by a transept of silver-trunked palms” (2005: 127). Both writers aim to transport the reader to the place in question through their choice of words; only the style, not the intention, differs.

### **Mackintosh-Smith’s role as authenticator**

In the first part of his trilogy, *Travels with a Tangerine*, Mackintosh-Smith recounts his arrival in Alexandria after travelling through Morocco. Little of Ibn Battutah’s Alexandria is visible, but “the great column raised in honour of Diocletian in AD 300” still remains, signposted for visitors, but now opposite “an exceedingly ugly block of flats” (2002a: 54). One objective of Mackintosh-Smith’s journey is necessarily to search for physical landmarks from the *Travels*, but equally important to him are the atmosphere and incidents that mark foreign travel and in this case his perception of recreating a journey not only physically but emotionally. Hence, he is disappointed with the experience of Alexandria as a whole: “My maudlin state persisted; darkened by the feeling that I wasn’t getting anywhere near IB or his Alexandria, it threatened to turn into one of ennui” (2002a: 54). In Cairo, he is taken to the site of the Convent of the Relics, where Ibn Battutah had stayed, to find only the remains of walls. “I tried to imagine how it had looked in the 1320s, to rebuild mentally IB’s enormous convent, and failed. Even the Nile, which in his day flowed by the gardens, had receded to the west” (2002a: 96). Luxor proves similarly disappointing: “IB’s ‘pretty little place’ had disappeared beneath hotels and papyrus showrooms” (2002a: 117). Mackintosh-Smith subsequently follows Ibn Battutah’s path through India and is able to reflect more positively on his quest in *The Hall of a Thousand Columns*, the second part of the trilogy:

By writing what old Arab authors call a dhayl - a literary ‘tail’ to the first part of the Travels, I had attached myself, inseparably, to the traveller. I spent more time with IB than with anyone living. His movements directed mine, my actions were drawn from the deep well of his memories. I was his alter ego, and the volume that bore my name was the result of a collaboration (2006: 13).

Despite the inevitable differences in the two journeys, a kind of metamorphosis has taken place; for Mackintosh-Smith, the journey has by now become its own reason for existing and he needs no justification or reassurance.

As Euben and others point out, and Mackintosh-Smith also discusses, there is in the *Travels* arguably a mixture of truth and exaggeration or actual inaccuracy. As mentioned, Harvey comments that Ibn Battutah may have been trying to fulfil his readers' expectation of marvels with some of the outlandish stories recounted (2007: 4). To some stories Ibn Battutah adds the disclaimer that they are ones he was told by others – as may indeed have been the case – thus relieving him of the responsibility of telling a direct untruth. One disputed account is that of the procession for the arrival of the Sultan of Delhi in his capital, where Ibn Battutah saw “three or four small catapults set up on elephants throwing dinars and dirhams among the people” (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 171), and recounted a similar incident in which “parcels of gold and silver coins” were thrown (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 188). According to Mackintosh-Smith, Ibn Khaldun, the 14<sup>th</sup> century traveller and historian, mentioned in his work *Prolegomena* the scepticism with which this tale was received (2006: 15). However, his own research indicated that “the scattering of coins in this manner is attested in local histories of the sultanate of Delhi” (2002b: 317).

Likewise, doubts were raised as to whether Ibn Battutah did in fact reach China. Mackintosh-Smith, on his own journey, takes pains to find an inscription (whose existence he discovered during his research) on a tablet in an old mosque in Quanzhou with the name of Burhan al-Din, who is mentioned by Ibn Battutah (2010: 195). He is duly taken by his Chinese guide to a granite slab with Chinese characters spelling the name, and feels that “this inscription was enough to vindicate IB. It is the touchstone of his travels east, the landfall of a trajectory that took off way back in Alexandria with the prophecy of that first Burhan al-Din” (2010: 203). Whether absolute proof or not, the incident is testimony to the possibility of tracing connections and making deductions even at a distance of six centuries. Regarding another discovery which he feels offers “startling evidence” of Ibn Battutah’s accuracy, Mackintosh-Smith reflects that “to find...a certain piece of furniture seen by him in an obscure Anatolian mosque, still in the same spot 670 years on, is a spine-tingling experience” (2002b, xviii). In general, Mackintosh-Smith takes every opportunity to seek out local knowledge and synthesise the information received in order to assess the veracity or otherwise of Ibn Battutah’s pronouncements.

### **Cultural and religious issues in both authors’ writings**

As regards cultural observation, Ibn Battutah acts sometimes as a mere onlooker reporting the facts, sometimes as a critic. In the latter case, he is often prompted by religious beliefs or simply an innate morality which cries out against violence and injustice. He comments with interest on the different religious customs of Muslims, Christians and Jews (and exhibits occasional prejudice despite his overall humanistic tone). He carries a certain amount of influence, and, indeed, as was the practice, is appointed to various official positions during his travels by the rulers he meets, notably being assigned as Delhi’s Ambassador to China by Sultan Mohammad Shah (Mackintosh-Smith 2006: 113). As a foreigner and outsider, he is apparently allowed to pass judgments which would be forbidden to the nationals of the country. In one example, he enforces modesty in an Egyptian bath house after finding men uncovered:

This appeared a shocking thing to me, and I went to the governor and informed him of it. He told me not to leave and ordered the lessees of all the bath houses to be brought before him. Articles were formally drawn up then and there making them subject to penalties if any person should enter a bath without a waist-wrapper, and the governor behaved to them with the greatest severity (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 21).

Mackintosh-Smith describes him humorously as “IB, that crusader against bath-house nudity” (2002a: 154), recollecting the incident on a visit of his own to a Damascus bathhouse. In other episodes, Ibn Battutah advises an intoxicated Sultan not to drink wine, much to the approval of his courtiers (Mackintosh-Smith ed. 2002b: 67), and rails, though not publicly, at the extravagant purchases made by Turkish women at the bazaar in Tabriz in Persia (Mackintosh-Smith ed. 2002b: 79-80).

Particularly on his approach to Mecca, Ibn Battutah reveals a genuine religious devotion which illustrates the primary reason for his journey: “He [God] has created the hearts of men with an instinctive desire to seek these sublime sanctuaries” (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 46). There are extensive passages describing the pilgrimage and the ritual prayers and chants as well as comments on the Meccans’ good and devout qualities (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 48). Mackintosh-Smith, as a non-Muslim, obviously has other motivations for his journey than religious ones, and yet exhibits a thoughtful curiosity towards Islam and is open to religious discussions on the various occasions when people try to convert him. He welcomes invitations to *dhikr* - Sufi prayer meetings – as one aspect of his own anthropological explorations, as described in *Landfalls*, the third and final volume of the trilogy (2010: 330-31).

### **Revelations of character and emotion**

Ibn Battutah emerges as a colorful individual as well as a chronicler. As in Dunn’s comment mentioned above (2005: 312), a definite persona emerges from the narrative; we see an upright citizen and an educated and open-minded traveller, conscious of the need for diplomacy and politeness, though not above self-satisfaction. Recalling a hunting trip with the Sultan of Delhi, he proudly comments, “Indeed, I showed such vigour and energy that I left the city on the same day as the sultan while the rest of the court remained for two or three days after him” (Mackintosh-Smith ed. 2002b: 193). However, he is not afraid to reveal his weaknesses, displaying the humanity which first attracted Mackintosh-Smith to his work. Early in the *Travels*, Ibn Battutah recalls his arrival in Tunis, where:

“not a soul said a word of greeting to me, since there was none of them that I knew. I felt so sad at heart on account of my loneliness that I could not restrain the tears that started to my eyes, and wept bitterly” (Mackintosh-Smith ed. 2002b: 4-5).

When escaping from a gang of infidels in India, he describes the strain of trying to conceal himself and move unobserved, and recounts how he hid one night in a huge storage jar with a bird on top which “kept fluttering its wings most of the night – I suppose it was frightened, so we made a pair of frightened creatures” (Mackintosh-Smith, ed. 2002b: 205). He openly reveals the difference between his public persona, accepted and even revered by



the community, and the traveller, who is acutely aware at times of being in an alien and sometimes hostile environment.

Likewise, Mackintosh-Smith reveals his personality and emotions through his writing; he is a traveller independently recording his own impressions as well as one with a mission to follow the path prescribed by the *Travels* as accurately as possible. Were he to focus totally on the recreation of Ibn Battutah's journey, his account could lose its individuality and spontaneity; as it is, he combines the new and the old, not necessarily with direct comparisons but with an indication of the unchanging rituals and incidents of a journey regardless of era. He exhibits an overt sense of fun and even whimsy, deliberately introducing modern allusions as anachronisms to provide humour and enjoying the incongruity of the contrast between the ages. Meeting with an imam in Egypt, he could have been Ibn Battutah about to partake of the traditional refreshments of sherbet and sweetmeats with his host, but in this case "Sport Cola and biscuits were brought" (2002a: 70). Also in Egypt, "six hundred and seventy-one years, five months and three days after IB" (2002a: 51) he compares Lote-tree Gate Street, a shopping area of Alexandria, to "a sort of deconstructed Marks and Spencers" (2002a: 51). Mackintosh-Smith reflects on modern Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and how "IB would have loved Deira City Centre. He had a deeply bourgeois side and could be very old-fashioned about bazaar smells and rowdy shoppers" (2005: 20), and thinks that "the old Tangerine would have been tickled pink" (2005: 23) by the construction of the Ibn Battuta Shopping Mall in Dubai with themed zones representing six countries of his travels. In examining Ibn Battutah's character, Mackintosh-Smith inevitably indicates his own. Most of all, perhaps, he exhibits a similar sensitivity to cultures and, despite the extensive scholarship apparent in his work, an awareness that he is a guest who has much to learn.

### **The significance of the 'replica' journey**

How, then, are 'replica' journeys significant and valid forms of travel in an exploratory sense? Firstly, the replica traveller's curiosity is satisfied in a way that would not be possible through research into written works alone (although the journey must nevertheless be preceded by ample research if it is to fulfil its aims and become a noteworthy project). Mackintosh-Smith has clearly given full importance to the preliminary searches so that he not only follows the prompts of the *Travels* but also links them with his further discoveries regarding the places and people encountered by Ibn Battutah. His reading enriches his work with information on Ibn Battutah's contemporaries and other historical evidence which complements the *Travels*.

He may fail on some occasions to find the physical evidence he seeks of Ibn Battutah's journey or even the mood of his wanderings but on others manages to connect past and present like jigsaw puzzle pieces forming a whole. It is of course of particular significance when he manages to verify a previously disputed episode in the *Travels*. The juxtaposition of the modern and ancient experience is both readable and humorous and furthermore serves to make the point that the nature of travel *per se* does not change; then and now, it involves the same doubts and hardships alongside positive emotions and

rewarding experiences. There is a similar array of characters, helpful and hostile, sane and eccentric, all portrayed in the context of Self and Other which underlies the experience.

## Conclusion

Just as there can be no doubt that Ibn Battutah contributed substantially to the body of knowledge about the countries he visited and their peoples, Mackintosh-Smith's depiction of his journey carries its own informative value in the accounts of his modern-day experiences and discoveries, particularly because he is able to verify so much of what Ibn Battutah has described and thus validate some of the previously questioned aspects of the *Travels*. Though not exactly a pioneering venture into the unknown, the 'replica' journey undertaken is worthwhile in its own right and generates its own form of discovery.

Mackintosh-Smith's trilogy also emphasizes that human nature is essentially unchanged in six centuries. He succeeds in bringing Ibn Battutah as a character into the 21<sup>st</sup> century while revealing his own personality in the process. Comparing the two accounts, we feel that Ibn Battutah would have approved of Mackintosh-Smith's irreverence and love of the incongruous. They are, we might say, kindred spirits separated only by time.

Though travel writing has inevitably changed through the ages in both content and style, Mackintosh-Smith illustrates that perhaps there are more similarities than differences. By recreating the 14<sup>th</sup>-century journey of one of the best-known travellers in history, he arguably encourages readers through his works to ignore the discrepancy in time and seek out the earlier accounts for themselves to find their own modern parallels.

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**ABDULLAH & RICHARD F. BURTON: ISLAM AND OTHERNESS IN  
PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF A PILGRIMAGE TO AL-MADINAH & MECCAH  
(1855-56)**

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**Abstract.** This is a study about identities, relationships to the “Other,” and the questioning of the concept of difference. At its core are two figures, which are ultimately one and the same. The source is the *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah & Meccah* (1855-56), by British explorer Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890). By donning the guise of the Muslim *Shaykh* Abdullah, Burton was able to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca, the *hajj*, a sacred ritual in Islam in which non-Muslims are forbidden to take part. This is thus a study of the representation of the Muslim “Other” – or, rather, of the representation of oneself as the “Other.” It is argued that the narrative presents a tension between two narrators, Burton (the book is written in first person) and Abdullah (generally referred to in the third person). Abdullah emerges as a disruptive presence in the narrative, destabilizing assumptions as to where protagonism lies. This study reflects on the nature of Abdullah’s relationship to Burton and analyzes how he is perceived by other characters, Muslim and non-Muslim; just as the nature of identity is neither fixed nor impermeable, the character shifts and evolves over the course of the work.

**Keywords:** *Richard Francis Burton; Islam; Pilgrimage; Travel Literature; Identity.*

Richard Francis Burton is a well-known nineteenth-century character. An explorer, anthropologist, ethnologist, translator, diplomat, military officer and agent of the British Empire, he wrote many books on his travels through Asia, Africa, North and South America.

Born in Torquay, Devon, in 1821, Burton moved a few years later with his family to Tours, in France; starting when he was nine years old, his family moved fourteen times in ten years, from France to Italy. In 1840, he went to study at Trinity College, in Oxford, where he showed a great interest in learning foreign languages. Burton already knew French, Italian and a couple of French dialects, and he started to study Latin and classical Greek, as well as Arabic at the home of his teacher, Dr. William Alexander Greenhill (1814-1894).

Burton did not finish his formal education, however; he was expelled from Oxford in March 1842 because he attended a horse race that the college had forbidden. He then successfully convinced his father to obtain a position for him in the East India Company (EIC) army. Later that year, he arrived in Bombay (present-day Mumbai). During his stay in the country, he learned many languages, including Hindustani, Gujarati, Portuguese and Persian – he apparently learned at least 25 languages over the course of his life. With this knowledge, he became an interpreter for the Company, for which he worked as an officer

for more than ten years, while organizing explorations financed by the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) to the Middle East and East and Central Africa.

His best-known travels are likely the expeditions he carried out with John Hanning Speke (1827-1864) in search of the source of the river Nile. They diverged on the exact spot of the source: Burton believed it was in Lake Tanganyika, while Speke thought it was in Lake Victoria. This disagreement led to a dispute that ended only in 1864, with the tragic demise of Speke, who died of a gunshot wound under mysterious circumstances. Amidst these tussles, in 1861 Burton married Isabel Arundell, whose family had important connections that set him on the road to a diplomatic career. He was sent to the island of Fernando Pó, off the western coast of Africa; in 1865, he was sent to a consulate in Brazil; and in 1869 he would be posted in Damascus, in Syria. In 1871 he was transferred to Trieste, where he translated and published the *Kama Sutra* (1883), *The Perfumed Garden* (1886) and *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (1885-1888); in 1886 he obtained the title of “sir,” and he passed away in October 20th 1890, felled by a heart attack.

*Pilgrimage* is a travelogue that narrates Burton’s pilgrimage to Mecca between April and September 1853 under the guise of a Muslim named Abdullah, since the *hajj* is forbidden to non-Muslims. It was originally published in three volumes between 1855 and 1856. The first volume is dedicated to Burton’s stay in Egypt, his arrival in Alexandria, his journey to Cairo, where he improved on his Muslim identity, the Suez crossing, his setbacks in a pilgrimage boat while going to Yanbu, and his arrival at Medina. The second volume is devoted to Medina and its surroundings, where he visited the sacred sites of Islam, such as Muhammad’s tomb, and his path to Mecca; it also contains a very detailed ethnographic description of Medina’s inhabitants and the bedouins of Hejaz. The third volume describes the city of Mecca, the places of worship, the rituals that the believers must execute in order to complete the *hajj*, and his return to Egypt through Jeddah.

John Gardiner Wilkinson (1797-1875) edited the first publication of *Pilgrimage*. According to Edward Rice (1990: 202), Wilkinson “was a man of some fame but minor talents and little competence to edit Burton, being an Egyptologist, not an Arabist,” and he “deleted some passages that he considered ‘unpleasant garbage’ and reduced others to footnotes in Latin, a language common among educated Englishmen (and women) that it might as well have been left alone” – this was the case of a passage concerning female circumcision. To the eyes of the Orientalist and archaeologist Stanley Lane-Poole (1854-1931), *Pilgrimage* “was saved from the ‘top shelf’ only by the circumstance of the author’s absence from England,” for Wilkinson “remarked that the amount of unpleasant garbage which he took upon himself to reject would have rendered the book unfit for publication” (Lane-Poole apud Assad 1964: 31).

In Rice’s description, *Pilgrimage* would go through many editions: four during Burton’s lifetime (the first one in 1855-6; in 1857, in two volumes; in 1874, in three volumes; and in 1879, as a single volume), and another four editions after the author’s death (including the memorial edition of 1893, which is probably the most complete of them all) – with each edition varying in turn.

The ambivalence of Burton’s character was reflected in his relationship with non-European cultures. Apart from the languages, he showed great interest in learning about Eastern religions, such as Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. The fact that he preferred to wear local clothes, follow local habits and hang around with non-Europeans led his military

colleagues to refer to him as a “white nigger” (Burton, I 1893: v. 1, 123). Throughout his life, Burton played up this narrative of his life in order for people to question his identity, as he was sometimes described as “civilized” and at other times, as an “amateur barbarian.”<sup>1</sup> He probably liked to keep up this indefiniteness because of the pleasure that he felt in shocking the sensibilities of his contemporaries in a strict Victorian society.<sup>2</sup> His obituary in *The Times* observed that “with barbarism he had almost more sympathy than with civilisation” (The Times apud Kennedy 2005: 13).

It was in Sind (in modern Pakistan) that Burton started to disguise himself as an “Oriental”. While working for the Sind Survey, he gathered information on the environment and human population of the region. When he tried to hide his European identity, he observed that he was able to gain better access to Sind societies, collecting more information for his superior, General Charles Napier (1782-1853), while he satisfied his curiosity as to the local inhabitants.

After experimenting different disguises, Burton created an identity that was unlikely to raise suspicions: the peddler Mirza Abdullah of Bushehr, of Arab and Persian ancestry, “such as may be met with in thousands along the northern shore of the Persian Gulf” (Burton, I 1893: v. 1, 155). This origin would explain his peculiar pronunciation of the local dialect. Even though Burton had never visited this area, he had read a lot about it, so he would know that Bushehr (in modern Iran) was then one of the most important ports in the Persian Gulf, where there was a constant traffic of peoples from various regions, and products such as cotton fabrics, coffee, sugar, pearls, and slaves. It was, in the words of Thomas McDow (2010: 497), borrowing a term coined by Mary Louise Pratt (1992), a “contact zone” for the Arab and Persian worlds and the Indian Ocean, just as Sind was a focal point for Persians, Indians, Baluchis, Punjabis and Afghans. These were sites where commerce and European imperialism would become important in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Burton also took advantage of his knowledge of Shia Islam, learned from his Persian *munshi* (a private tutor), Mirza Mohammed Hosayn of Shiraz, who kept him company in his incursions into villages in order to help if needed (Burton, I. 1893). In terms of his physical appearance, Burton darkened his skin with walnut juice and henna, wore a wig, and grew a great beard.

Mirza Abdullah first appeared in *Falconry in the Valley of Indus* (1852), going from village to village in Sind; in *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah & Meccah* he takes the name of *Shaykh* Abdullah; in *First footsteps in East Africa or, an exploration of Harar* (1856), he takes the title of *Haji*<sup>3</sup> Abdullah, since he completed the *hajj*, in order to reach the sacred city of Harar (in modern Ethiopia), at the time forbidden for non-Muslims; and he is also the author of the poem *The kasidah of Haji Abdu al-Yezdi*, written in 1853 right after the pilgrimage, but only published in 1880. These four books show Abdullah’s journey: if in *Falconry* we witness his birth and in *First footstesp*s his demise,

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<sup>1</sup> Burton used this expression to describe himself in *First footsteps in East Africa or an exploration of Harar* (1856: v. 1, 26).

<sup>2</sup> In Jonathan Bishop’s (1957: 124) view, Burton wanted at the same time to keep his image of a rebel and be “loved by the world he shocked”.

<sup>3</sup> This i shows that Burton writes the term in the Latin alphabet.

since the disguise was revealed in the narrative, *Pilgrimage* can be seen as Abdullah's climax, because he successfully completed all the rites of the *hajj*, one of the five pillars of Islam.

Curiously, *Pilgrimage* it is not a guide to the *hajj*, since the pilgrimage is not the true subject of the book. The descriptions of the pilgrim rites do not explain their religious meaning, much less the overall significance of the pilgrimage for Muslims – that is, to renew the alliance between Allah and Abraham and his people. The leading thread is Burton's personal journey, so the focus of the narrative is on himself and his individual experiences. The book's title reveals just that: it is a "personal narrative" of a pilgrimage, narrated in the first person by Richard Francis Burton, the explorer. Chapter One makes that clearer: while telling the reader what made him take on the disguise of a Muslim to undertake the pilgrimage, he justifies the title by saying that "it is the personal that interests mankind," quoting a passage from the book *Coningsby; or the New Generation* (1844), by British author and politician Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 4). He also observed that "in order to appear suddenly as an Easterner upon the stage of Oriental life; and as this recital may be found useful by future adventurers, I make no apology for the egotistical semblance of the narrative" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 5). So he introduces himself as an actor taking the role of an "Eastern" character upon the "stage of Oriental life," following British tastes in theater – this story was set against an exotic backdrop, constantly overshadowed by the threat that Burton's true European identity might be revealed.

Abdullah's identity changed according to Burton's needs and external circumstances. When he embarked on the boat from Southampton to Alexandria, Abdullah began life as a "Persian prince," wearing "Oriental" clothes; even his belongings were altered so they would look "exceedingly Oriental" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 5). Burton spent thirteen days practicing "Oriental manners", based on the "difference between a gentleman and his reverse – namely, that both perform the same offices of life, but each in a several and widely different way – is notably as applicable to the manners of the Eastern as of the Western man" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, p. 5). In his view, then, the Westerner is seen as a reflection of the Easterner.

Burton's reference for the average "Oriental" was based on the Indian Muslim, since he had lived many years in that region. It is possible that his knowledge of the Muslim faith was not limited to European Orientalist authors (like Edward Lane), but also took in Islamic religious literature and Muslim authors (such as Ibn Battuta and Ibn Jubayr), as well as his personal experience. But he never departed from the classical Orientalist discourse that offered "Orientals who could be described" (Said 1979: 95). As Pallavi Pandit Laisram (2006: 148) observed, Burton regards the Oriental as a "distinct type of personality, functioning in one consistent manner, regardless of time, place, or circumstance. [...] Since the Oriental [...] has no inner individual life, the narrative is rife with generalizations that assume the Orient to be one static, isolated type." The traveller also makes "derogatory generalizations about British temperament but these do not represent a static externalized perception of the British" (Pallavi 2006: 148).

When Burton arrived in Alexandria, he rejoiced "to see that by dint of a beard and a shaven head [he] had succeeded" in "misleading the inquisitive spirit of the populace" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 8)

The mingled herd of spectators before whom we passed in review on the landing-place, hearing an audible "Alhamdulillah" whispered "Muslim!" The infant population spared me the compliments usually addressed to hatted heads; and when a little boy, presuming that the occasion might possibly open the hand of generosity, looked in my face and exclaimed "Bakhshish", he obtained in reply a "Mafish;" which convinced the bystanders that the sheep-skin covered a real sheep. (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 8)

This is the first time that Burton shows the reader that he "fooled" the "natives" with his disguise. The fact that he uses the term "infant population" follows a very common colonial trope that represents the colonized as a primitive stage of individual human progress or of cultural development as a whole (Shohat; Stam 1994).

However, this successful deception was not the rule, since he encountered many Muslims who saw him as an *ajami*, "a Persian as opposed to an Arab, not a good Mohammedan like themselves, but, still, better than nothing" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 11). Afterwards, he changed Abdullah's identity to an Indian doctor, attending sick people. After one month in Alexandria, he decided to take on the disguise of a wandering dervish (a Sufi ascetic), changing the title "de Mirza" (associated with the Persians) to "Shaykh" Abdullah.

When Burton was travelling in a boat from Alexandria to Cairo, he befriended Haji Wali, a Muslim from Russia, who became his guide in the Egyptian capital. He discovered Burton's real identity and, thanks to his advice, the explorer changed Abdullah's origins so that he would have no connections to Persians, since he would face many difficulties: "in Egypt you will be cursed; in Arabia you will be beaten because you are a heretic; you will pay the treble of what other travellers do, and if you fall sick you may die by the roadside" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 44).

Burton also explained that the reader would see in future chapters "the uncomfortable consequences of my having appeared in Egypt as a Persian. Although I found out the mistake, and worked hard to correct it, the bad name stuck to me; bazar reports fly quicker and hit harder than newspaper paragraphs" (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 14). So this suspicion that he was really a Persian, a Shia Muslim, followed him throughout his journey. As McDow stresses, Mirza Abdullah "did not move as freely in Alexandria as he had in Sind and western India. In India his contradictions were easily hidden, but in Egypt Arabs looked down on Persians" (Mcdow 2010: 501).

Burton chose the character of the wandering dervish because:

No character in the Moslem world is so proper for disguise as that of the Dervish. It is assumed by all ranks, ages, and creeds [...] Further, the Dervish is allowed to ignore ceremony and politeness, as one who ceases to appear upon the stage of life; he may pray or not, marry or remain single as he pleases, be respectable in cloth of frieze as in cloth of gold, and no one asks him — the chartered vagabond — Why he comes here? or Wherefore he goes there? [...] The more haughty and offensive he is to the people, the more they respect him; a decided advantage to the traveller of choleric temperament. In the hour of imminent danger, he has only to become a maniac, and he is safe; a madman in the East, like a notably eccentric character in the West, is allowed to say or do whatever the spirit directs. (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 14-15)



After deliberating on the potential nations that Abdullah might take on, Burton decided that his double would be a pathan<sup>4</sup> - born in India of Afghan parents who established themselves in the country, educated in Rangoon (modern day Yangon, in Myanmar, the former Burma) and “sent out to wander, as men of that race frequently are, from early youth”. He said he was “well guarded against the danger of detection by a fellow-countryman”. To support the character he required a knowledge of Persian, Hindustani and Arabic, all of which he knew “sufficiently well to pass muster; any trifling inaccuracy was charged upon my long residence at Rangoon” (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 45).

This was an important step; the first question at the shop, on the camel, and in the Mosque, is ‘What is thy name?’, the second, ‘Whence comest thou?’ This is not generally impertinent, or intended to be annoying (...) I assumed the polite, plaint manners of an Indian physician, and the dress of a small Effendi (or gentleman), still, however, representing myself to be a Darwaysh, and frequenting the places where Darwayshes congregate. (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 45)

Haji Wali also gave him other recommendations as to how a dervish should behave:

“What business”, asked the Haji, “have those reverend men with politics or statistics, or any of the information which you are collecting? Call yourself a religious wanderer if you like, and let those who ask you the object of your peregrinations know that you are under a vow to visit all the holy places in Al-Islam. Thus you will persuade them that you are a man of rank under a cloud, and you will receive much more civility than perhaps you deserve. (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 45-46)

Burton guaranteed that Haji Wali’s remarks proved his “sagacity,” and he did not repent “having been guided by his advice” (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 46).

In order to distance himself from Abdullah, Burton wanted to not have good knowledge of English and Italian, languages that he mastered fully. This attempt was sometimes unsuccessful, since both voices are intertwined in certain passages of the narrative. In Alexandria, Burton wrote:

*I inquired when the boat started, upon which he referred to me, as I had spoken bad Italian, to the advertisement. I pleaded inability to read or write, whereupon he testily cried Alle nove! alle nove!-at nine! at nine! Still appearing uncertain, I drove him out of his chair, when he rose with a curse and read 8 A.M. (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 27) (italics mine)*

Even though he tries to keep a distance from Abdullah, it is clear in this passage that, when using the first person to address his Muslim double, he confused himself with

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<sup>4</sup> Burton (2014: v. 1, 45) explained that a “pathan” meant “the Indian name of an Afghan, supposed to be a corruption of the Arabic Fat’hán (a conqueror), or a derivation from the Hindustani *paithna*, to penetrate (into the hostile ranks). It is an honourable term in Arabia, where “Khurásani” (a native of Khorasan), leads men to suspect a Persian, and the other generic appellation of the Afghan tribes “Sulaymani,” a descendant from Solomon, reminds the people of their proverb, “Sulaymání hárámí!” — “the Afghans are ruffians!”

Abdullah. But in this passage – “We then chatted in English, which Haji Akif spoke well, but with all manner of courier’s phrases; Haji Abdullah so badly, that he was counselled a course of study” (Burton, R. 2014: v. 2, 261) – Burton distanced himself from Abdullah using the third person to address his Muslim double, even if it is to show the reader that he was very “clever” in fooling another fellow pilgrim.

But this was actually rare; the group of pilgrims that he joined in Suez, for example, actually suspected that he was not who he said he was, but since they depended financially on him to complete the journey, they turned a blind eye to the matter. Burton observed that he “accidentally” encountered one of his companions, Omar Effendi, from Daguestan, in the streets of Cairo after returning from the pilgrimage:

I never owned having played a part, to avoid shocking prejudices; and though he must have suspected me, - for the general report was, that an Englishman, disguised as a Persian, had performed the pilgrimage, measured the country, and sketched the buildings, - he had the gentlemanly feeling never to allude to the past. We parted, when I went to India, on the best of terms. (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 167)

Burton, in a few moments, admits that his disguise was not flawless, and that these faults were detected by some of his companions, even though he repeatedly declares in the book that he “misled” the Muslims.

Abdullah also passed as an Arab pilgrim by following the advice of another fellow pilgrim, Amm Jemal, in order to avoid a tax that foreigners must pay. Amm Jemal also recommended that Burton only speak to his Indian slave, Shaykh Núr, in Arabic. Even so, Amm Jemal suspected Burton’s true identity, since he asked one of the explorer’s companions where he had met that “Hindi.” In response, Burton bellowed indignantly: “Are we, the Afghans, the Indian-slayers, become Indians?” [and] brought the thing home to his feelings, by asking him how he, an Arab, would like to be called an Egyptian, a Fella?” (Burton, R. 2014: v. 1, 243). The different identities that Abdullah assumed in *Pilgrimage* derive from Burton’s self-consciousness in relation to the reactions of the other characters.

It is important, however, to point out that Burton was not the first non-Muslim European to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The first may have been the Italian aristocrat Ludovico di Varthema (c. 1470-1517) in 1503, who wrote *Itinerario de Ludouico de Varthema Bolognese* and apparently converted to Islam to make the *hajj*. Austrian Johann Wild (1585-1619) visited the sacred cities as a slave in 1607, and told his story in *Neue Reysbeschreibung eines Gefangenen Christen* [New description of a journey of a captive Christian]. When he was captured by Muslim pirates in the end of the seventeenth century, Englishman Joseph Pitts was enslaved and forced to convert to Islam, in order to make the pilgrimage with his master; his memoirs were published in 1704 as *A true and faithful account of the religion and manners of the Mohammedans, with an account of the author’s being taken captive*.

In 1807, the Spaniard Domingo Badia y Leblich (1767-1818) made the trip under the name Ali Bei al-Abbasi, and published a book entitled *Voyages d’Ali Bei en Afrique et en Asie pendant les années 1803 à 1807* [Travels of Ali Bei in Africa and Asia between 1803 and 1807]. The Italian Giovanni Finati [1786-1829(?)], a former Ottoman soldier who participated in military campaigns during the *hajj*, published his memoirs in two volumes

in 1815: *Narrative of the life and adventures of Giovanni Finati, native of Ferrara who, under the assumed name of Mahomet, made the campaigns against the Wahabees for the recovery of Mecca and Medina and since acted as interpreter to European travellers in some parts least visited of Asia and Africa.* The Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burekhardt (1784-1817), who discovered the city of Petra (located in present day Jordan), undertook the pilgrimage disguised as a Muslim Indian merchant and died before he could return to Europe; his travel diaries were published posthumously in 1829 as *Travels in Arabia*.

Burton was aware that the “written descriptions by hearsay” of the rites and ceremonies of the *hajj* “were common enough in all languages, European as well as native,” but none of them “satisfied” him, “because none seemed practically to know anything about the matter. So to this preparation I devoted all my time and energy,” having always harbored a “desire” to visit Mecca during the pilgrimage season. (Burton, I. 1893: v. 1, 150). Burton ultimately wanted to experience the experience of making the *hajj* firsthand.

Even though Burton said that he was initiated in India into the Sufi order *qadiriyyah*, he was not a converted Muslim. For the Muslim believer, the pilgrimage is a “performance of a complex sequence of symbolic actions,” which leads to a transformation that purifies oneself (Turner, 1979: 64). We cannot know what the meaning the pilgrimage held for Burton, since he was not a Muslim and he did not reveal anything of the sort in his writings. However, we may reflect on the Sufist idea that the true pilgrimage is an internal one – to reach God, one needs to follow a mystical path inside oneself. For Laisram (2006: 159), Burton’s journey “was a metaphoric pilgrimage into himself, revealing a state of homelessness, a condition in which he was neither completely Western nor completely Eastern in his conception of the Orient.”

It is possible, therefore, to think that *Pilgrimage* actually relates two pilgrimages: the *hajj* itself, with its performative rituals, the “external pilgrimage” undertaken by Abdullah – associated with Victor Turner’s (1979: 63) idea that rituals are “inherently dramatic because participants not only do things, they try to show others what they are doing or have done; actions take on a ‘performed-for-an-audience’ aspect”; and the one undertaken by Burton, under the guise of Abdullah, an “internal” one and of which we know almost nothing.

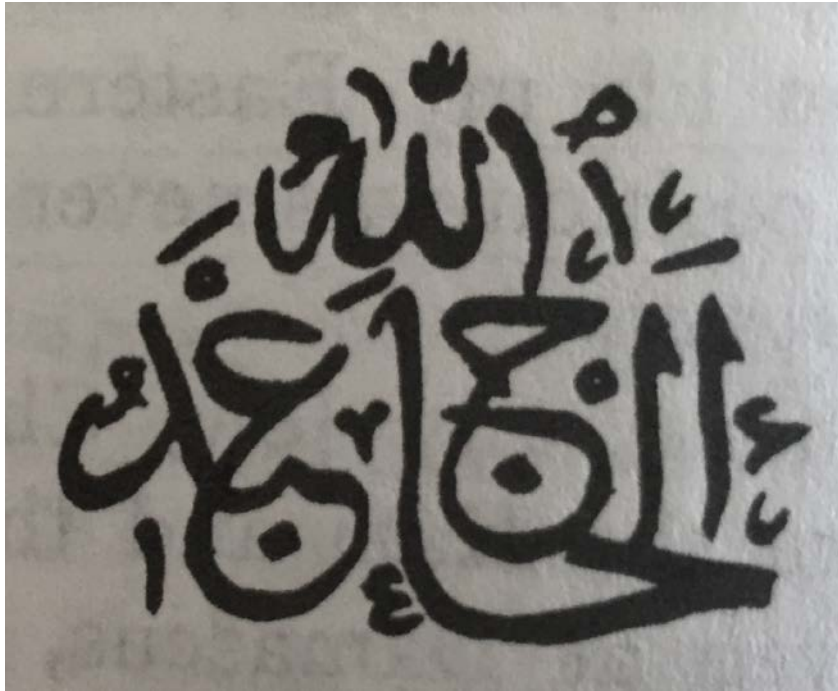
The external pilgrimage is a concrete one, and it was only made possible because Burton brought forth a new being – Abdullah – so he could take the trip. Without Abdullah, *Pilgrimage* probably would never exist. And this materialization is undertaken by the external performance of this character that makes the concrete pilgrimage. Abdullah was the solution that Burton produced so that he could experience himself the *hajj*. Abdullah was the *means* that Burton created to undertake the pilgrimage.

Even though Burton did not talk about this “inner pilgrimage,” it is possible to say that it existed, in a sense, manifested in the many changes that he effected on Abdullah’s identity. The search for the other in oneself still is a form of inner transformation, following the “Oriental” references that he knew.

For Abdullah, this transformation can be observed from the change of his title: throughout *Pilgrimage* he is referred to *Shaykh* Abdullah, but from the moment that he lays his eyes on the Ka’ba, his name changes to *Haji* Abdullah: “I may truly say that, of all the worshippers who clung weeping to the curtain, or who pressed their beating hearts to the

stone, none felt for the moment a deeper emotion than did the *Haji* from the far-north” (Burton, R. 2014: v. 2, 161) (italics mine).

It is as *Haji Abdullah* that he will be addressed throughout the narrative, and it is as *Haji Abdullah* that Burton signs his Arabic name from then on – الحاج عبد الله – including in this monogram with which he signed the preface to the third edition of the book:



[Richard Francis Burton's monogram in Arabic]

To mark this transformation, when in “Oriental” lands Burton wore a green turban that proved that he was a *haji* (Wright, 1906), indicating that he had completed a very difficult journey. In one of the many letters he wrote to Norton Shaw, who worked for the Royal Geographical Society, he revealed that, while in Cairo after his return, he still dressed as a “nigger and was called *haji*” – he signed the letter as “*Shaykh Abdullah*”, however (apud Lovell 1998: 2.921-2.939).

This title seems to have followed Burton throughout his life: the newspaper *Saturday Review* (apud Kennedy 2006: 8), in a review of the book *Gold Mines of Midian* (1878) – which Burton considered one of *Pilgrimage*'s “sequels,” along with *The Land of Midian Revisited* (1879) – described him as a “dervish and an orthodox *haji*”. For D.W. Hogarth (1904: 185), Burton went to Mecca to gain the “name and the notoriety that the title of *haji* brings,” in order to help him in future travels. For Burton, as Edward Said put it (1979: 166), quoting Disraeli's 1847 book *Tancred*: the “East is a career” – a career through which “one could remake and restore not only the Orient but also oneself.”

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## AL-ĠĀHIZ'S AR-RADD 'ALĀ N-NAṢĀRĀ: FICTIONAL EXTERNAL GEOGRAPHY SUPPORTING DOMESTIC AGENDAS?

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**Abstract.** For the longest time, perhaps because of its genre as polemic, *Ar-radd 'alā n-naṣārā* (*Rebuttal against Christians*) has rarely been taken into consideration or taken seriously as a historical source, despite its potential relevance to history. However, the treatise is deemed, nowadays, as a primary source for understanding shifting Muslim sensibilities towards Christian *ḍimmī* social status in a period of official anti-Christian sentiment. The accuracy and intentions of Al-Ġāhiz's writings have been drawn into question on numerous occasions, by both his contemporaries and by later historians, and *Rebuttal* is not an exception as the timing of its creation and the motivation behind it suggest a connection to Al-Mutawakkil's anti-*ḍimmī* measures of 850. The purpose of this paper is to show how, in order to achieve his goal, Al-Ġāhiz actively tries to blur the lines between (various) *ḍimmī* and Byzantine Christians by simultaneously taking on doctrinal and social issues while perpetrating generalizations and decontextualizations. Structured as responses to a series of questions asked by some fellow Muslims and initially addressed by some Christians, al-Ġāhiz's purpose was either to provide a genuine answer or to raise awareness over what was perceived as haughtiness from Christians, as *ahlu d-ḍimma*, in the Abbasid society at that time. Ultimately, the goal of his criticism and rebuttal was the (re)enforcement of the law, either as a natural, next-logical-step measure, or as a calculated measure, enforcing the caliph's agenda. Despite being, almost certainly, exaggerated for effect, *Rebuttal* nevertheless gives a unique insight into the mixed urban life of the period and contains relevant information about the social and legal conditions of Muslim-*ḍimmī*, especially Christian, relations in 'Abbasid society.

**Keywords:** *Al-Ġāhiz, Rebuttal, Christians, ahlu d-ḍimma, Byzantine Empire, Al-Mutawakkil.*

While still a student in Basra in the early 800s, Abū 'Uṭmān 'Amr Ibn Baḥr al-Kinānī al-Baṣrī (776-868/9), later referred to as Al-Ġāhiz, authored works that brought him to the attention of the caliph al-Ma'mūn. Soon, he would start making a living by his literary skills, dedicating his books to some of the leading court officials of his day, which made him one of the most reputed authors of 'adab and politico-religious polemics in Arab history.

The problems confronting Muslim conscience at that time were quite numerous and diverse. In the field of theology, the most pressing issue was harmonizing faith and reason (*al-Mu'tazila*)<sup>1</sup>, in politics, the thorny question of the Caliphate was constantly brought up by the enemies of the 'Abbasids, while the socio-religious arena was being troubled by the conflicts between the various Islamic sects and the claims of the non-Arabs. In this context, some of al-Ġāhiz's works on the Imamate were introduced to al-Ma'mūn, which not only

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<sup>1</sup> Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mūn instituted *al-miḥna*, a period of religious persecution that lasted for fifteen years (833-848), in which religious scholars were punished, imprisoned or even killed lest they conformed to Mu'tazila doctrine. It was two years after al-Mutawakkil's rule.

won him the caliph's compliments but also got him started on the path of his future fame as a great *littérateur*.

Al-Ġāḥiẓ's support for the Abbasids was deemed valuable to al-Ma'mūn (Pellat 1952: 54). The caliph reportedly said, albeit according to al-Ġāḥiẓ himself:

Someone whose intelligence we respect and whose reports enjoy our confidence. (...) Here is a book which does not require the presence of its author [to be understood], and needs no advocate; the subject is conscientiously dealt with, and profound thinking goes hand in hand with elegance and lucidity; its appeal is both to princes and the common people, to the *élite* and the masses. (Gibson 2015: 27)

This account emphasizes that al-Ġāḥiẓ's success as a writer seemed to have much to do with the appeal of his style (fluid prose was meant to be read by individuals, as the author's presence "was not required") and how it connected with readers who varied from elite scholars to other literate professionals.

At the time, though, it wasn't just accessible prose on the mentioned topics that was gaining momentum, but also the translation – by *ḍimmī* Christians – of Greek classics, which pumped Arabic scholarly discussions with fresh material and provided a new substrate for the Christian-Muslim conversation. Furthermore, quite a few historians emphasize the ease with which Christians were moving through the 'Abbasid society, especially compared to their situation under Byzantine rule, which labeled them as heretics.

It seems that, at the time, *ḍimmī* relations were at a point where the public could readily observe high-class Christians flaunting their social status, even while there was a general understanding that such behavior was contrary to their stipulated role, according to the *ḍimma* contract. However, while Christians enjoyed overall admiration and sympathy, this situation led to resentment from Muslim elements within the society. Consequently, during a period of official anti-Christian sentiment, it was no simple task for the caliph to enforce *ḍimmī* restrictions, which is why he needed first to turn the tide of popular opinion about Muslims' relationship to Christians and al-Ġāḥiẓ might have been just the right man for the job as the premier social and cultural critic of his age. Charles Pellat proposed, as quoted by Peter Webb, that al-Ġāḥiẓ was chosen by the caliph al-Mutawakkil to write *Ar-radd 'alā n-naṣārā* (*Rebuttal against Christians*) in a period of official anti-Christian sentiment (Webb 2012: 21).

According to Pellat, *Ar-Radd 'alā n-naṣārā* is most often connected with al-Mutawakkil's anti-*ḍimmī* measures of 850<sup>2</sup> (Pellat 1952: 58). According to Gibson, the dating of the work is mainly based upon Yāqūt, who reports that al-Faḥḥ ibn Hāqān<sup>3</sup>, al-Mutawakkil's personal secretary and chief adviser, wrote to al-Ġāḥiẓ, who was about to

<sup>2</sup> In his *Tariḥ ar-rusūl wa-l-mulūk* (*History of Prophets and Kings*), Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Ġarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī provides an account of the restrictions al-Mutawakkil enforced on *ahlu ḍ-ḍimma* starting 850, along with the letter the caliph sent to his district governors asking them to implement some of these policies.

<sup>3</sup> He was appointed secretary soon after Mutawakkil ascended to the caliphate in 847. According to aṭ-Ṭabarī, in 849/850, the year of al-Mutawakkil's decree against *ḍimmīs* al-Faḥḥ was exercising administrative responsibilities, including intelligence, on behalf of the caliph, for the capital city of Samarra and the Haruni Palace, which suggest a close contact between the two. He was later sent governor to Egypt in 856/857. (Gibson 2015: 46)

become one of his most notable protégés, to encourage him to complete his *Rebuttal*. (Gibson 2015: 33) This must have been after 847, when the reign of al-Mutawakkil started, and fits well with the anti-*ḍimmī* measures he instituted.

Despite the fact that there is no particular basis for doubting Yāqūt's account, some authors suggest, however, that there is reason to question this theory, mostly due to the fact that in *Kitāb al-ḥayāwān*<sup>4</sup> (*Book of Animals*), which was dedicated to the vizier Ibn al-Zayyāt<sup>5</sup>, al-Ġāhiz himself mentions “kitābī ‘alā n-naṣārā wa-l-yahūd” (“my book against the Christians and the Jews”) as a work that was already completed. (Thomas 2009: 709) Therefore, the issue at stake is whether or not the arguments made in the refutation are connected to the drastic measures al-Mutawakkil instituted against *ḍimmīs*. The social issues al-Ġāhiz raises do, indeed, match almost integrally the actions al-Mutawakkil took against Christians and Jews.

Another argument that would contradict the same theory<sup>6</sup> is that the reason behind the composition of the *Rebuttal* was, as stated by the author himself, a letter from a group of Muslims asking al-Ġāhiz to answer a series of questions asked to them by some Christians. However, others suggest that, as Nathan Gibson puts it, it is very likely that al-Ġāhiz was responding to a real or imaginary letter from less sophisticated readers as a way of executing the caliph's commission (Gibson 2015: 44). Writing his treatise as a response to such questions could be considered a clever literary ploy, as it was an accessible and efficient way of presenting his case, as requested by the caliph, to his true audience – the reading Muslim public –, which ultimately made it a valuable piece of political propaganda.

As to whether the *Rebuttal* we are discussing is dated before or after 847, most researchers suggest that it is possible that the extant version of this work is either a revision of the one mentioned in the *Book of Animals*, now lost, or a distinct work that was not yet written at the time, but his plans changed after he mentioned it in *Book of Animals*. In this context, it is essential to note that what we consider nowadays titles were, at the time, descriptions rather than titles; they tended to be flexible and authors did not insist on using a specific title for a specific work. (Thomas 2009: 709 and Gibson 2015: 36)

While there is no clear or explicit evidence in the work to support a connection with al-Mutawakkil, we can assume that the extant *Rebuttal* was not written (long) before his anti-*ḍimmī* measures, as the world al-Ġāhiz describes in his text is one in which the Christian elite attain a social status largely unchecked by Muslim power, giving no indication that any reform is underway to undo this situation. Therefore, it is no stretch of the imagination to assume that the *Rebuttal* was written either before or toward the beginning of al-Mutawakkil's anti-*ḍimmī* measures, commissioned by the caliph himself, in order to turn the tide of public opinion in favor of implementing such restrictions.

Al-Ġāhiz's precise situation at court is difficult to establish because his administrative duties do not feature prominently in his own writings or in those of his biographers. While it seems that it was al-Ma'mūn's approval that initially brought him to

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<sup>4</sup> Generally believed to have been completed by 847, with some parts potentially revised or written after 847, and specifically after the letter from al-Fath (For a thorough listing of historical sources and their comparison, see Gibson 2015: 38-41).

<sup>5</sup> Who died in 847.

<sup>6</sup> See Thomas (2009) and Gibson (2015).



Baghdad, according to one report, the prolific Abbasid writer lasted only three days before being asked to resign from a secretary position in the caliph's administration. According to a different account, al-Ġāḥiẓ served as an assistant in the chancellery (*diwān ar-rasā'il*) from the reign of al-Ma'mūn through that of al-Mutawakkil. (Gibson 2015: 29) From the little information available about his public life, it is unclear how many official jobs he held and for what length of time. As of his income, he probably made a significant portion of it from patrons – by “dedicating” certain works to a person who appreciated a treatise on a particular subject and was willing to remunerate the writer's efforts – and, probably, teaching. It would not be far-fetched to assume that the dedicatee might also hope the book would influence the public in a particular direction.

According to the extant records regarding the dedications of al-Ġāḥiẓ' books, some of his major patrons were the vizier Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Zayyāt (Ibn al-Zayyāt)<sup>7</sup>, the Grand Qāḍī Aḥmad ibn Abī Du'ād<sup>8</sup> and the qāḍī's son, Muḥammad (Gibson 2015: 36). After the last two fell out of favor with the newly installed caliph, al-Mutawakkil, al-Ġāḥiẓ now found himself to be a conspicuous Mu'tazilite in a political climate that was quickly turning anti-Mu'tazilite. After he returned to Basra, fearing potential repercussions due to his connection to his advocates at the caliph's court, al-Ġāḥiẓ somehow gained the support of the secretary al-Faḥḥ ibn Ḥāqān, who wrote the following letter to the 'Abbasid writer, as preserved in Yāqūt:

Abū Ḥayyān [al-Tawḥīdī] said, “I heard Abū Mu'ammār, the secretary in the Bādūryā chancellery, say, ‘Al-Faḥḥ ibn Ḥāqān wrote a letter to al-Ġāḥiẓ in which he said in part of it, ‘The Commander of the Faithful loves you and is cheered whenever you are mentioned. Given your distance from his assembly (*maḡlis*), if he did not think so highly of you for your scholarship and your knowledge, he would force you [to report] your opinion and conduct regarding what you are engrossed in and devoting yourself to. When he presented me with its title (*'unwān*)<sup>9</sup>, I caused him to think even more highly of you. Let that be the reward for your trouble. So ascribe this situation to me and make good on this favor regarding the treatise ‘The Refutation of Christians’ (*Kitāb ar-radd 'alā n-naṣārā*). Finish it up, send it to me quickly, and profit yourself from it. You will be receiving your salary – I have requested what was overdue and have asked that you be paid a whole year in advance. This is not the sort of thing you could have arranged yourself. I have read your epistle ‘On the Insight of Ġannām’ (*risālatika fī baṣīra ḡannām*), and if I would not make you more arrogant, I would tell you what came over me upon reading it. Peace’” (Gibson 2015: 32-33)

According to this account, al-Mutawakkil clearly approved of al-Ġāḥiẓ's writing, further confirming his prestige as a popular essayist. Moreover, it appears as if he already knew something about the *Rebuttal* when al-Faḥḥ ibn Ḥāqān mentioned it, further demanding that the work be finished. Gibson suggests that al-Ġāḥiẓ had begun the work hoping it would find approval from the caliph, while al-Faḥḥ ibn Ḥāqān, as al-Ġāḥiẓ's advocate at the court, helped to ensure that it would receive appropriate remuneration.

<sup>7</sup> Named vizier in 834/835, died in 847.

<sup>8</sup> A fellow Mu'tazilite from Basra.

<sup>9</sup> Possibly “preface”. (Gibson 2015: 32)

Consequently, we can assume that the essay's agenda was set by the caliph, while it was left up to al-Ġāhiz to word and implement that agenda.

The extant version of *ar-Radd 'alā n-naṣārā* has been preserved in the form of only ten excerpts of different lengths, edited down from the original by a certain 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ḥassān (Thomas 2009: 710), where al-Ġāhiz is refuting Christian doctrines<sup>10</sup> while also describing Christians as a social evil: "They take advantage of their respected positions as theologians, doctors, astronomers, secretaries, perfumers and money changers, they ignore official edicts, avoid taxes, poke fun at Islamic traditions, corrupt the minds of young and weak-minded Muslims" (Thomas 1989: 25).

As Nathan Gibson himself notes, for the longest time, perhaps because of its genre as polemic, *Rebuttal* has rarely been taken into consideration or taken seriously as a historical source, despite its potential relevance to history, revealing potential correspondences between government policy and al-Ġāhiz's activity with respect to the anti-*ḍimmīs* measures of 850. (Gibson 2015: 14) However, the treatise is deemed, nowadays, as a primary source for understanding shifting Muslim sensibilities towards Christians' social status in a period of official anti-Christian sentiment. Despite being, almost certainly, exaggerated for effect, it nevertheless gives a unique insight into the mixed urban life of the period and contains relevant information about the social and legal conditions of Muslim-*ḍimmī*, especially Christian, relations in 'Abbasid society.

The trigger of al-Ġāhiz' *Rebuttal* was a letter from a group of Muslims asking for his help to answer a series of questions that some Christians had asked them. In the first excerpt, al-Ġāhiz lists the Christians' six questions and offers an extended analysis of the reasons why the Muslim masses have come to like Christians better than Jews or other religious communities; the way he explains popular preference is, however, meant to actually invalidate the listed preferences.

In the second and third excerpts, the readers are presented with counterarguments to the first part, along with a lengthy account of the social successes (in comparison to those of the Jews') and moral failures of Christian *ḍimmīs*, as the author is trying to persuade his readers that Christians are actually a greater menace to Muslims than Jews or any other religious community due to their use of wealth and power to disdain their rightful place in society, violating their covenant with Muslims – the *ḍimma* contract. In the following excerpts, he selects some of the questions posed by the Christians, as well as others that were found elsewhere both in contemporary and later polemic.

As identified by Gibson, the arguments of the great ninth-century Arab thinker and author fall into three main themes: Christians' social power and prestige, Christian intellectualism and Christians' purity<sup>11</sup>. (Gibson 2015: 86)

Al-Ġāhiz attempts to prove the Christians' social power and prestige especially by comparison to the followers of the oldest monotheistic religion – the Jews. He claims that one of the most important reasons why Christians were preferred to Jews is their occupying important positions as government officials, courtiers, physicians of the nobles, perfumers and bankers, while Jews were normally dyers, tanners, butchers of tinkers, "so when the

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<sup>10</sup> Analyzing the doctrinal dimension of this treatise is beyond the scope of this paper, based on the fact that al-Ġāhiz's relevant arguments don't represent a novelty in the scholarly discussions of the time.

<sup>11</sup> Related to the doctrinal dimension of the *Rebuttal*.

masses saw the Jews and Christians in this light, they imagined that the Jews' religion held the same place among the other religions as do their trades among other professionals." (Lewis, 1985: 60)

As for the Christians' intellectual abilities, while we can safely assume that he interacted with circles where Christian translators and other professional Christian associates at court were active, they barely made an appearance in his works (Pellat 1952) – and when they did, they were described not as true intellectuals but as mere translators, mechanical conveyers of pre-Christian Greek sciences. (Gibson 2015: 29) More so, al-Ġāhiz accuses Christians with "attributing" the Greeks' books to themselves (*aḍāfūhu 'ilā anfusihim*) and "appropriating them to their religion" (*ḥawwalūhu 'ilā millatihim*) despite the Greeks being "neither Byzantine nor Christian", thus deceiving the Muslim masses about their superior intellectual pedigree – compared both to the Muslim and other religious communities.

Furthermore, al-Ġāhiz tried striking a chord by explaining the popular Muslims' preference for Christians through Jew's more accentuated ugliness, due to inbreeding:

The reason that the Christians are less hideous – though they certainly are ugly – is that the Israelite marries only another Israelite, and all of their deformity is brought back among them and confined with them...they have, therefore, not been distinguished either for their intelligence, their physique, or their cleverness. As the reader certainly knows, the same is the case with horses, camels, asses, and pigeons when they are inbred. (Lewis 1985: 90)

Underneath the listing and the explanation of the reasons Muslims came to like Christians better than Jews, however, al-Ġāhiz is actually making an argument to invalidate these preferences. (Gibson 2015: 29)

Apart from the early religious literature, though, most researchers agree that there is no evidence that Jews were viewed with greater hostility or faced worse treatment than were Christians under Muslim rule. Bernard Lewis claims that, on the contrary, there are some indications that Christians were more open to suspicion than Jews, probably because of the fact that, for most of the fourteen centuries of Islamic history, the major external enemy of Islam was Christendom. It is with the Byzantine emperors and other Christians rulers that the first Muslim conquerors fought for Syria, Palestine, Egypt, North Africa, Sicily and Spain. With Christian *ḍimmīs*, there was often the suspicion of at least sympathizing with the Christian enemy – a suspicion that would sometimes prove well founded, especially in later medieval times. (Lewis 1985: 90)

Within the same logic, as Bernard Lewis noted, the position of the Christian minorities under Muslim rule was sometimes affected favorably or adversely by relations with the Christian powers beyond the frontier. This did not apply to Jews, though, except indirectly and consequentially. While there were many Christian states, some friendly, some hostile, some weak and some powerful, the Jews had no such advantage or disadvantage, with the single solid exception represented by the kingdom of the Khazars. (Lewis 1985: 61)

Ahmad Shboul claims that al-Ġāhiz was fully aware of the place of Byzantium as a rival power and a dangerous adversary, as well as of the role of Christianity. Additionally,

he claims that *Rebuttal* reflects an impatience with the inherent Quranic and early Islamic sympathy with Christianity and Byzantium which, in al-Ġāhīz's view, worked against the interests of Muslims, if not necessarily in purely religious terms, then culturally and economically. (Shboul 1999: 132) Christians are criticized both for the teachings of Christianity and the cultural aspects of Byzantium. In al-Ġāhīz's *Rebuttal*, the two levels of conflict, religion and neighboring political and cultural powers, seem to overlap, thus blurring the lines between (various) *ḍimmī* and Byzantine Christians. It must be noted that while al-Ġāhīz does not exhibit (possibly on purpose) an intricate knowledge of Christianity, his distinct references to "Jacobites" and "Nestorians" clearly indicate that he is aware of the distinctions within the ecclesiastical establishment.

Al-Ġāhīz seems to validate Shboul's theory, as he elaborates on what Gibson calls "the most ironic of Christian threats to the 'umma'" – the size of the Christian population. Thus, despite all restrictions related to marital practices in Christianity (celibacy, marriage, divorce), al-Ġāhīz expresses his perplexity at the size of the Christian community:

They have covered the earth, filled the far corners and exceeded the (other) communities in population and in the number of (their) offspring. This is one of the things that has added to our misfortunes and made our affliction worse. Another thing that has added to their (population) and increased their numbers is that they take (converts?) from the other communities without giving to them, since every religion that comes after another takes many (converts?) from it, while giving few (back) to it. (Gibson 2015: 191)

Despite the lack of records indicating the exact numbers in the 'Abbasid caliphate at that time, the Christian population must have been substantial enough for al-Ġāhīz to rely on his Muslim readers' perceptions to resonate with his statement that Christians had "covered the earth". It is clear, however, that al-Ġāhīz is dealing here precisely with perceptions, rather than with tangible realities, especially since he seems to be referring not only to Christians within the caliphate, but also to Christians from "the far corners" – Abyssinia in the south, Byzantium in the west and Armenia in the north, not to mention the significant number of Christians in Central Asia to the east. Not only were Christian societies more numerous inside and outside the caliphate, but they were also more of a force to be reckoned with than Jewish or Zoroastrian ones were, especially during this period of stale wars with the Byzantines. It was, thus, Christians the Muslims should be most concerned about.

Moving to one of his particular interests, as connected to the previously discussed issues, al-Ġāhīz moves on to lamenting over Christians practicing castration:

One of the things that evidences their lack of compassion and the depravity of their hearts is that of all the communities, they are the masters of castration – and castration is the worst mutilation and the greatest wrong that can be done to a man. They even do it to children, who are innocent of any wrong and cannot resist them. We know of no people known for castrating people wherever they are except for the countries of Byzantium and Ethiopia. Elsewhere, there are exceedingly few (who practice castration), and, moreover, they could have only learned it from the Christians, since they had no other reason to do so. They (the Christians?) castrate their sons and deliver them over to their churches. (Gibson 2015: 194)

The reason al-Ġāhiz spent so much space speaking about castration, not only in *Rebuttal* but also in an epistle titled “Boasting Match between Pretty Boys and Pretty Girls” and in the *Book of Animals* (Gibson 2015: 196), is the fact that eunuchs played very visible roles in the ‘Abbasid society, while castration was forbidden in Islamic law. Consequently, Arabs deemed castration to be a most odious crime and a sign of the cruel natures and the corrupt hearts of Christians. According to Arabic geographers such as al-Mas‘ūdī and al-Muqaddasī, who mention the ethnic and regional origins of eunuchs as Sudanese, Byzantine, Chinese, Abyssinian, Berber and Ṣaqāliba (Gibson 2015: 196), it appears that eunuchs came from many foreign places, but not all Christian lands. Also, while it is true that the castrating of young boys, especially those destined to the service of the Church, was a common Byzantine practice, al-Ġāhiz does not mention – either from lack of knowledge or little knowledge – that castration was often criticized or condemned by Byzantine religious authorities. Al-Ġāhiz’s claims about the practice of castration among Christians seem to be both ambiguous (which Christians?) and clear-cut (*all* Christians), thus making us suspect either an intentional or a careless, poorly informed generalization for the purpose of his *Rebuttal*.

In spite of his appreciation of al-Ġāhiz’s masterful *‘adab* and remarkable knowledge, the great historian and geographer al-Mas‘ūdī himself labeled the former as an “arm-chair scholar” (Hermes 2012: 18), harshly criticizing him “for incorporating in his works much geographical and zoological information which he neither witnessed nor was able to confirm” (Khalidī 1975: 12), as “true knowledge can only be acquired through practice and observation” (Khalidī 1975: 12). In the light of al-Mas‘ūdī’s criticism and as Peter Webb suggests, that agendas and patronly preferences may have “coloured” al-Ġāhiz’s analysis in certain epistles, thus leading to exaggeration and embellishment at the expense of sober discourse, we ought to exercise caution in interpreting his texts at face value (Webb 2012: 21).

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# THE IMAGE OF MARDIN IN IBN BAṬṬŪṬA'S *RIḤLA*<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, deemed to be the greatest voyager of all the pre-modern era, *raḥḥālatu l-'islām* “the voyager of Islam”, stopped during his *riḥla* in the town of Mardin, in southeastern Turkey. The traveler wrote about his visit to this town, describing the people living there and their customs and appearance, as well as the surrounding areas of Mardin during that time. He also provided descriptions of the rulers of the area, which, together with the other details of his visit, helped produce a reference document of paramount anthropologic, sociolinguistic and historical importance of the entire area.

**Keywords:** *Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Mardin, travel story.*

## I. Introduction

The study I herewith present deals with the visit Ibn Baṭṭūṭa paid to the town of Mardin, and a few neighbouring places. In 1327, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa spent some time in Mardin, which was, then, under the reign of Šamsu d-Dīn Sāliḥ (1312-1364), the son and second successor to Nağmu d-Dīn Ġāzī II.

## II. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa and his travel

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (Muḥammad bin ‘Abdi Llāh bin Muḥammad bin Ibrāhīm al-Luwātī ṭ-Ṭanġī, born in Tangier, 1304 – died in Fez, 1369), a jurist, a historian and a religious man, deemed to be the greatest voyager of all the pre-modern era, *raḥḥālatu l-'islām* “the voyager of Islam”, is the one who endowed mankind with the journal of his journey (*riḥla*). This journal, known under the title *Tuḥfatu n-nuzzāri fī ġarā'ibi l-'amṣāri wa 'ağā'ibi l-'asfār*, stands for “A gift offered to whoever seeks curiosities in any country, as well as marvels in any trip”, contains impressions gathered over a time span of almost 30 years (1325-1353), during his peregrinations across *Dāru l-'Islām* (i.e. the Islamic World).

He originally set out to perform the Ḥaġġ in Mecca, but when he arrived at the Red Sea he found all boats had been sunk as the result of a local insurrection and he was unable

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this paper was published in 2009 in the volume *Artukler*, Cilt 1, Mardin.

to travel further. Unwilling to return home without completing the Ḥağğ, he traveled back to Cairo and then crossed the northern Sinai to join the Ḥağğ caravan in Damascus the following year. This completed, innate curiosity and insatiable wanderlust took over (he had by now confessed to wishing “to travel around the world”), and instead of returning home, he traveled 75,000 miles across the Islamic World. In today's world this covers 44 countries. His desire to traverse its entirety never wavered and despite occasional and sometimes severe adversity, he succeeded. On his final return to Morocco in 1354, where he became a jurist, he dictated his *riḥla*, or travels, to a scribe. His writings languished until 1839, when a Frenchman found a manuscript in Algeria. Hailed as the “Marco Polo of the East”, his tales of life in 14<sup>th</sup> century Turkey, East Africa and the Malabar Coast of India remain the most extensive on record.

### III. The Artuqides and Mardin

Artuq bin Aksab, founder of the dynasty, was rewarded for his services to the Seljuq sultan with the grant of Palestine in 1086. Forced out of Palestine by the Fatimids of Egypt, Artuq's descendant Mu'īnu d-Dīn Sökmen returned to Diyarbakır, where he took Ḥişn Kayfa (1102), Mardin, and several other northern districts. His brother Nağmu d-Dīn II Ġāzī, meanwhile, returned to Seljuq service and was made governor of Iraq by the Seljuq sultan Muḥammad. Sent to Diyarbakır in about 1107, II Ġāzī replaced one of Sökmen's sons at Mardin (1108); he then made it the capital of his line, leaving Ḥişn Kayfa to his brother's descendants.

The Turkmen dynasty ruled the province of Diyarbakır in northern Iraq (now in southeastern Turkey) through two branches: at Ḥişn Kayfa and Amid (1098–1232) and at Mardin and Mayyafariqin (1104–1408).

The line in Mardin and Mayyafariqin:

c. 494/c. 1101 Yāqūtī bin Alp Yārūq bin Artuq

497/1104 'Alī bin Alp Yārūq

497/1104 Şoqmān I bin Artuq, Mu'īnu d-Dīn

507/1114 or 508/1115 II Ġāzī I bin Artuq, Nağmu d-Dīn, established in Mardin and in 512/1118 in Mayyafariqin.

516/1122 Taymur Tāş bin II Ġāzī, Al-Maliku s-Sa'īd Ḥusāmu d-Dīn

548/1154 Alpī I bin Taymur Tāş, Nağmu d-Dīn

572/1176 II Ġāzī II bin Alpī, Qutbu d-Dīn

580/1184 Yülük Arşlān bin II Ġāzī II, Ḥusām al-Dīn, who lost Mayyāfariqin in 581/1185

599/1203 Artuq Arşlān bin II Ġāzī II, al-Maliku l-Manşūr Nāşiru d-Dīn

637/1239 Ġāzī I bin Yülük Arşlān, Al-Maliku z-Zāhir or as-Sa'īd Nağmu d-Dīn

658/1260 Qāra Arşlān bin Ġāzī I, Al-Maliku l-Muzaffar Faḥru d-Dīn

691/1292 Dāwūd I bin Qāra Arşlān, Al-Maliku s-Sa'īd Şamsu d-Dīn

693/1294 Ġāzī II Qāra Arşlān, Al-Maliku l-Manşūr Nağmu d-Dīn

712/1312 'Alī Alpī bin Ġāzī II, Al-Maliku l-'Ādil 'Imādu d-Dīn

712/1312 Maḥmūd bin Ġāzī II, Al-Maliku Şāliḥ Şamsu d-Dīn

765/1364 'Aḥmad bin Maḥmūd, Al-Maliku l-Manşūr Ḥusāmu d-Dīn

769/1368 Dāwūd II bin Maḥmūd, Al-Muzaffar Faḥru d-Dīn

778/1376 'Īsā bin Dāwūd II, Al-Maliku z-Zāhir Mağdu d-Dīn  
809/1407 'Aḥmad bin 'Īsā, Al-Maliku ṣ-Ṣāliḥ Šihābu d-Dīn  
812/1409 Qara Qoyunlu conquest.

#### IV. The Visit Paid by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa at Mardin and its neighbourhood

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited Mardin during the first part of his trip across the Islamic world in the year 1327, two years after it had started in 1325. The route he followed to come to Mardin is Kufa, Baghdad (where he spent a longer time), Mosul and Mardin. Going to Mardin he made three short stops at Nusaybin, Singār and Dara.

##### IV. 1. The Visit to Nusaybin

Nusaybin (Nuṣaybīn, located 51 km off Mardin) has a very old history, once playing a huge role within the region. Strategically commanding the entrance to the upper Syrian plains from the mountain passes of Asia Minor, Nusaybin – then called Nisibis – was a frontier outpost of the Assyrian empire. Captured from the Armenian king Tigranes I the Great by the Roman Lucius Licinius Lucullus in 68 BC, it changed hands intermittently in the Roman-Parthian struggles, was conquered by the Persians in the 5th century, and was then taken by the Arabs about 640. It continued to prosper under the caliphs until the Mongol invasions of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It finally declined as a result of invasions and internal troubles. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who arrived at Nusaybin, coming from Mosul, after having gone through two stations, found a city mostly in ruin, lacking the old glory. But the traveler is amazed by the flourishing gardens of Nusaybin, by the abundance of fruits and mostly by the famous rose water prepared there, which was believed to be the best:

ثم رحلنا مرحلتين ووصلنا إلى مدينة نصيبين وهي مدينة عظيمة عتيقة متوسطة قد خرب أكثرها وهي  
في بسط أفيح فسيح فيه المياه الجارية والبساتين الملتفة والأشجار المنتظمة والفواكه الكثيرة وبها يصنع  
ماء الورد الذي لا نظير له في العطاراة والطيب

*Then we traveled for two more stations and we arrived at the city of Nusaybin, a magnificent and ancient city, medium in size, most of it in decay. It lies on a widely stretching plain, with rivers and bushy gardens aligned with trees bearing plenty of fruits. Here is produced the rose water, unpaired among all fragrances (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 216).*

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa is amazed by Görgarbonizra River on whose banks is located the city of Nusaybin, by the abundance of its waters and mostly by the fact that part of the water is collected in two big cisterns for hard times:

ويدور بها نهر ينعطف عليها انعطاف السوار منبعه من عيون في جبل قريب منها وينقسم انقساماً  
فيتخلل بساتينها ويدخل منه نهر إلى المدينة فيجرى في شوارعها ودورها ويخترق صحن مسجدها  
الأعظم وينصب في صهريجين أحدهما في وسط الصحن والآخر عند الباب الشرقي

*It is surrounded by a river, which twists around it like a bracelet and which pours downwards from the nearby mountain springs. Then it spreads and showers the*



*gardens, part of it enters the city and flows into its streets and houses, it crosses the yard of the Great Mosque and finally it pours into two cisterns, one placed in the middle of the yard, the other one at the Eastern Gate (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 216).*

For the inhabitants of Nusaybin, a city pretty well endowed for those times' standards, with two madrasas and a hospital, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa has nothing but good words as to their special nature:

وبهذه المدينة مارستان ومدرستان وأهلها أهلٌ صلاح ودين وصدق وأمانة  
*In this city, there are a hospital and two madrasas. Its inhabitants are virtuous, pious, honest, and trustful people (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 216).*

In support of his words, he even quotes a line of the famous poet of Baghdad, Abu Nuwas, who was in love with Nusaybin:

طابت لي نصيبين لي يوما وطبت لها يا ليت حظي من الدنيا نصيبين  
*I loved Nusaybin and it loved me,  
Oh, how nice it would be to enjoy it in this world (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 216).*

However, the beauty of Nusaybin, so much praised by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, is somewhat shadowed by an observation made by his scribe, Ibn Ġuzayy, who inserted it in the text of "The Travel" and which contradicts the things related by his master:

قال ابن جزى: الناس يصفون مدينة نصيبين بفساد الماء والوخامة  
*Ibn Ġuzayy said: people described the city of Nusaybin as having bad water and as being hard to be inhabited (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 216).*

## IV.2. The Visit to Dara

After Singār, another place visited in his trip to Mardin, about which Ibn Battūta said, among others, that it is inhabited by "the Kurds, a brave and generous people" (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 216), he went to Dara (Dāra):

ثم سافرنا إلى مدينة دارا وهي مدينة كبيرة بيضاء المنظر ، لها قلعة مشرفة، وهي الآن خراب  
لاعمارة بها وفي خارجها قرية معمورة ، بها كان نزولنا،  
*Then we traveled to the city of Dara, a big city with a white appearance and its fortress overseeing the lands. It is now in decay, deserted, but at its outskirts there is a village where we stopped over (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).*

### IV.3. Visiting the City of Mardin

Starting with 1104/1105, after having been conquered by Il Ġāzī Bey, and, by 1408, when conquered by the Karakoyunlu tribe (The Black Sheep), Mardin became the chief stronghold of the famous Muslim Turkmen dynasty of Artuqids. Under the Artuqids, Mardin, the capital of a small state, registered an unprecedented development and became one of the important towns in the region. It is a fact, in addition to the mosques, schools, markets, public baths built at that time, proved by the existence in the Arabic language of a special verb derived from the name of Mardin: *'amrada/yumridu* "to go to Mardin" (v. Kazimirski, A., 1860; Grigore, G. 2007: 17). Impressed to the utmost by the beauty of Mardin and its development, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa would write down that:

ثم رحلنا منها فوصلنا إلى مدينة ماردين ، وهي عظيمة في سفح جبل من أحسن مدن الإسلام وأبدعها  
واتقنها واحسنها أسواقا

*Then we departed from it and reached the city of Mardin, which is a magnificent city on the slopes of a mountain. It is one of the most beautiful cities of Islam, a wonder and perfection, with the most beautiful marketplaces* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).

Placing Mardin among "the most beautiful cities of Islam" is even more important since, following the route of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa up to Mardin, we realize with what cities he had compared it: Cairo, Jerusalem, Mecca, Damascus, Aleppo, Basra, Mosul, and Baghdad, cities that have been and will be benchmarks of the Islamic world. By simply putting Mardin next to these big cities of Islam, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa pointed out the glamour of the Artuqide capital city.

A special remark is related to the weavings made in Mardin, which were famous at that time, as it had been underlined by other travellers of that period, such as the well-known Venetian Marco Polo in his book "Il Milione" (see Gabriel, A. 1940: I, 5) and by the Arab Al-'Umarī (1968: 97) in his book "Kitābu masāliki l-'abṣāri wa mamāliki l-'amṣār":

وبها تصنع الثياب المنسوبة إليها من الصوف المعروف بالمرعز

*Here the clothes, which are a feature of the city, are produced of wool known as al-mir'iz (thin goat fur)* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).

The description of Mardin ends with the presentation of the famous fortress located on top of the mountain on whose side the city lies:

ولها قلعة شماء من مشاهير القلاع في قنة جبلها

*Its magnificent fortress, one of the most famed fortresses, is rising on the peak of the mountain* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).

Referring to this fortress, Ibn Ġuzayy added that it is also called *as-shahba'* like the name of the fortress from the city of Aleppo with which Mardin was for a long time in competition:

قال ابن جزى: قلعة ماردين هذه تسمى الشهباء وإياها عنى شاعر العراق صفى الدين عبد العزيز بن  
سراى الحلبي بقوله فى مسمطنه:

[...]

وقلعة حلب الشهباء أيضا

*Ibn Ġuzayy said: this fortress of Mardin is called as-shahba' (the grey) and it was this fortress that the poet of Iraq Ṣafā d-Dīn 'Abdu l-'Azīz bin Sarāy Al-Hillī referred to in his musammaṭa (a poem in which the last line does not rhyme with the previous ones):*

[...]

*The fortress of Aleppo is called Ṣahbā' (the grey), too (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).*

This *musammaṭa* was dedicated to the sultan of Mardin, the Artuqid king Naġmu l-Dīn Ġāzī II (1294 - 1312), known in history as a great lover of beauty, who warned the invaders of Mardin not to step over his roses in his favourite garden (Ṣumaysānī, H., 1987: 253-255), would make the subject matter of the famous anti-Mongol *fatwā* given by the *ṣayḥu l-'Islām*, Ibn Taymiyya. This *fatwā* would play, in the history of Islam, a very significant role within the Islamic political religious debates till nowadays (Grigore, G. 2006). Naġmu d-Dīn Ġāzī II started his reign at about the same time as the sovereign of the Ilkhanid Sultan Ġāzān (Qāzān) who would declare Islam, in 1292, as the official religion of the empire:

وهذه المسمطة بديعة مدح بها الملك المنصور سلطان ماردين ، وكان كريما شهير الصيت ولى الملك بها نحو خمسين سنة وأدرك أيام قازان ملك التتر وصاهر السلطان خدابنده بابنته دنيا خاتون.

*This wonderful musammaṭa praises the Sultan of Mardin, who was magnanimous, of an outstanding fame and ruled for almost fifty years, getting to know the days of Qāzān, the king of Tartars and becoming akin to the Sultan Khudabande, through his daughter, Dunya-khatun (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).*

In the year when Ibn Baṭṭūṭa arrived to Mardin, the king was al-Maliku ṣ-Ṣāliḥ Ṣamsu d-Dīn Maḥmūd bin Ġāzī II (712/1312 – 765/1364), son of al-Maliku l-Manṣūr Naġmu d-Dīn Ġāzī II Qāra Arṣlan, and his second successor after al-Maliku l-'Ādil 'Imādu d-Dīn 'Alī Alpī bin Ġāzī II, who reigned for only a couple of months (in 1312). He is mentioned only by the name of al-Maliku ṣ-Ṣāliḥ and is praised for his generosity – a high virtue in the Islamic world – which cannot be compared with the generosity of other leaders whose hospitality the traveler enjoyed:

وهو الملك الصالح ابن الملك المنصور الذي ذكرناه آنفا، ورث الملك عن أبيه وله المكارم الشهيرة. وليس بأرض العراق والشام ومصر أكرم منه،

*He is the King aṣ-Ṣāliḥ (The Virtuous One) son of King al-Manṣūr (The Victorious One), whom we previously mentioned, who inherited the kingdom from his father and who is the achiever of famed charities. In all the land of Irak, Syria, and Egypt there is no one more generous than him (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).*

Like his father, Naġmu d-Dīn Ġāzī II, a great lover of beauty, King Ṣamsu d-Dīn is also a big supporter of arts and especially of poetry, so much praised in Orient:

يقصده الشعراء والفقراء فيجزل لهم العطايا، جريا على سنن أبيه، قصده أبو عبيد الله محمد بن جابر الأندلسي المروى الكفيف مادحا فأعطاه عشرين ألف درهم

*To him poets and dervishes addressed poems, whom he was magnanimously rewarding, following the deeds of his father. To him addressed a laudatory ode Abū 'Ubaydi Llāh bin Gābir al-Andalusī l-Marwī the Blind, for which he granted him twenty thousand dirhams (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217).*

Of a great importance regarding the history of Mardin is the confession of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa which confirms the fact that even if Mardin belonged to the Mongol Ilkhanid Empire of Iran this did not hinder or did not have any consequence upon the activities performed by its religious authorities, or over the apparently normal functioning of its Islamic institutions, be they related to education, charities, law or spiritual life. Moreover, the vizier of Mardin had been educated at Tabriz, which was the capital of the Ilkhanid Empire:

وله الصدقات والمدارس والزوايا لإطعام الطعام، وله وزير كبير القدر وهو الإمام العالم وحيد الدهر وفريد العصر جمال الدين السنجاري وقرأ بمدينة تبريز، وأدرك العلماء الكبار، وقاضى قضائته الإمام الكامل برهان الدين الموصلى، وهو ينتسب إلى الشيخ الولي فتح الموصلى وهذا القاضى من أهل الدين والورع والفضل، يلبس الخشن من ثياب الصوف الذي لا تبلغ قيمته عشرة دراهم، ويعتم بنحو ذلك، وكثيرا ما يجلس للأحكام بصحن مسجد خارج المدرسة، كان يتعبد فيه فإذا رآه من لا يعرفه ظنه بعض خدام القاضى وأعوانه.

*And he was engaged in almsgiving, in madrasas, in zāwiyas for feeding the unfed. He had a most worthy vizier, an outstanding scholar of his time, the imam Ġamālu d-dīn as-Siḡārī, educated in Tabriz and acquainted with the great scholars. The qadi of his qadis was the impeccable imam Burhānu d-Dīn al-Mawṣilī, who was tracing the steps of aṣ-Šayḡ al-Walī Faṭḡ al-Mawṣilī. This qadi was a pious, devout, and virtuous man. His garments were of the roughest wool, worth no more than ten dirhams. Often, he held his court of justice in the yard of the mosque, outside the madrasa, as if performing his devotions. Anyone seeing this, without knowing him, would think he is one of the qadi's servants or aids (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 217-218).*

## V. Conclusion

Though very often standardized, following a certain line, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's remarks with regard to Mardin and its rulers bear a great significance and are extremely important with a view to reconstructing the history and the very atmosphere of those times of the Artuqid period.

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# STRANGERS IN ISLAM: SHAPING THE OTHERNESS

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**Abstract.** Mental space is a category of Religious Studies and describes a virtual space where one feels the sense of community. The opposite is the myth of the Stranger, the enemy, the weird, the unusual. This is how prejudices are constructed: the well-known, the familiar, the close-by is good, while the stranger, the distant is eccentric, weird, bad. Maintaining the religious, ritual, national purity of the community is a common interest, while accepting a parallel truth, another community as equally just is not common especially in monotheistic religions. Religion is a well-known creator of such mental spaces along with language, culture, tribes, and families. This paper examines how religion creates a common mental space.

**Keywords:** *Islam, stranger, enemy, geographical writers, religion.*

The constructed mental space and the myth of the Stranger are two well-known categories of Religious Studies. In this paper I would like to present how Islam constructs its mental space differentiating itself from other religions and how myths of the Stranger are used to construct or deconstruct this space; and how Islam as a religion influenced later Muslim writers' views on strangers.

## Shaping the Stranger

A mental space comprises all the characteristics and properties with which a community identifies itself. This is the 'we', the utmost community where someone feels identical, safe, at home. Most of the time this does not correspond to a physical space, but is created, structured by a language, a religion, a common ancestor, or a common national consciousness when speaking about the modern period, etc. The community thinks about itself as the chosen one: chosen by the gods or a single God to be the best nation, the best religion, the perfect language, the best community, the one that has a certain superiority, or whose members are rightfully proud simply for being born into, or being part of this community. They identify with statements such as: we are beautiful, sound, great, honest, just, a true nation, we deserve to be chosen, we are the civilized ones, etc. They differentiate themselves from others who are not members: they are strangers, enemies, non-humans, not-us, barbarians, uneducated, devils, ugly; they stink, and they have different skin color, barbarian or non-human language, etc. This is how prejudices are constructed: the well-known, the familiar, the close-by is good, while the stranger, the distant is eccentric, weird,

bad. Maintaining the religious, ritual, national purity of the community is a common interest, while accepting a parallel truth, another community as equally just is not common especially in monotheistic religions. Religion is a well-known creator of such mental spaces; when a religion is developing, it has to distinguish itself from other religions: it must say what particular difference it brings into the world and – especially in monotheistic religions – it must also say why it is the ultimate religion, the best way, the truth-holder, and why everyone else is wrong. Every monotheistic religion – as Jan Assmann points out in his famous book *Moses, the Egyptian* – must make this distinction to differentiate itself from its surrounding polytheisms and, in the case of Christianity and Islam, from other monotheisms as well.

This can also be a linguistically formulated mental space as in the case of Arabic, Arabic being the holy and utmost perfect language of al-Qur’ān al-Karīm, everyone not speaking it at a perfect level is a stranger, a barbarian (Sitaru 2015: 182-183). This is also a returning topos in Arabic literature: geographical writers such as ibn Faḍlān and al-Muqaddasī, memoir-writers such as ‘Usāma bin Munqid, and theologians as al-Ġāhiz also note that the foreign speech is like animal sounds or baloney and the level of civilization is highly related to the levels of speaking and writing *al-fuṣḥa*, which, due to the fact that it is the perfect language of revelation, is a religious category as well.

The definitions of monotheisms usually include a God who is one by number. Therefore, if we want to keep a coherent system, it is impossible, theologically, dogmatically or philosophically alike, to have more gods, as in that case one of them would be a little less than the others. So, technically he would not be a God, not an absolute, omnipotent and omniscient God. This distinction of monotheistic religions therefore has a moral aspect as well: these religions do not only say that they have found some kind of truth about gods, but that they have found the Truth, the ultimate *meaning of life, the universe and everything* and everyone who does not adhere to this truth is misled, misguided, takes the wrong path, must reconsider their lives, turn to the one true God and become one of “us”. The distinction is that there is only one true God, there is one true way to Him, and there is one true community of believers, everyone else is a forger, a fabricator, a sinner; everyone else is misled, a Stranger who is against the “us”, who tries to decompose “our” community. This Stranger is not merely a different person with a different religion, but – because s/he fails to see the obvious truth – s/he is also ethically inferior, lacking the right morals, behaving weirdly, and refusing to take the right path.

Draw a distinction. Call it the first distinction. Call the space in which it is drawn the space severed or cloven by the distinction. It seems as if George Spencer Brown's "first Law of Construction" does not apply solely to the space of logical and mathematical construction. It also applies surprisingly well to the space of cultural constructions and distinctions and to the spaces that are severed or cloven by such distinctions. The distinction I am concerned with in this book is the distinction between true and false in religion that underlies more specific distinctions such as Jews and Gentiles, Christians and pagans, Muslims and unbelievers. [...] Let us call the distinction between true and false in religion the "Mosaic distinction" because tradition ascribes it to Moses. (Assmann 1997: 1)

This concept has at its basis a very important cultural idea, namely that the world is divided into two parts: the world of the righteous and the world of the Strangers. In this world it is unimaginable for a Stranger to be righteous, or for his/her God to also be a true one. No parallel truth is accepted, no other god but The GOD, the highest unique, singular, unspeakable, and most transcendent entity. This very definition of transcendence leaves no space for parallelism (and multiculturalism). Not all religions construct their space in this way; a different concept of otherness used by other religions is the one which is called translation, where gods, phenomena or rituals can be translated or applied to another cultural space. These kinds of cultural spaces had to find a different way to form the concept of the stranger, basically on 'tribal innards', and not based on religious otherness. However, this is not the case for monotheistic religions: there are no translation options for them, as they have this moral clause in their basic concept. Consequently, in Judaism, Christianity and Islam the Stranger is not just 'some other guy with some other god', but a person with a moral deficit, and mostly an ugly, immoral, sexually wrong un-human.

This concept of otherness does not speak about the real nature of the Stranger, because it is not a descriptive, objective category. It rather formulates a wish or a self-evaluation: how a cultural identity prefers to see itself compared to others. "Having an enemy is important not only to define our identity but also to provide us with an obstacle against which to measure our system of values and, in seeking to overcome it, to demonstrate our own worth."- says Eco in *Inventing the Enemy* (Eco 2012: 12). In his essay Eco states that we need the concept of otherness in order to construct our identity, we need this "us-them" dichotomy, we need to be identified with a group, we need this strong feeling of *aṣabiyya* (ibn Ḥaldūn), the solidarity of a group, and we need to picture the others. This concept of otherness has some clear signs: ugliness, smell, barbarian language, strange habits, bad sexual behavior or moral perversity, stubbornness in keeping their habits, inhumanness, lower-class, etc.

### **The relativeness of the values behind concepts**

Mental spaces as a part of the sacred geography are also constructed similarly to physical sacred places: if we approach a sacred place from outside, from a secular world without any sacredness, we find levels of sacredness: first, there is a sign that the sacred place begins. Next, as we are getting closer, there are various levels of Sacredness, the most Sacred being the Saint of Saints, the altar, the Black Stone. These levels of holiness can be found in every constructed area of any kind of worship.

Mental spaces of the sacred are constructed imitating this system, drawing a mental line between "us", who are "inside" and "them", who are "outside", and even creating levels of sacredness: this line is formulated from prejudices. Physically, in the TaNaKH the desert is depicted as the place of the demons where the top of sins is expelled. Mentally, if one is a sinner, one can be expelled from the common mental space as a heretic (like the *ḥawārij*), one can be ordered to repent, and there are dedicated rites for the repentant which indicate that the community readmits him (such as public penance in Traditional Eastern Protestant Christianity). Civilization – which in the West mostly means urbanization –, has a very high value and is contrary to barbarism, peasantry, poverty. However, considering



ibn Ḥaldūn's al-Muqaddima (as also a large part of Arabic Literature), one can see that the mental space is constructed in contrast to that: the people of the desert are perceived as purer and morally superior, while those who live in the cities are seen as corrupted. This proves that concepts do not hold absolute values, especially not in how one would like to think that civilization or urbanization is the utmost sign of developed communities. Values of concepts are highly dependent on how we see the world, and one must make a difference between the concept itself which can be absolute and the moral value behind it which is dependent on a cultural agreement. This cultural agreement behind concepts can be formulated by religion, nation, tribal innards, similar lifestyle, language, etc.

So cultural concepts considered good and, acceptable within a culture can easily be at the opposite side of the values in another culture. This leads us to a question: do we have universal values, or is every single concept co-dependent on the cultural sphere in which it is built?

### **Monotheisms and enemies**

In Biblical Judaism, the enemies are the other nations. The concept of one, chosen nation naturally entails that there are other, non-chosen ones, who are meant to be converted or defeated. "I have chosen you as a nation" – says God in the TaNaKH, and not as a self: a community, and not as a person. The goyim are coming to the Sion – this is one of the signs of the last times. The concept of the nation in the TaNaKH is a little more than a tribe, but a little less than an *umma*: it is not an international community as the *umma* is meant to be, but theologically it is far more than just a bunch of tribes. The moral aspect is in connection with birthrights – you can be better by being born into the right place and accepting the one true God – or adhering to the nation who has this one and only God. There was no middle position here, the first commandment is very clear: you have one God, do not worship others. So an ideal worshipper is focusing on the coherence of the nation and the 'national' worship, national meaning here mostly the learned ones, and not the *am haaretz*. You have to be perfect as a nation, not as a singularity. But is it possible to become part of this nation and become true?

In early Christianity, the enemy is the world as a whole: let the world be on its own, give Caesar what is his, and the world is not given real importance because the immorality is attributed to the whole world's general system, and the only way out of this immorality is to leave the world alone. A true believer is for the world, but not from it, and has nothing to do with worldly things. Adhering to the one true God in Jesus' teaching is a mystical retreat into a very personal, subjective, intimate relationship with God. Nations do not count any more because they are worldly things. Later on, of course, when societies became Christian, the original division had to be made inside: the possessors of religious capital like the priests, the establishment, the Church became the enemy, because they became the part of the world corrupting themselves with it. But also the Foreigners wondering around Europe became enemies because of their lack of morals: the indigenous people of the Americas, and other polytheists. But what about Jews and Muslims, who were not polytheists but worshipped the same God, but differently?

So, when we turn ourselves to Islam, we have to examine carefully how this monotheism is shaped. In Islam, as well as in other monotheistic religions, a strong command of moral excellence is formulated. But while in the Qur’ān trying hard to be moral means to be a good Muslim, later on this turns to the opposite, being a Muslim meaning that you’re a moral person. Moreover, as we will see, Islam after the formative period – turning away from pre-Islamic Arabia and labeling it as *ḡāhiliyya*, the age of ignorance – began to think that the only criteria of civilization is being a Muslim, practicing Islamic habits of cleanness, sexual ethics, etc.

Islamic civilization developed a construct of history that labeled the pre-Islamic period the Age of Ignorance and projected Islam as the sole source of all that was civilized – and used that construct so effectively in its rewriting of history that the peoples of Middle East lost all knowledge of the past civilizations of the region. (Ahmed, 1992, p. 37)

In Islam, the enemy is polytheism (*širk*), social injustice caused by polytheism, this is what draws immorality. Every group in the Qur’ān is pictured as an enemy not because they are part of a nation (Jews), or not because they are the persons of the power, but because they are unjust, therefore theologically wrong, therefore immoral. And most of the time this enemy does not come from the outside, like the Roman Empire and owners of the power or the nations of Kanaan, but it is an inner one: the family members of the tribes in Mekka, partners in covenants in Medina, or – in the case of hypocrites – from within the Muslim community.

The Quran uses various categories to label the others: *kāfir*, *mušriq*, *munāfiq*, *kadḏāb*, *fāḡir*, respectively *’ahl al-kitāb* and *’ahl al-fatra*. These labels return when one is speaking about strangers in later books. *Kāfir* is the person who ignores the truth, covers himself or covers the truth, the Meccans who refute the Prophet, they keep you away from the right path (8,36), they are violent (22,72; 4,101), wicked (80,42), reject the truth (84,22), they are proud (38,74), unjust (2,254), lack good guidance (16,107), are steeped in arrogance and stubborn defiance (38,2), *mušriq* is the person who commits *širk* (6,121), postulates someone or something as god, mostly idolater, *fāḡir* is a wicked wrong-doer (71,27), *kadḏāb* means liar (40,24), *munāfiq* (33,73) is a hypocrite who within the Muslim community secretly undermines the community and is secretly unsympathetic to the cause. They enjoin evil and forbid good (9,67), exactly the opposite as Muslims; the fear that their heart will be exposed (9,64), liars (59,11).

There are also some Qur’an-verses that tell Muslims not to befriend (or take as a *walī*) non-Muslims/hypocrites (3,28, 3,118, 4.88-90, 4,144, 5,51, 5.57, etc.). These labels present that who is a true believer and construct a strong consciousness and a feeling of brotherhood among the Muslims, also presents a high standard to which a true believer must adhere in their life.

### **The middle position**

But Islam – contrary to the two other scriptures – has a middle position, when the mental space of *umma* is constructed. It must be acknowledged that there are three main groups: one is the believers, who are the “us”. The second is the others, the strangers, the foreigners, the morally bad people, who are unjust. The third is the *’ahl al-kitāb* who may be considered

moral entities or strangers, depending on their moral comportment, ie. whether they adhere to *their* religious tradition or not (in the Qur'ān), or whether they adhere to Islamic traditions (in later writings).

This is very unusual for monotheisms which tend to be exclusive by definition. Biblical Judaism has its “chosen nation” as a concept, while Christianity – albeit maintains the exclusive status of Jews in Pauline theology – applies it to itself. Both Christianity and Islam have something to do theologically with the problem of the new revelation while maintaining the older one as well. Christianity thus develops the dogma of Christological exegesis applied to the Old Testament which is highly rejected by Jewish commentators who often feel that Christianity expropriated their Scriptures: “Christianity ... supplants Judaism from its own history and (mis)conceives it as it's own symbolic-mental prehistory, while Judaism keeps it as it's own but stops explaining it as a history.” (Tatár 2003: 121, translated by Cs.Gy.). Islam as well must face the theological problem that if the Torah and Gospels are true revelations, why does not use it as a revelation. This can lead to two directions in Islam: one way can be the acceptance that 'ahl al-kitaab can gain afterlife by their own revelation or, that something happened to these revelations, ie. they are no longer as intact as they used to be. So albeit Islam accepts that there were revelations, and every nation has a dedicated prophet (5,48, 16,36 and 22,67-69), this still remains irrelevant in dogmatics.

There are several Qur'ān-verses that allow to conclude that Islam recognizes multiple religions (such as 2,62, 5,69, 3,199 etc.). But how can these verses and the so-called non-alliance-verses be supported in the same time? El Fadl argues that there are several solutions to this problem: one of it is *nash*, so the non-alliance verses abrogate everything before them. The other solution can be the holistic view of the Qur'ān where every verse can be a “part of a complex and layered discourse responding to various historical situations” (el Fadl 2005: 212). El Fadl argues that the non-alliance-verses were revealed while there were various hostilities between the parties. This hostility – and also how the Qur'ān talks about Jews as a political and not a religious entity – may be another topic of detailed research.

### **From al-Ġāhiz to al-Ġazālī**

Other Islamic traditions apart from the sunna show a different face of Muslims dealing with the religious strangeness. From a very hostile approach to non-Muslims such as al-Ġāhiz's or ibn Taymiyya's to a rather accepting one such as al-Ġazālī's, opinions vary. According to Khaled Abou el Fadl's categorization, there are two types of approach to a non-Muslim: a *puritanist* one which takes sacred texts only at a very strict literal level, giving them an absolute status and not grading them as classical Islamic jurisprudence does, and the *moderate* one, practically everyone else. In the puritanist approach non-Muslims are often depicted as if being a non-Muslim were a “moral fault” (el Fadl 2005:206), and “it is an indication that these Muslims are putting their emotions before their religious commitments, a clear sign of weakness of faith” (el Fadl 2005:207). Muslims can ally or show kindness if necessary, but cannot love non-Muslims, because “this is equal to loving

what is immoral ... and the camp of good must not love the camp of evil” (el Fadl 2005:207).

Consequently, I have examined various geographical and non-geographical writings to see, how strangeness is depicted, whether there is a moral criterion as well and is it based on the problem of injustice which involves other kinds of sins, and here is what I have found:

1. Ibn Ḥaldūn (1332-1406) depicts black people as they are closer to “animal soul” than Arabs. So he says about Slavic people. They are “intemperant” because they do not know Islam. Civilized life is always connected to Islam and Mediterranean space of climate.

2. ’Usāma bin Munqid (1095-1188) in his book about Crusades depicts the Franks as animals (p.143), Satans (p. 145, 147), rough personality (p. 146) promiscuous people (p.147) who don’t have self-esteem or jealousy (p. 148), and speak an incomprehensible language (p. 154, *tubarbir*). He relates that a man’s wife can talk to another man without his husband. Though ’Usāma had some Christian friends (from the Order of Knights Templar), the newcoming knights were uncivilized, and ’Usāma was keeping to complain about this fact writing that the very few who became civilized were the exception, not the rule (p.152), as if they didn’t know that Muslim prayed in the direction of Mecca, and not eastwards. When someone shows Muslims the picture of Mary holding the Child and telling them this is God while being a child, ’Usāma calls them *kāfirūn*. He as well relates another story about how the Franks enforce a law which lets the winner of two people who are fighting be right. Beside this trial by combat Usama also describes a trial by ordeal, and old Frankish practice abolished by Louis the Pious in 829. Though ’Amīr ’Usāma was at war with Franks, he clearly did not generalize and take every Christian as a *kāfir*. He differentiated between civilized Christians who live among Muslims, the Muslim civilization being the criteria of civilization: law, cleanness, purity, modesty, justice and behind all of it religion that made this happen.

3. In Ibn Faḍlān (870-960), the Oguz people are like wondering donkeys because they do not know the religion of Allah (p. 91), they do not wash themselves after going out, never use water, and their women do not cover themselves, and Ibn Faḍlān was even forced to see one of the women’s private parts, and was ashamed and asked Allah’s forgiveness (p.92-93). They see ritual washing as a water-witchery. Ibn Faḍlān tried to correct bad habits such as inheritance, *iqāma*, women not covering themselves, but with a very little success. The Russians are the dirtiest people of Allah (p. 151) and they have very disgusting habits regarding washing their faces. So Ibn Faḍlān writes that civilization comes when someone is using Islamic habits and laws correctly, washes itself properly, respects the covering habits of women, otherwise, even a Muslim is considered no more than an animal.

4. Al-Ġazālī (1058-1111) in his famous *Faysal at-tafrīqa* establishes several criteria regarding unbelievers. Some are within Islam, i.e. those who follow a man or a sage with *taqlīd*, the Jews and the Christians are Unbelievers because they deny the truthfulness of the Prophet. Deists are all the more Unbelievers because, in addition to our messenger, they reject all of the messengers. Atheists (*dahrīyūn*) are even more so Unbelievers because, in addition to our messenger who was sent to us, they reject the very God who sends the prophets altogether. (al-Ġazālī 2002: 92)

In al-Ġazālī’s writings (and this is the utmost end until religious thinkers went in Islam) the only deficiency of Christians is their lack of recognition of the Prophet.

5. Al-Ġāhiz (776-869), one of the most eloquent writers in Islamic history, has a politically influenced writing against the Jews and Christians. This treatise is formulated during Caliph al-Mutawakkil's reign (847-861) while religious minorities are persecuted because of their cultural, financial and political rule in the Abbasid Empire. Jews are depicted as envious, but still better than Christians. Christianity is depicted as ambiguous and hypocritical (p. 327), ugly but still less repulsive than Jews (p. 328), while Jews, because they do not marry from other nations, are "denied high mental qualities, sound physique, and superior lactation. The same results obtain when horses, camels, donkeys, and pigeons are inbred" (p. 328). Al-Ġāhiz complains that Christians are taken as coequals with Muslims and considers an insult that they take Islamic names and do not wear the discriminatory belt prescribed for them (p. 328-329) and insult the Mother of the Prophet. Al-Ġāhiz even wonders how Christianity is so fertile despite all the monks and celibacy that they filled the Earth with (p. 332), and they convert but do not let anyone to convert to other religion (p. 332). They are singled out of nations because they practice castration (p. 332) which is the greatest sin in Islam against a man, and they practice it even on children.

And the Christian, though cleaner in dress, though engaged in more refined professions, and physically less repulsive, yet inwardly is baser, filthier, and fouler; for he does not practice circumcision, does not cleanse himself from pollution, and in addition eats the flesh of swine. His wife, too, is unclean. She does not purify herself from the defilement of menses and childbirth; her husband cohabits with her in her courses, and, in addition to all this, she too is uncircumcised. In spite of their evil natures and overruling lusts, their faith offers no restraints against passion such as eternal hell-fire in the world to come or punishment by religious authority in the world we live in. How indeed can one evade what harms him, and pursue what profits him if such be his faith? Can such as we have described set the world aright? Can anyone be more fit to stir up evil and corruption? (p. 333)"

These arguments are very common and well-known and persist until the very present day not only in Islamic, but in so-called Christian cultures as well, but with an opposite direction.

## Conclusions

1. The way we relate to a stranger is often based on our communal identities; this can be structured by religion, nation, tribe, family, language, anything which constructs a communal identity. Mental spaces are often created and cultivated by monotheistic religions. In Islamic culture being a Muslim is equivalent to being civilized.

2. Strangeness is a moral category as well, strangers are often depicted as immoral people. This immorality is clearly formulated by the concept of religious superiority-feeling which had a twisted direction compared to the Qur'ān: in the Qur'ān those who act morally are the true Muslims, but later this turned into the opposite and the Muslims became those who act morally.

3. Islam has not one, but at least two different concepts to define strangeness and their usage depends on historical circumstances. So when we read Muslim sages from the

Golden Age, this duality is almost always depicted. However, People of the Book and strangers are immoral and interesting at the same time: this duality regarding strangers is a main point when geographical or other writers approach other nations or religions. There is almost always a sense of superiority because of religion (which is clearly formulated by the definition of monotheism, the Mosaic distinction), but also a true sense of curiosity and an attempt to an understanding even in the most hostile works.

4. Civilization is used as a synonym of Islam. Those are civilized who are Muslims, practice Islamic habits, have an “Islamic” sexual ethics; or, if not Muslims, they learn from them cleanness, habits, etc., while being a Muslim and not practicing its habits is considered a lack of civilization. So cultural curiosity which shapes geographical writing is almost always determined by a cultural-religious feeling of superiority. Non-Muslims, whether a religious or ethnic community, are unclean, speak a non-human language, have barbarian habits, etc.

5. These dehumanizing arguments are very common and well-known until today in intercultural relations. Considering “us” to be normative, and the religious, racial, ethnical “other” to possess a level of civilization only in relation to “us” is a very well-known concept of shaping the otherness. This does not tell anything about “the enemy”, but rather suggests that these identities who need an enemy to be formulated are not very strongly based.

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## IL MILIONE AND THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN

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**Abstract.** The *Travels of Marco Polo*, and, especially, his descriptions of China and the Mongol Empire were, for a long time a work that captured the imagination of the European public regarding the people and cultures of Asia and considered a reference for this geographical space. However, his writings also helped establish as truth legends such as the secret religious “Order of the Assassins” and their mysterious leader, “The Old Man of the Mountain”, myth that had already appeared during the Crusades. For many years the story went unchallenged as little information was available about who “The Assassins” really were. The current study focuses on Marco Polo’s travel to Persia, more exactly to Alamūt, the headquarter of the Nizārī state, founded by Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ, and on his account as the main resource. In addition, based on the most recent research I proposed a few answers to questions regarding the origin of terms used by Marco Polo and to shed light on the legend of the Assassins.

**Keywords:** *Marco Polo; Assassins; Ismā’īlī, Nizārī; Persia; Alamūt; Iran.*

Reading the *Travels of Marco Polo* and his depiction of Persia, one cannot miss the accounts of the Old Man of Mountain, his castle and the practices of his followers. Thus, a few questions arise from his story: who are the *mulehet*, who is the “Old Man of the Mountain” and what is the origin of his name and who are the Assassins? Throughout this article I will try to give answers to all these questions.

Marco Polo’s account starts as follows:

“Mention shall now be made of the old man of the mountain. The district in which his residence lay obtained the name of Mulehet, signifying in the language of the Saracens, the place of heretics, and his people that of Mulehetites, or holders of heretical tenets”<sup>1</sup> (Komroff, 1926: 53).

The term *mulehet* comes from the Arabic word *malāḥida*, meaning “heretics”, name by which a branch of Shi’a Islam, the Ismā’īlīs, was referred to by outsiders. The origin of the Ismā’īlīs is traced back to Ismā’īl, son of Ja’far al-Šādiq (Corbin, 1975: 520). Ismā’īl was elected by his father, Ja’far al-Šādiq, as his successor in the role of imām; however, he died before his father. After the death of al-Šādiq his supporters were split into three main groups: the Nāwūsīya, who believed that Ja’far al-Šādiq was the expected Mahdī, the followers of Mūsa al-Kāzim, another son of Ja’far and half-brother of Ismā’īl, group that

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the text, for fragments of Marco Polo’s *Travels*, I used the 1926 edition of Manuel Komroff, revised from Marsden’s translation of 1854, chapters 23-23, pages 53-56.



would later become the most prominent of the Shi'as, *Iṭnā'aššariyya* or, the Twelvers, and, finally, the supporters of the claim of *Ismā'īl* and of his son, *Muḥammad* (Lewis, 1940: 31-32).

The history of the *Ismā'īlīs* can be split in three major periods: the pre-Fāṭimid period, between 148/765, the emerging of the movement up until 297/909, the year of the establishment of the Fāṭimid Caliphate; the second period which is the rule of the Fāṭimid Caliphate between 297/909 until 487/1094, and, the third period, after 487/1094, year that was marked by a major split within the *Ismā'īlīs*, caused by the power struggle between *al-Musta'li* and the legitimate heir to the Imāmate, the prince *Nizār* who was dethroned by the former (Corbin, 1975: 522).

The pre-Fāṭimid period represents the time of the incubation of the *Ismā'īlī* belief system and is the period with the least reliable information. This fact can be attributed to the hostile environment in which both the *Ismā'īliyya* and the *Iṭnā'aššariyya* communities lived, both of them being persecuted by the 'Abbāsīd rulers, thus, their members being forced to practice *taqiyya* in order to survive (Daftary, 2007: 87). The term *taqiyya* "fear", "prudence", represents, in Shi'a Islam the practice of dissimulation, the hiding of one's belief and religion, in times of oppression or persecution, which, literally means that one adheres to the practices and beliefs of the majority in public, in this case, the Sunni, while remaining Shi'ite on the inside. The *taqiyya* is seen as a balance to the practice of *ṣahada*, "martyrdom" (Gleave, 2004: 678-679).

During this period, the *Ismā'īlī* movement spread across a vast geographical area, reaching from North Africa in the west to Central Asia in the east and to Yemen in the south (Daftary 2005: 22). At first, most of the adepts were from a rural or Bedouin background, however, as the movement grew and continued its expansion also within urban populations. By the end of the 9<sup>th</sup>, around 280/890, the *Ismā'īlīs* were centralized and the missions, *da'wa*, were directed from the city of *Salamiya*, in modern day Syria (Daftary, 2007: 115-116).

In 286/899 a major split of the *Ismā'īlī* community took place. One of the missionaries, *da'ī*, named *Ḥamdān Qarmaṭ*, didn't accept the claims of 'Abd Allah, the new ruler of the movement from *Salamiya*, who had declared himself Imām instead of accepting *Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl* as the hidden Mahdi (Daftary, 2007: 116-117). The *Qarmaṭīs* flourished in Yemen, Syria, Mesopotamia and *Baḥrain* and continued to challenge the other *Ismā'īlīs*, who established the Fāṭimid caliphate in Cairo.

The establishment of the Fāṭimid Caliphate in North Africa represented an important turning point in both the history of the *Ismā'īlīs* and of the Shi'a in general for it was the first time a state was ruled by an imām and caliph, state which became a challenge to the 'Abbāsīds and the Sunnis. The founder and first imām-caliph of the new state was 'Abd Allah al-Mahdi who conquered the capital city of the *Aḡlabīds*, *Raqqada*, which lies in today's Tunisia. The new ruler was immediately recognized by the *Kutama Berbers* (Daftary, 2005: 64).

Of importance to the current study is the schism of 487/1094, which occurred after the death of the Fāṭimid caliph, *al-Mustanṣir*, who named his son, *Nizār*, as his successor. However, the power struggle between *Nizār* and his half-brother, *al-Musta'lī*, lead to the break-up of the *Ismā'īlīs* and the emergence of the *Nizārīs* in Syria and Persia (Daftary, 2007: 241-242).

The term *mulehet*, from Marco Polo's account designates, thus, the Nizārī state of Alamūt, established by Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ, an Ismā'īlī *da'ī* who pursued his mission in his native Persia. In the year 1090 he managed to take control of the Alamūt fortress, in the vicinity of the city of Qazvīn and started directing his mission, *da'wa*, from there (Hodgson, 1955: 47-50).

The Nizārī state of Alamūt lasted for a period of 166 years, between 483/1090, from the taking of the fortress, and 1256 when it was captured by the Mongolians. During this period, Alamūt had eight rulers: the first three (Ḥasan-i Šabbāḥ, Kiyā Buzurg-Ummīd and Muḥammad ibn Buzurg-Ummīd) referred to themselves as *da'ī* and *ḥuḡḡa* "proof" while the last five (Ḥasan II, Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad, Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥasan, 'Alā' al-Dīn Muḥammad and Rukn al-Dīn Kurshāḥ) were imāms.

The first rulers of Alamūt were *ḥuḡḡa*, a term that was used in reference to a leader who was just below the imām in the spiritual hierarchy, however, in Ḥasan-i Sabbāḥ reinterpreted the term to add a new meaning and dimension: "custodian of the Ismā'ili mission until the imam should reappear at which time he would point out the imam to the faithful" (Hodgson, 1968: 438). The death of Nizār was a moment of impasse for what was to become the Nizārī Ismā'īlīs as he had not appointed anyone to become his successor. Thus, Ḥasan-i Sabbāḥ became the only link with the true imām as his supreme *ḥuḡḡa* "proof" and prophesized his reoccurrence as *qā'im* "the figure who, at the end of the world, would cap the series of imāms and complete their work, bringing perfect justice and truth" (Hodgson, 1955: 66-67).

In 559/1164, Ḥasan II, the son of Muḥammad ibn Buzurg-Ummīd, two years after his ascension to the throne of Alamūt, declared himself more than just *da'ī* and *ḥuḡḡa*, adding the title of caliph and later linking this position to that of the Fāṭimid ruler al-Mustansīr, who was also an imām. In this way, Ḥasan II proclaimed the *qiyāma* "resurrection" with him being the long expected imām and *qā'im*. However, the Resurrection was interpreted as a symbol of the ending of a spiritual era in which the *šari'a* was to be respected and the beginning of a new one in which the moral perfection was above all else (Hodgson, 1968: 459).

Ḥasan II couldn't manage to refine his doctrine, being murdered shortly after the proclamation, but his son, Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad, continued the newly established tradition. He linked the figure of the imām, who now become *qā'im*, to the Qur'ānic Ḥiḍr, who had drunk the water of life and was destined to live forever. Moreover, the *imām-qā'im* was interpreted in the Šūfī manner who considered Ḥiḍr as an "eternally wandering mystic, ready to bring material and spiritual sustenance to lonely dedicated Sufis in their hour of extremest need" (Hodgson, 1968: 462-463). At this time, the Nizāris also adopted the Šūfī terminology for their doctrine, where the leader was called by the Persian word, *pīr* "old", "old man". By the time of Marco Polo's journey to Persia, after the fall of Alamūt and the subsequent Nizārī state, the Ismā'īlīs were disguised in a Šūfī *ṭarīqa* (Hodgson, 1968: 466), with the former leaders of Alamūt being known as *pīr*, thus offering a plausible explanation for the name adopted by Marco Polo: "Old Man of the Mountain."

Marco Polo continues his account with the description of a paradisiacal garden that the Old Man of the Mountain used in order to make his followers obey him at all cost:

“In a beautiful valley enclosed between two lofty mountains, he had formed a luxurious garden, stored with every delicious fruit and every fragrant shrub that could be procured. Palaces of various sizes and forms were erected in different parts of the grounds, ornamented with works in gold, with paintings, and with furniture of rich silks. By means of small conduits contrived in these buildings, streams of wine, milk, honey, and some of pure water, were seen to flow in every direction.

The inhabitants of these palaces were elegant and beautiful damsels, accomplished in the arts of singing, playing upon all sorts of musical instruments, dancing, and especially those of dalliance and amorous allurements. Clothed in rich dresses they were seen continually sporting and amusing themselves in the garden and pavilions, their female guardians being confined within doors and never suffered to appear. The object which the chief had in view in forming a garden of this fascinating kind, was this: that Mahomet having promised to those who should obey his will the enjoyments of Paradise, where every species of sensual gratification should be found, in the society of beautiful nymphs, he was desirous of its being understood by his followers that he also was a prophet and the compeer of Mahomet, and had the power of admitting to Paradise such as he should choose to favor” (Komroff, 1926: 53-54) .

The depiction of the garden resembles greatly with the garden described in the Arabic text *Min al-ġuz’ at-tānī min sīrāti amīr al-mu’minīn al-Ḥākīm bi-amr Allāh*, dating from the time of the Fāṭimid leader Zāhir: in the story an Ismā’īlī builds a garden in Maşyaf, near Tripoli, that looks just like the descriptions of Paradise with different types of plants and animals, beautiful slaves finely dressed enchant the guests who are brought inside only at the wish of the owner of the house after being drugged. In later conversations with the Ismā’īlī, the guests were told that all their experience was a miracle of ‘Alī and that they would be offered a place in such a Paradise if they followed the teachings of the Ismā’īlīs. Such stories were also present in Persia, however, the historian Juwaynī didn’t search for such a garden after the fall of Alamūt (Hodgson 1955: 135).

Marco Polo used the word “assassin” in reference to some followers of the leaders of Alamūt, more exactly to those who carried out targeted murders. He argues that young men aged between twelve to twenty years old were specifically trained for this sort of missions with the use of the aforementioned garden: “at his court, likewise, this chief entertained a number of youths, from the age of twelve to twenty years, selected from the inhabitants of the surrounding mountains, who showed a disposition for martial exercises, and appeared to possess the quality of daring courage. To them he was in the daily practice of discoursing on the subject of the paradise announced by the prophet, and of his own power of granting admission. And at certain times he caused opium to be administered to ten or a dozen of the youths; and when half dead with sleep he had them conveyed to the several apartments of the palaces in the garden” (Komroff, 1926: 54). After a few days spent in the so-called Paradise, the young men were taken out and told that they can only return if they obey their master.

While assassinations were, indeed carried by the Nizārīs, they generally came as a result of massacres directed against them in various parts of the Muslim world. Also, the murders were targeted against preachers or rulers who actively fought the Nizārīs or incited populations to violence against them. Those who carried out the murders were called *fidā’ī*, the word “assassin” appearing to be derived from *ḥašīšīn* “smokers of hashish”, as they

were known in Syria. However, the word “assassin” was not used by Marco Polo for the first time, having already been introduced in European languages during the time of the Crusades (Hodgson, 1968: 442-443).

### Final remark

Marco Polo’s account of the Nizārī state of Alamūt is brief and, in many ways, it comes as a reinforcement of the already existing myths and legends rather than shading light on the historical truth of a complex reality. His travel to Persia were conducted after the year 1271, when he left Venice, while the fall of Alamūt took place in 1256 (Hodgson, 1955: 265), thus, Marco Polo’s story is based on accounts of other people and are not a description of his personal, first-hand experience, fact that is acknowledged in his book: “the following account of this chief, Marco Polo testifies to having heard from sundry persons.”

Another issue that is obvious is Marco Polo’s lack of knowledge with regards to the terms he uses: the Old Man of the Mountain appears to be a direct translation of the Persian word *pīr* “old”, “old man”, used in reference to the leaders of Alamūt, rather than a documented account of his actual role and function of *imām-qā’im*, the term “assassin” was just a perpetuation of the already existing notion introduced in Europe during the Crusades, thus, not offering a broader explanation of their actual scope and function, while just by calling the Nizārīs, *mulehet*, he doesn’t offer any insight into who they actually were or what were their doctrines.

Overall, Marco Polo’s story only fuels the European imagination, reinforcing the stereotype of the mystical Orient and can in no way be taken as a proper investigation of the rather complex history of the Ismā’īlīs.

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## تمثلات الذات والآخر في ثلاث رحلات عربية من القرن السابع عشر

رشاً الخطيب

الجامعة العربية المفتوحة - الأردن

**Abstract.** Europe in the seventeenth century was departing from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, and the Arab Islamic world was still close to civilized Europe, but the educated elite did not notice that the renaissance of Europe has made the cultural gap between the two sides widening day after day. The travel to Europe - for all its reasons and motives - allowed the encounter of civilization between the East and the West. The opportunity was available for the travelers of the Arab Islamic world to maintain the positions of the agreement and discard the positions of disagreement between them. So, did they really do that? Or did the travel failed to change much of the self-promotion against the other?! This paper seeks to extrapolate the representations of the self and the other in the models of the Arab travels in the seventeenth century, which recorded that meeting at that specific historical moment. Three different types of travel literature are chosen, which belong to the same era and to the West, but each is distinct from the other in different aspects. These journeys are: Ahmad ibn Qasim Al-Hajari Al-Andalusi journey (to France and the Netherlands), the journey of Prince Fakhr Al-Din Al Maani (to Italy), and the journey of Priest Elias Al-Mouseley (to America). The choice of these travels was based on the assumption that the journeys that belong to one-time, which is the 17th century, may help to search for other features that may gather them or make them different in the search for the representations of the self and the other in the journey.

**Keywords:** *Travel Literature, Self and Other, Ahmad ibn Qāsim Al-Hajarī (Afoukay), al-Amīr Fakhr al-Dīn al-Ma'nī al-Thānī, Elias ibn Hanna al-Mawsilī.*

أولاً: التعريف بالرحلات

1. رحلة أفوقاي الأندلسي

المؤلف:

هو أحمد بن قاسم الحجري أفوقاي الأندلسي، وهو أحد الموريسكيين الذين عاشوا بعد سقوط غرناطة في ظل الحكم الإسباني، ولد سنة 1569 في الثلث الأخير للقرن السادس عشر الذي شهد عددا من القرارات الإسبانية التي لاحقت المسلمين في حياتهم اليومية وخصائصهم الثقافية وطقوسهم الدينية، فانهى الأمر بهم إلى اعتناق المسيحية جهرا واستعمال اللغة الإسبانية والمحافظة على الإسلام وممارسة اللغة العربية سرا. وقد اضطرته هذه الأحوال إلى التفكير بالهرب إلى المغرب، وتمّ له ذلك عام 1598، ثم استقر به المقام في مدينة مراكش وتيسّر له العمل مترجماً في ديوان السلطان المغربي زمناً طويلاً، حتى عام 1636.

الرحلة:

ارتحل الحجري أفوقاي إلى فرنسا بتكليف من السلطان المغربي، لبحث مسألة استيلاء بعض السفن الفرنسية على حوائج خاصة بالموريسكيين المهجّرين من إسبانيا. وقد استغرقت رحلته نحو سنتين من 1611-1613، زار فيها عدداً من

## رشا الخطيب

المدن الفرنسية لإنجاز مهمته، وكانت له لقاءات عديدة بالطبقة الحاكمة والمثقفة في فرنسا. وحين أراد القبول راجعاً إلى المغرب اختار أن يسافر عبر هولندا، التي التقى فيها ببعض رواد الدراسات الاستشراقية. وكان أفواقي قد دون رحلته بعد نحو ثلاثين عاماً من رجوعه، وما وصلنا منها هو مختصرٌ كتبه بنفسه سماه **ناصر الدين على القوم الكافرين**، اكتفى فيه بتدوين المجادلات الدينية التي جرت في رحلته. وآخر ما نعرف من أخباره أنه كان في تونس سنة 1641/1051 وهو تاريخ النسخة من مختصر رحلته التي نسخها بخط يده.

## 2. رحلة الأمير فخرالدين المعني المؤلف:

هو الأمير فخرالدين المعني بن قرقماس بن معن فخرالدين الأول أمراء الشوف والبقاع وجبال لبنان، كان مولده في 1572، تسلّم إمارة الشوف في لبنان وهو دون العشرين. كان يريد بناء دولة قوية تقف أمام الدولة العثمانية على الرغم من عدم خروجه عن سلطتها، فأنشأ جيشاً ضخماً، وبسط سيطرته على مناطق واسعة في لبنان، فرغب إليه التجار الإيطاليون وأقام علاقات تجارية وحربية أيضاً مع دولة توسكانا، "التي كانت آنذاك حكومة مستقلة حاكمها يسمى الدوق ثم الدوق العظيم، ثم دخلت في حكم إيطاليا سنة 1869" (فوستنفلد: 1981: 158)، فازدهرت التجارة في بلاده. توجست الدولة من توطيد علاقات الأمير فخرالدين بإيطاليا، وتفاقت الأمور حتى أُحْكِمَ الحصارُ عليه، مما اضطره سنة 1613 إلى اللجوء إلى توسكانا، فأقام هناك خمس سنوات، وعندما عاد انصرف إلى تعمير بلاده وتحديثها كما شاهد هناك. وقد حقق الكثير مما جعل المؤرخ المحبي (ت: 1699) يقول عنه: "وبالجملة فقد بلغ مبلغاً لم يبق وراءه إلا دعوى السلطنة" (المحبي: 1867: ج1، 368). وكان ذلك سبباً في السعاية ضده لدى الباب العالي حتى انتهى الأمر إلى اقتياده أسيراً إلى الأستانة حيث جرى قتله سنة 1635.

## الرحلة:

وجد الأمير فخرالدين نفسه محاصراً، فاضطر إلى ركوب البحر الذي كان المنفذ الوحيد له، وركب في منتصف أيلول سنة 1613 سفينة هولندية من ميناء صيدا -لأنه بلا خفارة عثمانية- رفقة سفينتين فرنسيتين نقلتا حاشيته وأسرتة، متجهاً إلى إيطاليا. طالباً اللجوء والحماية من دوق توسكانا، كما تشير إلى ذلك رسالة الأمير نفسه يطلب اللجوء (المعني: 2007: 117)، وقد أجابه الدوق إلى طلبه ونزل ضيفاً عليه وأكرمه. استقرّ الأمير في فلورنسة عامين ثم نزل مسيناً في صقلية وأمضى فيها ثلاث سنوات أخرى، حتى غادرها، ووصل ميناء عكا في أيلول 1618، ومنها عاد برباً إلى بيروت. وكان في أثناء هذه المدة قد زار لبنان سنة 1615 في رحلة بحرية مرّ فيها على عدد من الجزر المتوسطية ثم رجع إلى صقلية.

## 3. رحلة الخوري إلياس الموصللي المؤلف:

هو الخوري إلياس بن حنا الموصللي الكلداني، لا يُعرف تاريخ مولده ولا وفاته، وإنما آخر عهدنا به كتابٌ في الصلوات والدين المسيحي طبع في روما سنة 1692 (رباط: 1906: 472). أمضى الموصللي نحو خمسة عشر عاماً في أوروبا وأمريكا، ينتسب إلى أسرة بغدادية تضم عدداً من البطارقة الناصرة المرتبطة بالفاتيكان (كراتشكوفسكي: 1961: 702)، وهو ما قد يفسر الحفاوة في استقباله في أماكن عديدة زارها في رحلاته. وكان في ختام رحلته إلى أمريكا ينوي الرجوع إلى بلاده عن طريق الشرق، ثم غيّر رأيه واختار الرجوع إلى إسبانيا (الموصللي: 2001: 117-118). ولا يُعرف مصيره بعد ذلك؛ إذ ربما بقي في إسبانيا حتى سنة 1699 أو أنه غادر إسبانيا إلى روما بعد 1692 -وهو تاريخ طباعة كتابه- وأمضى بقية عمره هناك، أو ربما يكون قد

عاد إلى بلاده ثانية مشرفاً على كنيسة بغداد الكاثوليكية، استناداً إلى المنصب الذي منحه إياه ملكة إسبانيا (رباط1906: 472).

### الرحلة:

غادر الموصلية بغداد سنة 1668 متجهاً إلى روما، مروراً ببعض المدن السورية وحجاً إلى القدس، ومنها سافر إلى حلب، ثم أبحر من الإسكندرونة إلى روما، والتقى بالبابا كليمينت التاسع هناك (كراتشكوفسكي 1961: 702). ثم غادر روما إلى فرنسا والتقى الملك لويس الرابع عشر، وتابع رحلته إلى مدريد، والتقى الملكة حنة النمساوية التي حمل إليها رسائل من البابا.

تعرف إلى مربية الملك وقام بأعمال القداس، فأعجبت به الملكة الأم وعرضت أن يسألها طلباً. فطلب مهلة استشار فيها بعض أصدقائه، ثم وسألها إجازة يتوجه بها إلى بلاد هند الغرب في العالم الجديد (الموصلية 2001: 43). ومما يشهد على مكانته الخاصة ومنزلته أن تلك الإجازة كانت تصريحاً للسفر في بلاد الهند الغربية لمدة أربع سنوات فقط (الموصلية 2001: 97)، ولكنه تجاوز المدة دون أن يتعرض لعقوبة أو لسلب امتيازاته الممنوحة بموجب تصريح الملكة.

وفي فبراير 1675 غادر ميناء قادش الإسباني على متن السفينة الملكية -التي تغادر كل ثلاث سنوات- (الموصلية 2001: 21) متجهاً إلى أمريكا، وقد مرّ في طريق رحلته بجزر الكناري، ثم وصل شواطئ ما صار يُعرف بأمريكا الجنوبية، وزار الكثير من المدن والقرى والجزر في بنما، وفنزويلا، وكولومبيا، وإكادور، والبيرو، وبوليفيا، ونيكاراغوا، وهندوراس، وغواتيمالا، وتشيلي، ثم عاد إلى البيرو سنة 1680، ومنها سار إلى المكسيك (بلاد ينكي دنيا) ثم إلى كوبا التي اختارها لطبيب هوائها بدلا من المكسيك بهوائها الحار (الموصلية 2001: 123-124)، ثم قفل راجعاً إلى قادش ثانية سنة 1683.

لم يفصح الموصلية عن الأسباب التي دفعته للقيام برحلته، ولكن يمكن فهم السبب وراءها إذا نظرنا إلى صلاته التي تدل على رفعة منزلته الدينية وعلاقاته بالطبقة الحاكمة، في البلاد التي زارها في القارة الأوروبية وفي العالم الجديد. بيد أن ظاهر الرحلة يدعم أنها كانت لأسباب تبشيرية ولدعم كنيسة روما في أراضي العالم الجديد؛ ومما يؤيد هذا الرأي إشارة واضحة للموصلية في ديباجة الكتاب، بأنه يريد من كتابه هذا أن يبين أن طوائف البشر في الإقليم الرابع الذي كان مخفياً عن الأبصار ومستوراً عن الأفكار بشراً يؤمنون بالمسيح وأنهم رجعوا إلى الإيمان الحقيقي واحتضنوا الكنيسة المقدسة، حتى إن كثيرين منهم بعد دخولهم في الإيمان بالمسيح خسبوا من جملة القديسين (الموصلية 2001: 27-28).

### ثانياً: تمثلات الذات والآخر

"إن تمثل الذات للآخر لا يأتي من فراغ وليس تصوراً اعتباطياً بقدر ما هو نتاج ثمرة وعي ومعرفة سابقين..بمعنى أن الصورة التي تختزنها الذات عن الآخر لا تتسم بالعفوية ولا تكون نتيجة للمشاهدة وللاتصال فقط، بل إنها تستمد أسسها... من المنظومة المرجعية الثقافية" (إبراهيم 2010). وإذ لم تنقطع مرويّات الرحلات عن مرجعياتها الثقافية فهي "لا تعرف البراءة في التمثيل" (إبراهيم 2011)؛ فقد اشتبكت مع تلك المرجعيات التي دفع بها إلى إعلاء الذات وإقصاء الآخر. كانت البواعث الرئيسية المعروفة للرحلة وهي الحج وطلب العلم والتجارة، بعيدة عن أوروبا فلا يُعري بالسفر إليها واحداً منها، ومع ذلك لم تكن أوروبا مجهولة لسكان الدولة الإسلامية؛ وقد سجلت كتب الجغرافيا والرحلات المتقدمة أوصافاً للبلاد والشعوب المسيحية تكشف عن معرفتهم بها.

وفي القرنين الخامس عشر والسادس عشر عندما قويت شوكة الدولة العثمانية وأصبحت المواجهة واقعة بعد فتح القسطنطينية 1453، وسقوط غرناطة 1492، صار اللقاء بين الجانبين معتاداً من خلال الرحالة والتجار ورجال الدين والسفراء... وغيرهم.

وعلى الرغم من ذلك كان هناك نوع من التجاهل الأوروبي للعالم الإسلامي؛ فالمسلم في خيال الأوروبي هو الجاهل البعيد عن أسباب الحضارة، لذلك كان أفوقاي الأندلسي في رحلته، الحريص على إظهار سعة علمه وقوة جداله.



أنموذجاً مخالفاً لما ألفته الذاكرة الأوروبية من صورة المسلمين، عبّر عنه الراهبان اللذان التقياه في زيارته لباريس رفقة الطبيب الفرنسي أبرت، وقد وصف أفوقاي ذلك قائلاً:

ولما كنا في الموضع بين الأشجار الكبار، ولم يظهر أحد قال لي: تعجّبنا منك تحفظ الألسن وتقرأ الكتب، وسرت في المدن وأقطار الدنيا ومع هذا تكون مسلماً! قلت لهم العجب هو منكم تقرأون الكتب والعلوم وأنتم من أهل هذه المدينة الكبرى ومع ذلك تقولون على الله الذي خلق كل شيء وهو واحد قبل كل شيء وبعده- أنه ثالث ثلاثة ما لا يقول العقل أبداً. وذلك نقصان في حقه تعالى. (الحجري 2004: 56-57).

وهكذا تتوارى تمثيلات الذات وتمثيلات الآخر خلف الأنساق الثقافية المضمرّة في خطاب الرحلات، فكانت صورة المسلم في الخيال الأوروبي محكومة بالرؤية الدينية والحضارية، والصورة ذاتها تبدو مشابهة لما لدى الرحالة العرب والمسلمين في الجانب المقابل؛ لأن الدين نسق ثقافي قوي يحدد طبيعة الأنساق الثقافية الأخرى (بوالة 2014:). فقد كان الدين حاسماً في تمثّل الآخر في رحلة الحجري أفوقاي، ورحلة الأمير فخر الدين، فكان المختلف دينياً هو (النصراني) أو (الكافر)، بينما في رحلة الموصلية كان المختلف دينياً هو (الهنود الكفرة) من سكان العالم الجديد، أو الخارجين على طاعة الكنيسة في روما؛ وهكذا كان الدين العامل الأول في تمثّل الآخر والوعي به وكذلك في تمثّل الذات. وقد تشابهت الرحلات الثلاث في أنّ كانت الذات المؤمنة حاضرة مقابل الآخر الكافر، بينما طغت صورة الذات المتأخرة مقابل الآخر المتقدم في رحلة الأمير فخر الدين، كما تكشفها أنساق الرحلة المضمرّة.

أما العلاقة بين الذات والآخر فهي محكومة غالباً بعامل الغلبة والخضوع، أو الإعجاب والانبهار من أحد الطرفين، لكن هذه الرحلات تبدو متوازنة: إذ تتطوي على الإعجاب بالآخر، كما في رحلة الأمير فخر الدين ورحلة الخوري الموصلية، لكنها لا تخلو من مواجهة مع الآخر، كما في رحلة أفوقاي الأندلسي؛ بسبب غلبة الطرف الأوروبي. وإذا أردنا أن نجمل تمثيلات الذات والآخر في الرحلات المدروسة هنا، فإننا سنقف فيها على ما يأتي مما يناسب غرض البحث: ففي تمثيلات الذات سنقف على: الروح الدينية في الرحلة، والنزوع إلى تعظيم الذات وتضخيم صورتها، وبنية النص الرحلي، أما في تمثّل الآخر فنسقف على: تسمية الآخر أو وصفه، ومواقف الإعجاب منه أو النفور، وصورة المرأة.

### أ) الذات والآخر في رحلة أفوقاي الأندلسي

كانت الرحلة في أصلها كتاباً كبيراً، وهو مفقود حتى اليوم، ألّفه أفوقاي بعد قيامه بالحج وزيارة المشرق سنة 1636م، أي بعد زمن طويل من رحلته إلى فرنسا وهولندا بين 1611-1613.

ويتمثّل الوعي بتأليف نص الرحلة من عنوانها **ناصر الدين على القوم الكافرين**، فالعنوان هو "إعلان عن طبيعة النص" و"بلاغ أولي عن مضمون المؤلف" (حليفي 2015: 11، 16). ولهذا العنوان أهمية خاصة؛ فهو يحمل صراحة موقفاً تجاه الآخر، إذ وصفهم بـ (القوم الكافرين) وتظهر الذات هنا بقوة بصفتها (ناصرّة الدين).

تتنازع نصّ الرحلة في أصله أجناسٌ عدة كالتاريخ والسيرورة والمناظرات والتراجم... وغيرها، حتى وإن قال أفوقاي إنه جعل تأليفه رحلة سماها **رحلة الشهاب إلى لقاء الأحباب** (الحجري، 2004: 20).

أما المختصر الذي بقي لنا من الرحلة فمعظمه في الجدل الديني والمناظرات؛ لأنه كان الغاية من اختصار الرحلة بناء على طلب شيخ المالكية بالقاهرة، الذي سأله أن يختصرها ويكتفي منها "بما وقع له من الكلام في الدين مع النصراني" (الحجري، 2004: 22)، ولهذا لم تكد وصمة الكفر ومناسبة العداة تفارق الآخر في رحلة أفوقاي الأندلسي.

أما الذات فقد ظهرت في أكمل صورة لها أمام ذات أخرى مضمرّة كان أفوقاي يخاطبها بين السطور، هي الذات المسلمة التي أعجبت بحكاياته في ديار المشرق التي زارها، وأراد أن يقدم لها صورة نقية للذات التي أراد لها أن تكون حاضرة في الرحلة.

لم يكن أفوقاي في مختصر رحلته منشغلاً إلا بالجدل الديني، حتى طغى على غيره من جوانب الرحلة، فلم يتحدث عن مهمته السفارية ولا عن الوفد الذي رافقه في الرحلة إلا قليلاً (الحجري 2004: 77، 70)، على الرغم من تصريحه أن دافعه للرحلة هو سفارته عن السلطان المغربي لتخليص حوائج الموريسكيين المنهوبة من قبل السفن الفرنسية (الحجري 2004: 47-48).

كان الجدل الديني في رحلة أفوقاي نقلاً لجدل واقعي حدث وليس مجرد جدل افتراضي أو أسئلة تستشرف المستقبل، لكنه يعكس خطاباً أحادي النظرة قائماً على إقصاء الآخر المختلف دينياً وتشويهه، وكان خطاباً عنيفاً ربما يفسره السياق التاريخي للرحلة ولصاحبها، فأفوقاي وهو أندلسي موريسكي قد أُجبر - في ظل بطش السلطات الإسبانية-

على العيش نصرانياً في الظاهر مسلماً في الباطن مسلوب الإرادة في إعلان معتقده وثقافته ولغته، لمدة طويلة حتى اقترب عمره من الثلاثين، وإذ لم يستطع التخلص تماماً من ذكريات طفولته وشبابه بعد هروبه من إسبانيا، فقد بقيت آثارها تلاحقه، خاصة أن مهمته السفارية التي كانت دافعه للرحلة قد جاءت بعد القرار الإسباني بطرد المسلمين 1609. وظهرت آثار تنصيره على صفحات رحلته في عنف أحكامه تجاه الآخر المسيحي، فقد شبّه هروبه من إسبانيا ووصوله إلى المغرب كأنه اجتاز أهوال يوم القيامة، وشبّه دخوله المغرب بدخوله الجنة (الحجري، 2004: 45-46)، ووصف اضطرابه الشديد ورؤياه في المنام أنه يلوذ بقراءة المعوذات قبل وصوله الأراضي الفرنسية (بلاد الشرك)، إذ يقول:

وبلغنا بلاد الفرنج إلى مرسى هبر دي غرسي... وبتنا في السفينة بنية الخروج إلى البر في غد، وتلك الليلة طولها نرى في النوم أنني كنت نلتوا سورة الإخلاص، وبعد أن نزلنا في البر بان لي أن قراءة "قل هو الله أحد" كان تثبيتاً لي على التوحيد، والأمر لله تعالى به إذ كنا نازلين ببلاد الشرك (الحجري، 2004: 49).

وقد أصابه الضيق عندما زار الطبيب الفرنسي أبرت في بيته بباريس ووضع أمامه مجموعة من الكتب العربية التي يمتلكها ومنها القرآن الكريم، فأصابه غيظٌ وتغير؛ لأن من كان يحمل القرآن برأيه "كافر نجس" (الحجري، 2004: 53). وهي أحكام وتمثلات شائعة تجاه الآخر المختلف دينياً.

ولكن هذا يدفعنا للإشارة إلى مسألة في غاية الأهمية وهي أن أفوقاي الذي كان يبدو في رحلته حاداً في أحكامه تجاه الآخر، هو نفسه الذي يبدو منفتحاً عليه، كما يظهر في رسائله إلى بعض المستشرقين الهولنديين، وتشهد تلك الرسائل على صداقته وتعاونه مع الآخر، ورغبته في التبادل والتلاقح الفكري والمعرفي والثقافي بين حضارتين، بعيداً عن الجدل الديني الذي لا يظهر في رسائله للمستشرقين المحفوظة في مكتبة جامعة لايدن ومكتبة جامعة مانشستر.

كما أن امتلاكه لأدوات عديدة كاللغات الأوروبية التي كان يتقنها- جعلت التواصل مع المستشرقين ممكناً ويسيراً. كما جعلته ثقافته الواسعة وإطلاعه على مصادر الثقافة الشرقية والغربية- محاوراً جيداً ومجادلاً قوياً، وسمحت له باستعراض قدراته المنطقية والجدلية، الذي كان ينتهي عادة بتسليم الآخرين له!!

فهل كان أفوقاي مزدوج الشخصية؟! أم هل رأى بعد عودته من أوروبا أن الإنسانية لا بد لها من اللقاء ولو تأخر الوقت؟! فقد دون رحلته بعد زمن طويل من استقراره ببلاد المسلمين، في وقت كانت فيه القضية الموريسكية قد تفاقمت ولم تعد لها حلول ممكنة تلوح بالأفق، فوجد نفسه محاولاً إثبات تدينه وإسلامه الصحيح في منفاه الجديد، فالموريسكيون في منافعهم الجديدة شمال أفريقية كانوا موضع شبهة أحياناً؛ لأن كثيراً منهم لم يكونوا على معرفة جيدة باللغة العربية التي كانت ممنوعة في الأندلس في القرن السادس عشر.

ويُضمر الجدل الديني لدى أفوقاي في رحلته، تزويقاً للذات ومحاولاً لتتقية تاريخه وحياته السابقة مما شابها في إسبانيا، أو هو إخفاءً لعيوب الذات مقابل إظهار الآخر وتشويهه وإقصائه (فهو مثلاً لم يذكر لنا كيف تدبر في رحلته التي طالت لسنتين أمور طعامه، الذي يجب أن يكون وفق الشريعة الإسلامية التي يدافع عنها، أو كيف تدبر أمور الصلاة وتحديد القبلة وصيام رمضان أو صلاة الجمعة... وغيرها من شؤون تمس حياة المسلم اليومية في حله وترحاله.. ومثل هذا مما سكنت عنه في الرحلة يُظهر الذات في صورة نقيّة تقية، لا يغيب نسق الدين والتدين عنها).

كان الجدل الديني في رحلة أفوقاي دفاعاً عن هويته الدينية والثقافية؛ إذ يُضمر خطاب الرحلة صورة للذات في أكمل تمثيل لها، فهو المسلم الغيور على دينه الذي يهرب من بلاد الكفار إلى بلاد المسلمين، وهو الملتزم بعقيدته على الرغم من الإغراءات الشديدة التي تقابله، كحكايته مع الفتاة الفرنسية الجميلة (الحجري، 2004: 71-73)، وهو المدافع بقوة عن دينه؛ الذي يرى انتصاره كأنما هو انتصار للإسلام كله (الذات) أمام الكافرين (الآخر).

كما يكشف الجدل الديني نسقاً مضمراً يحاول فيه أفوقاي التخلص من ماضيه؛ إذ تعكس مناظراته الدينية معرفة واسعة وإطلاعاً كبيراً على مصادر الثقافة الغربية والتقاليد الدينية المسيحية واليهودية قبل الشريعة الإسلامية، بما يشي بأنه في أثناء إقامته بإسبانيا كان مثلاً للمسيحي الجيد، الذي كانت محاكم التفتيش تسعى إلى أن يكون عليه موريسكيو الأندلس، فهو يحفظ آيات الإنجيل ويستشهد بها في جداله، بل إنه يصحح لمجادليه ما سَهَرُوا عنه من تلك الآيات ويحدد لهم مواضعها من الكتاب المقدس، الذي اطلع عليه باللغة العربية وبالعجمية أيضاً! وهو شيء لم يتمكن منه جميع الموريسكيين، هذا مع الإشارة إلى أن بعض مجادلاته -المدونة في الرحلة- تنبئ عن أنه رجع إلى مصادر أخرى مكتوبة لم تكن متوافرة بين يديه وقت حصول الجدل فعلياً.

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وإذا ما وقفنا في رحلة أفوقاي على بعض العناصر التي تكشف تمثل الذات والآخر فيها، فإننا نُجمل الحديث عنها فيما يأتي:

## تمثل الذات:

- **تعظيم الذات:** ظهر ذلك في عدة صور استعراضية فقد أطنب أوقاي في إظهار تقدير الإسبان له أمام أبناء جلدته من الأندلسيين حين كان ما يزال يعيش هناك؛ وكان ذلك بعد أن نجح في مساعدة الإسبان في ترجمة الرقوق الرصاصية التي عُثِر عليها في غرناطة، فاستطاع أن يسير في الطرقات حاملاً كتاباً باللغة العربية دون خوف (الحجري 2004: 34) وهو ما كان ممنوعاً بالقانون. وفي صورة أخرى استعرض أوقاي أمام الفرنسيين سعة اطلاعه وتنوع معارفه مبيّناً لهم أن ذلك من ضرورات عمله مترجماً في البلاط السلطاني (الحجري 2004: 67). وتتجلى سعة اطلاعه وتنوع ثقافته في جميع مواقف الجدل التي خاضها والتي كانت عادة ما تنتهي بعبارات من قبيل "فُهِت التاجر ولم يعرف ما يقوله"، "فخرس الراهب وبهت ولم يجد ما يجاوب به"... وغيرها، وهي عبارات تكشف مدى عناية أوقاي بصورة الذات القريبة من الكمال التي حرص على تمثيلها في رحلته.
- **الروح الدينية:** طغت الروح الدينية على معظم الرحلة بل إنها تقريباً هي كل ما فيها، ويظهر ذلك ابتداءً من عنوان المختصر الذي وصلنا، وجعله نصراً للدين على القوم الكافرين، يقوم به المؤلف كي تكون الذات في صورتها المشتهاة، وإلى جانب ذلك حفلت صفحات الرحلة بإحالات مناسبة على النصوص الدينية من الكتب المقدسة، تجعل من رحلته دليلاً لكل باحث في الجدل الإسلامي-المسيحي-اليهودي.
- **بنية النص الرحلي ولغة الرحالة:** أما في بنية النص الرحلي نفسه فإننا واجدون أوقاي يلجأ على هويته العربية؛ فاللغة كانت ملمحاً أساسياً لتأكيد هويته العربية التي نجح في المحافظة عليها على الرغم من الثلاثين عاماً التي أنفقها من شبابه في ظل الأحكام والقوانين الإسبانية. وعلى الرغم من استعراضه معارفه باللغات الأخرى التي فتحت له أبواب الجدل هناك.

## أما في تمثل الآخر فيكفي أن نشير إلى:

- **التسمية والوصف:** استعمل أوقاي ألفاظاً عديدة تصف الآخر الأوروبي غير المسلم، وقد أكد تسميتهم بـ(الكفار) ابتداءً من العنوان، وهم في بعض الأحيان (الفرنج) (والنصارى واليهود)، بينما احتفظ بالتسمية الشائعة عندما أطلق على سكان العالم الجديد (الهنود المغربية)؛ وهي التسمية التي شاعت لوصف الهنود الحمر بعد عقود من وصول الأوروبيين إلى العالم الجديد، وهي جميعها تعكس صورة الآخر المختلف دينياً وتحمل تفسراً إقصائياً لا يخفى.
- **الإعجاب:** أما مواقف الإعجاب بالآخر فلم تحفل بها رحلة أوقاي إلا قليلاً؛ لأن بنيته كانت تقوم على الجدل الديني وترفع من شأنه، وتجعله محط اهتمامها الأول؛ إذ تكاد رحلته تخلو من نظرة انبهار أو إعجاب كالتي نتوقعها عند الرحالة المسلمين في زيارتهم لأوروبا؛ لأنه أمضى نحو ثلاثين عاماً في إسبانيا. فلم يقع أسير المقارنة بين الذات والآخر في ميادين العمران أو التقدم التقني أو جمال الطبيعية، إلا ما كان يصدر فيه عن ندية، في سياق لا يلتفت فيه إلى الذات التي لم يكن يراها متأخرة عن نظيرتها لدى الآخر الأوروبي (كما في مقارنته القاهرة بباريس واعتقاده أن القاهرة تفوق باريس في اتساعها) (الحجري 2004: 52). وهكذا غابت - من رحلته - أو كادت تغيب الرؤية الانبهارية المفتتنة بالآخر وبأي جانب حضاري مما قد يلفت انتباه الزائر إلى بلاد غريبة. ولا يغيب عن الصورة أن أوقاي عندما زار تلك البلاد لم يكن أتى من بيئة غريبة عن المجتمع الذي كان قد عاش فيه.
- **المرأة:** وهي من الملامح البارزة في تمثل الآخر، وهي أول ما يلاحظه الرحالة العربي المسلم عند زيارته لمجتمع أوروبي، فقد لاحظ أوقاي بروز المرأة للشأن العام ومخالطتها الرجال وعدم احتجابها عنهم. لكن ما شغله مما كان له صلة بالنساء اللواتي اختلط بهن في رحلته - هو عاداتهم بقضاء وقت مع المرأة والتسلي والتنزه معها، ثم لا يلزم الرجل شيئاً إذا لم يتزوجها. وفي حكايته مع الفتاة الفرنسية التيبادلها الإعجاب مثل على ما نقول (الحجري 2004: 71-73).

## ب) الذات والآخر في رحلة الأمير فخر الدين المعني

لم تكن رحلة الأمير فخر الدين نصاً مستقلاً بل هي أخبار مدوّنة على الأغلب من شخص غير الأمير نفسه، وهي جزء من كتاب تاريخ الأمير فخر الدين للمؤلف أحمد بن محمد الخالدي الصفدي (ت1624)، الذي جمع في كتابه أخبار الأمير فخر الدين في لبنان والأقطار الشامية بين السنوات 1021هـ/1612-1034هـ/1624، وقد ذكر الخالدي تنقاً من أخبار رحلة الأمير فخر الدين إلى إيطاليا في موضعها من السنوات التي أرّخ لها. أما محققا الكتاب فجعلوا الرحلة ملحفاً بالكتاب بعنوان رحلة الأمير إلى أوروبا (رستم1969: 208-241).

تبدو لغة الجزء الخاص برحلة الأمير فخر الدين مخالفة للغة مؤلف الكتاب، سواء في مقدمة الكتاب أو متنه، ولهذا يرجح أن تكون أخبار الرحلة إما من إملاء الأمير نفسه شفويّاً أو من يوميات له دُوّنها في أثناء الرحلة، لأن سداجة التعبير فيها وعفوية الأداء وبساطته تذكر ببعض رسائل الأمير الشخصية (المعني2007: 22). تتميز رحلة الأمير فخر الدين بأنها لجوءٌ اضطر إليه، وقد صرّح في رحلته بأن سببها هو طلب اللجوء والحماية (المعني2007: 34، 38) وورد ذلك في رسالة من الأمير إلى دوق توسكانا.

لقي الأمير فخر الدين استقبلاً جيداً من مضيفيه: أصدقائه وحلفائه في توسكانا وفي صقلية (التي كانت تحت سيطرة إسبانيا) وقد أمضى سنواته الأولى هناك متجولاً متنزهاً مطّلعاً على المنجزات العمرانية والتقنية والحضارية في إيطاليا، خاصة أن الأماكن التي زارها كانت من المدن التي شهدت ملامح النهضة الأوروبية الحديثة، حتى أنه: انشرح خاطر الأمير ونسي بلاده لخُسن نظامات تلك البلاد، والإكرام الزائد الذي حصل له، وبقي في فلورنسا لا يأكل في الشهر مرة في بيته لكثرة الدعوات التي كانت تأتيه إلى الجنائن والمنتزهات الفاخرة وكان يدور يومياً في عدة أماكن لأجل الفرجة، فكان يرى في كل يوم شيئاً جديداً (المعني2007: 109).

وما ساعد الأمير على ذلك أنه كان غير منشغل بتحصيل تكاليف إقامته هناك -أول الأمر على الأقل- إذ تكفل دوق توسكانا بها (المعني2007: 40) فأعطى سعةً من الوقت ليمضي أيامه مستفيداً ومطلعاً على حياة جديدة في أوروبا، مستكماً في ذهنه طموحه للنهوض ببلاده، ولم تكن نزواته مجرد سياحة؛ إذ حقق بعض ما أراد عند عودته من تلك الرحلة، مما سبّب له الصدام من جديد مع الباب العالي.

من جهة أخرى سمح دوق توسكانا لصيفه بحرية الاطلاع والتجوال في منشآت عديدة منها منشآت حكومية حساسة، لكنه أوجس منه خيفة فيما بعد -كما يظهر في ختام الرحلة: إذ عندما نوى الأمير الرجوع إلى بلاده، طلب إذنًا من الدوق للمسير بالمركب، فمأظله في إجابة طلبه بإصدار إجازة السفر لأيام عديدة (المعني2007: 97) خوفاً من أن يفشي الأمير فخر الدين للدولة العثمانية أسرار بلاده في النهضة والعمران والإدارة التي اطلع عليها في أثناء إقامته في إيطاليا. ولم يحصل الأمير على إذن السفر إلا بعد استجوابه أين سيعود وماذا ولمن سيتحدث عنهم.

ويضمّر هذا الفعل الموقف من الآخر وتمثّله؛ فعلى الرغم مما يظهر من حسن ضيافة توسكانا والتقاء المصالح التجارية والسياسية بين الدوق والأمير، إلا أنه يكشف الصورة المستقرة عن غدر العربي، في أذهان الأوربيين.

كان معظم رحلة الأمير فخر الدين وصفاً للأماكن التي زارها في توسكانا وصقلية، وفي ذلك الوصف يكمن الانبهار والإعجاب حتى مع عدم التصريح به، فلم يكن انبهاره سطحياً ساذجاً، إذ لم يصرح في رحلته بأنه يقارن أحوال توسكانا بأحوال بلاده، لكن ذلك لا ينفي أن فكرة إعجابه بالبلد المضيف وفكرة المقارنة بين الذات والآخر كانت حاضرة بقوة حتى لتكاد تكشف عن نفسها في كل موضع من الرحلة، كأن الأمير يقول لنفسه في كل مرة يصف فيها منجزاً حضارياً، إنه يريد لبلاده أن تكون مثل إيطاليا في نهضتها وعمرانها.

فصورة الوطن-الذات كانت حاضرة في خياله لأنه كان صاحب مشروع نهضوي لبلاده، وما يزيد من ترجيح هذا الأمر الأعمال التي قام بها بعد عودته من تلك الرحلة الإيطالية. ومع هذا لم يكن ليحيد عن أن يكون تمثّل الذات في الرحلة تعظيماً لشأنها واعتزازاً بمكانتها، رغم الإحساس بالتفوق الحضاري الغربي، كما سيأتي تفصيله. أما تمثّلات الذات والآخر في رحلة الأمير فخر الدين، فتظهر في الجوانب الآتية:

## تمثل الذات:

- **تعظيم الذات:** حرصت الرحلة على إظهار رفعة الأمير فخر الدين ومكانته، وتأكيد الحفاوة التي حظي بها في كل مكان نزل به بين أهله ومضيفيه، فقد أظهرت رحلته الحفاوة في الاستقبال وكرم الضيافة التي نالها بتكريمه وتخصيص مبلغ مالي يُنفق لإكرامه ضيفاً مميزاً لدى دوق توسكانا.
  - **الروح الدينية:** أما هذه الروح فإن الرحلة لا تشير إلى أن هذا الموضوع قد شغله إلا عَرَضاً، فلم يشغله الاختلاف الديني بينه وبين مضيفيه، وهو الذي شغل أفوقاي والموصلي في رحلتيهما مثلاً، ولم يكن لديه عوائق حقيقية تمنعه من إتمام طقوسه الدينية التي آمن بها، إلا ما كان من مسألة صلاة الجماعة والمنارة التي ظنها الإيطاليون منذنة! (المعني 2007: 93). وحرصه على تناول طعامه على الطريقة الإسلامية، كما أشار إلى أنه وزوجته كان يصومان رمضان في الحرّ أيام انتظارهم سفينة العودة (المعني 2007: 92). وقد اعتذر في رحلته لمضيفيه الذين عرضوا عليه التحول إلى المسيحية. بقوله إنه "ما جينا إلى هذه البلاد لا كرامة مال ولا كرامة حكم، بل لما جاء علينا عسكر ثقيل جينا احتمينا عندكم واحميتوا راسه وراعتونه ولكم بذلك الفضل والجميل والمنة" (المعني 2007: 94). وقد تحدث كذلك عن أنظمة البنوك الإيطالية وفوائدها القائمة على الربا، لكنه حديثاً من باب الإعجاب دون أن يصدر عليها حكماً (المعني 2007: 62-63) لا بل إنه كانت له أموال، أودعها البنوك الإيطالية وصار يأخذ فوائد ربوية عليها (المعني 2007: 118).
  - **بنية النص الرحلي ولغة الرحالة:** لا يبدو من لغة الرحلة أن الأمير فخر الدين قد تعلم الإيطالية أو غيرها رغم إقامته هناك، بل اعتمد على مترجم له اسمه قارلو (المعني 2007: 97). كما أن النص الرحلي نفسه بلغته الفقيرة البسيطة أدبياً ولغويًا وحتى فنياً، القريبة من العامية والحياة اليومية للناس العاديين، تكشف الأصل الشفوي للرحلة الذي ترجمه تنظيرات المهتمين بالرحلة، ويؤيد هذا ما عرفناه من مخالفة لغة الرحلة لنص كتاب الخالدي الذي دَوّن أخبار الأمير ورحلته. ويجعلنا نميل إلى أن الرحلة هي إملاء أحاديث الأمير على أحدهم كي يكتبها.
- وفي تمثل الآخر نقف على:**
- **التسمية:** وصف الأمير فخر الدين الآخر الأوروبي (بـالنصارى) وفي مرة واحدة قال عنهم (الفرنج)، ولكنه لم يكن في تسميته أو وصفه لهم يصدر حكماً قيمياً كما رأينا عند أفوقاي باستخدامه كلمة الكافر وصفاً للآخر الأوروبي.
  - **الإعجاب:** ومن حيث إعجابه بالآخر فهذا يتجلى في صفحات رحلته التي وصف فيها المعالم الحضارية التي عاينها في إيطاليا بإعجاب متزن وروية حضارية تستشرف مستقبل بلاده. فقد وصف مظاهر كثيرة عمرانية وحضارية وغير ذلك، كالإحصاء والنظافة والطرق والأسلحة والمدافع، والمسرح وحبلة مصارعة الثيران، والمطبعة والسجن والعقوبات والمستشفيات... وحتى العناية باللقطاء وغسيل الثياب وصناعة الصابون! ويبدو في إعجابه بالآخر تألمه لواقع الذات، المضمرة وراء سطور عباراته فهو يرى "عندهم ضبط وطاعة في ساير الأمور"، و"العقوبات لا تخضع لوساطة أو شفاعنة" مما يُفتقد في بلاده.
  - **المرأة:** استغرب الأمير فخر الدين -كأفوقاي- من عدم احتجابها ومخالطتها الرجال في الرقص والعمل جنباً إلى جانبه حتى في الدكان (المعني 2007: 47)، وكان أمراً غير مألوف في بلاده.

## ج) الذات والآخر في رحلة الخوري إلياس الموصلي

دَوّن الموصلي يومياته رحلته أو تواريخ رحلته كما سماها- قبيل عودته إلى إسبانيا، بعد نحو ست سنوات من ارتحاله في العالم الجديد، ببيت قرب ليما عاصمة بيرو (الموصلي 2001: 98). وهكذا استطاع أن يحفظ تفاصيل الرحلة الأمريكية من الضياع، بينما لم يسجل ما يشبهها من التفاصيل عن رحلته في أوروبا، ولا ندري أكان ذلك قصداً أم عن غير قصد؟! فالقسم الأوروبي من الرحلة كان قصيراً قياساً إلى وصف رحلته إلى أمريكا. وربما يرجع ذلك إلى أن أوروبا معروفة للشرق، ولأنه يزور العالم الجديد وهو جديد حقاً عليه وهو أول شرقيّ دَوّن رحلته إلى ذلك العالم. يظهر الموصلي في الرحلة قوي الذاكرة دقيق الوصف شديد العناية بالتفاصيل على الرغم من ضعف مهاراته اللغوية أو الأدبية؛ إذ كان وصفه للأماكن دقيقاً إلى الحد الذي جعل الأب رباط ناشر رحلته لأول مرة- ينتبع البلاد التي زارها على الخرائط فيجد أنه "لم يغفل بلدة ولم تخنه ذاكرته إلا نادرًا" (رباط 1905: 822).

وهذا يخالف رأي كراتشكوفسكي الذي وصف الموصلية بأنه كان ساذجاً (كراتشكوفسكي 1961: 702)، بل إن تفكير الموصلية في تدوين رحلاته في أوراق مكتوبة لهو دليل على سعة أفق لا سذاجة! وهي كمثل أفقه الواسع عندما اختار طلب إجازة ملكية للسفر إلى العالم الجديد، في وقت لم يتسن ذلك لكثيرين، إذ عرضت الملكة عليه أن يتمنى طلباً – فلم يعجل إليها بطلب أي شيء في مجلسه ذلك، خاصة طلب المال -كما قد نتوقع-؛ فحبه الشديد للمال واضح في صفحات الرحلة، بل إنه تمهل في طلبه حتى أخبر أصحابه فأشار عليه أحدهم بطلب الإذن بالسفر إلى العالم الجديد (الموصلية 2001: 43)، وهو شيء كان بعيد المنال لغير الإسبان في ذلك الوقت بله الشرقيين!!

في حين أن أفوقاي الذي مرّ بموقف مماثل في مجلس أمير هولندا، وطلب منه أن يتمنى عليه شيئاً كما هي عادة ملوك النصارى، لم يطلب مالا كما قد يُظنّ في مثل هذا الموقف للمسافر؛ "حتى لا يوصف بالطمع فيثبت هذا الوصف للمسلمين" (الحجري 2004: 114)، بل حسم أمره في مجلسه ذلك وطلب من الأمير توصية لقبطان السفينة كي يتمّ أمر سفره هو ورفاقه بسلام. فهذا ما كان منه وهو من باب القلق على صورة المسلمين التي قد تثبت في أذهان الأوروبيين: بأنهم طماعون يلهثون وراء المال، وفي هذا تزويق للذات وتفتية صورتها أمام من يستمع إلى حكايته.

يمتلك الحوري لباس الموصلية كذلك مما يفي سذاجته. حسناً جغرافياً لا يخطئه قارئ رحلته إلى أمريكا؛ إذ كان يصف المدن والقرى والجزر الكثيرة التي مرّ بها ويذكر المسافات بينها (بالفراسخ)، ويصف طبيعة طبوغرافيتها ووعورة المسالك أو سهولتها وطقسها وأحيانا سكانها... وغير ذلك من تفاصيل ترسم ملامح البلاد التي زارها. وربما كان تدوينه لأخبار رحلته في أثناء قيامة بها هو ما ساعده على ألا تفوته تلك التفاصيل، وهو مما يفي عن صاحبها صفة السذاجة.

كان الموصلية كذلك بعيداً عن مسألة الانبهار أو المقارنة بالآخر، بل إن في خطابه الرحلي إقصاءً للآخر المختلف دينياً ونيافاً له، فلم يرد ذكر الوطن -في سياق المقارنة مع الآخر- إلا لماماً وعرضاً في موضعين أو ثلاثة، منها: مقارنة الحشيش لديهم بالقهوة في بلادنا (الموصلية، 2001: 93)، وإطلاقهم اسم الدنيا العتيقة على بلادنا (الموصلية 2001: 109)، ومقارنة الطقس والمطر في المكسيك بالطقس في بلادنا (الموصلية 2001: 114). لأن الموصلية كان منشغلاً عن هذه المقارنة بالمال والذهب والفضة! التي يصادف القارئ أخباراً جمعها أو سكها أو استخراجها في معظم صفحات الرحلة! أو أنه كان منشغلاً عن ذلك بمهمته التبشيرية، التي يظهر أنها قد تكون سبب رحلته الذي لم يعلن عنه! إذ إننا نرى الموصلية في الرحلة يكاد لا يهدأ خلال سنوات ارتحاله في أوروبا وأمريكا وهو ينتقل من مكان إلى مكان ولا يقيم إلا قليلاً في بعض الأماكن ليرتحل منها من جديد، وهو يهرع باستمرار لارتداء ملبسه الكهنوتية الخاصة لإقامة القداسات بمختلف اللغات التي يعرفها لتتال رضا حاضريه وينالوا البركة منه! ويضمّر هذا تزويقاً للذات وتمثلاً لها بأكمل صورة؛ إذ سعى الموصلية إلى أن يثبت للبابا وكنيسة روما أنه صاحب إيمان لا يشكّ فيه؛ فقد كان نسطورياً ثم تكتك، كما عُرف عمه بضلاله على الرغم من محاولات الموصلية الفاشلة معه كي يخضع للحبر الأعظم (سركيس 1948: 341-342).

#### أما في تمثّل الذات والآخر في رحلة الموصلية فنقف على: تمثّل الذات:

- **تعظيم الذات:** حرص الموصلية طوال رحلته على إظهار مكانته الرفيعة أينما حلّ؛ فأخبار حفاوة الاستقبال تكشف عن علاقته الرفيعة مع الملوك ورجال الدين في مختلف الدول التي زارها، كما أن الميل إلى تعظيم صورة الذات يظهر في العديد من التوصيات التي حصل عليها، مما سهل مهمته في التنقل والترحال واصطحاب الخدم ومرافقة كبار الشخصيات والحصول على الهدايا والتكريم وعدم تفتيش حقائبه وأمتعته خاصة عندما رافق رئيس ديوان الإيمان [محاكم التفتيش] (الموصلية 2001: 95)، كما حرص الموصلية على تقديم نفسه بأنه مبارك الجانب استطاع اجتياز درب صعب ونجا من محاولة قتل حتى فتن الناس وحسبوه نبياً أو قديساً (الموصلية 2001: 64).
- **الروح الدينية:** وهي تملأ الرحلة من مقدمتها حتى خاتمتها؛ ويفسّر ذلك في ضوء مهمة الموصلية الدينية التي لم يفصح عنها والتي كانت على ما يبدو دافعاً للرحلة. ففي مقدمة الرحلة تكشف عباراته وآيات الإنجيل التي اقتبسها عن إيمانه ودعمه الكبير لكنيسة روما. وقد درج على أن يربط تواريخ وصوله إلى الأماكن التي مرّ بها بالمناسبات الدينية التي توافق تلك التواريخ، هذا إلى جانب أنه كان دوماً يردّ شفاءه من الأمراض أو نجاته من أي خطر يقطع طريقه - إلى الرب وبركة العذراء مريم.

- **بنية النص الرحلي ولغة الرحالة:** تمثل رحلة الموصلية -والرحلتان السابقتان- نماذج على تردي أساليب الكتابة في ذلك العصر، على تفاوت مستوى الضعف والركاكة في كل منها؛ إذ كانت رحلته فقيرة في بنيتها اللغوية والأدبية، قريبة من لغة الحياة اليومية بعاميتها وبساطتها تراكيبيها. وتشير بعض الملاحظات إلى أن رحلة الموصلية ليست كالرحلتين السابقتين قائمة على أصل شفوي، بل إنها مستمدة من يوميات مكتوبة دونها بنفسه قبل عودته. وربما بقيت يومياته على أصلها الذي كتبه أول مرة. وقد أضاف للكتاب ديباجة تبدو مختلفة عن باقي الرحلة في أنها مكتوبة باللغة الفصيحة، وتميل العبارات فيها إلى الزينة البديعية والجمل المسجوعة التي تشبه ما ساد الكتابة في القرن السابع عشر، مع آيات من الإنجيل تدعم أفكاره وتظهر إيمانه. وهكذا دون الموصلية رحلته بالعربية وبضاعته منها محدودة، لكنه أشار إلى معرفته لغات أخرى كان يقيم بها القداسات في المدن والبلدات التي زارها في أمريكا، كالإسبانية(الموصلية2001: 67،87) والسريانية الشرقية[الكلدانية](الموصلية2001: 72،79).

#### أما تمثلات الآخر فتظهر في:

- **التسمية والوصف:** كان الموصلية كغيره من الرحالة يرى الآخر بأنه المختلف دينياً؛ لذا لم يتمثل الآخر الأوروبي في رحلته إلا بصورة الذات، فهو لا يختلف عنه لأنه بوجه من الوجوه هو (ذات) تنتمي إلى الدين نفسه، أما الآخر المختلف دينياً الذي تعرض منه للإقصاء وأحياناً للتشويه كما هو مألوف، فهم (الهنود الكفرة) وهم (عبيد سود) وهم أقوام فيهم توحش وبعُد عن التحضر، لا يعرفون الإله الحقيقي ولا يعرفون القراءة والكتابة ولا النقود، سُدج يظنون أن الفارس فوق حصانه هما قطعة واحدة!! ولكنه هذا لم يمنعه ذلك من مدحهم بميزة القوة وإظهار الميل لهم تعاطفاً؛ بسبب الظلم الواقع عليهم من محاكم التفتيش، التي عرض لتصرفاتها دون انتقادها(الموصلية2001: 95). بينما كان الموصلية لا يتحرج عن أن يسمي الأوروبيين أحياناً بـ(النصارى) (الموصلية2001: 58،78)، وهو وصف يطلقه المسلمون على المسيحيين، فمع كونه يتفق والأوروبيين في الدين إلا أنه استعمل اللفظ ليدل على الآخر المختلف عنه قومياً.
- **الإعجاب:** أما المظاهر التي أثارت إعجابه مجتمع الآخر، فهي تبدو في ثنائيه على جمعية خيرية فرنسية (بسميها مجمع الخيرات) لسيدات مُحسنات من الأشراف تعنى بالفقراء والمرضى والغرباء (الموصلية2001: 36)، وقد أسهب في ذكر تفاصيل الحياة اليومية للهنود والإسبان في أمريكا دون أن يكون له حكم قيمي عليهم إلا فيما يتصل بالعقيدة: فقد وصف صناعة الشيكولاته التي يسميها جيكولاته، ومراسم ضرب المدافع ودق الأبواق في وداع السفن عند إبحارها إلى أمريكا، ووصف حلبة مصارعة الثيران، والمسرح... وغيرها مما أطلع عليه في أثناء الرحلة. لكن اهتمامه الأول كان نحو المال والذهب والفضة: كسبه وكنزه، جمعه واستخراجه من المناجم والوديان والجبال، بل حتى تصنيع النقود وسكها في السكّخانة(الموصلية2001: 88)، حتى الحكايات التي كان يوردها تتعلق بالمال من جهة أو أخرى كحكاية البننت ومغارة الذهب التي يملكها والدها (الموصلية2001: 66)، كما اهتم بمداخل الكنائس والأديرة والتفاصيل المالية لبناء بعضها.
- **المرأة:** لم يكن للمرأة نصيب من ملاحظات الموصلية في البلاد التي زارها، إذ لم يسجل حول حضورها في الفضاء العام أي استهجان أو إعجاب، ولم تكن حاضرة إلا بطلاة في حكاياته التي سردها في ثنايا رحلته.

#### خاتمة البحث

تتفق الرحلات وتتشابه في كثير من الجوانب في تمثيلها الذات والآخر، فهي تتفق في زمان وقوعها وزمان تدوينها، كما تتفق في وجهتها نحو الغرب. وعلى الرغم من أنها تنتمي إلى فترة زمنية واحدة سواء في بدايات القرن السابع عشر أو أواخره، إلا أن لكل رحلة منها نظرتها الخاصة في تمثيل الذات والآخر بتفاوت منزلة صاحب الرحلة. كان أصحاب الرحلات موضوع البحث من طبقة خاصة وليسوا من عامة الناس، فأفوقاي الأندلسي كان سفيراً ومترجماً عن السلطان المغربي، والأمير فخر الدين المعني أمير إحدى المناطق التابعة للسلطنة العثمانية، أما الثالث منهم فهو رجل دين سليل عائلة معروفة بخدماتها الدينية، وهو قريب من أرفع السلطات الدينية في روما والسلطات الدنيوية

في البلاط الملكي لفرنسا وإسبانيا. وهكذا فثلاثتهم كانوا من طبقة قريبة من الحكام وكبار رجال الدولة، مكنتهم من الارتحال دون صعوبات.

وعلى الرغم من صدور الرحلات الثلاث عن أشخاص ينتمون إلى طبقة خاصة، قد تجعلنا نفترض أنهم تلقوا تعليماً أفضل من غيرهم من عامة الناس، إلا أن الرحلات في مجملها كانت متواضعة الإنشاء وضعيفة الأسلوب؛ مما ينبئ عن تردي الوضع العام للتعليم في عصرها.

لكنها تشير إلى قصدية إنشاء النص الرحلي، الذي يعد ثمرة لفعل الرحلة نفسه وتحويلاً لها من هيئتها الفعلية المادية إلى هيئة رمزية في شكل نص مكتوب؛ ذلك أن قصدية تدوين فعل الرحلة ينقل الفعل إلى الرمز، وهو ما تتفق فيه الرحلات الثلاث، وهو كذلك شاهد على ابتعادها عن الجغرافيا في ذلك العصر، وظهورها غرضاً أدبياً قائماً؛ إذ أصبح الترحال نفسه يستحق التدوين المستقل.

أما في تمثّل الذات والآخر في الرحلات؛ فقد كان تمثّل الذات في مجمله يتجه دوماً إلى المبالغة في إظهار صورتها بنية لا تشوبها شائبة، وإظهارها في أكمل صورة (ينبغي) أن تكون عليها. في حين لم تتباعد تمثيلات الآخر عن الصورة الشائعة التي عرّفت الآخر على أساس الاختلاف الديني؛ فكان الدين هو العامل الأول في رسم صورة الآخر لدى أوقاي والموصلي. بينما كان الآخر المختلف حضارياً هو الحاضر لدى الأمير فخر الدين، وهو ما يجعلنا مطمئنين إلى فرضية أن سيرة الرحالة وتجربته الشخصية إلى جانب السياق التاريخي لزمان الرحلة ومكانها- هو الذي وجّه تمثّل الذات والآخر فيها.

فقد كان الشرق الإسلامي والغرب المسيحي في القرن السابع عشر متقاربين في مظاهر حضارية كثيرة، ولهذا فالمقارنة بينهما كانت ما تزال غير واضحة في أذهان الرحالة، لهذا تبدو الرحلات الثلاث بعيدة عن فكرة الصدام مع الآخر إلا في رحلة أوقاي؛ إذ إن سيرة كل رحالة وظروف رحلته واهتماماته، هي التي وجّهت نظرته تجاه الآخر. كما غابت النظرة الانبهارية القائمة على الإعجاب والافتتان عن الرحلات؛ لأن الفوارق الحضارية بين الجانبين كما أسلفنا كانت قليلة إلى درجة لا تكاد تُلاحظ، على الرغم من أن الأمير فخر الدين بنظرته الثاقبة وطموحه البعيد، استطاع أن يلتقط بذكاء الفروق الحضارية التي بدأت تتسع بين الشرق والغرب مع إرهاصات النهضة الأوروبية.

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رثا الخطيب

## **L'EUROPE DE ZEYNEB HANOUM : LES DÉSIILLUSIONS « OCCIDENTALES » D'UNE RÊVEUSE « ORIENTALE »**

**LUMINIȚA MUNTEANU**

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**Abstract.** Zeyneb Hanoum (Hanım), one of the muses and also main characters of the novel *Les désenchantées* by Pierre Loti (1906), whose real name was Hadice Zennur, has fled Turkey in January 1906, before the publication of the above mentioned book, in company with her younger sister, Nuriye Neyrūnnisa, better known in the Occident as Melek Hanoum and, later, as Nouriyé Rohozinska, in order to escape Sultan Abdülhamid's persecution. The two Ottoman ladies, who were partly of French descent and had been given a progressive, liberal education, travelled a while around Europe, visiting and also staying for different intervals of time in France, Switzerland, Italy, London, Brussels, Spain. Unlike her sister, who married in 1908 a Polish aristocrat and composer and adapted herself to Paris lifestyle, Zeyneb Hanoum was greatly disappointed with her Western and, in particular, French experience, all the more so as « her Occident », primarily based on book knowledge, proved to be a distant mirage. Disenchanted with both the « Orient » and the « Occident », she has decided to go back to Turkey six years later, in 1912, and to get on with her life ; she never returned in Europe until her death, in 1923. Our article deals with her « European impressions », published in 1913 in London, with the support of the British journalist Grace Ellison.

**Keywords:** *Zeyneb Hanoum, Ottoman elite, European impressions, Belle Époque, Grace Ellison, suffragette.*

### **Texte et contexte : essai de mise en perspective**

« *Désenchantée* I left Turkey, *désenchantée* I have left Europe. Is that rôle to be mine till the end of my days ? », se demandait, de manière rhétorique, Zeyneb Hanoum (Hanım) dans une lettre adressée à Grace Ellison le 6 mars 1912, pendant son voyage de retour à Istanbul, au bout de six ans passés en Europe ; ainsi s'achevait non seulement une odyssée qui avait débuté autrefois sous d'heureux auspices, hormis ses prémices menaçantes, mais aussi le récit d'une aventure qui, de manière en quelque sorte prévisible, avait tourné mal pour sa protagoniste. Quoique fort discrète au sujet de ses projets d'avenir, Zeyneb Hanoum espérait peut-être à cette époque-là de repartir à zéro et même de se forger une autre identité dans une Turquie qui se trouvait encore en pleine ébullition après l'avènement au pouvoir des Jeunes-Turcs. Le peu d'années qui s'étaient écoulées depuis la prise du pouvoir par ces derniers s'était accompagné, pourtant, d'une diminution considérable de l'enthousiasme premier de leurs adeptes, ainsi que des adversaires jurés d'Abdülhamid II ; par conséquent, Zeyneb Hanoum resta longuement sur ses gardes, malgré son optimisme initial, et ne se dépêcha pas de regagner Istanbul, en dépit de son mal du pays et, d'autre part, de ses déceptions occidentales. Lorsqu'elle finit par s'y décider, elle ne le fit que contrainte par

les aléas de son existence « occidentale » ; de retour en Turquie (un retour qui équivalait à une défaite personnelle), elle ne la quitta plus jusqu'à sa mort, survenue probablement en 1923, dans des circonstances obscures<sup>1</sup>. Son choix ne la rendit pas plus heureuse qu'elle ne l'avait été auparavant, d'autant plus qu'elle ne se faisait guère d'illusions sur son lendemain ; il ne fit que mettre un terme à ses incertitudes, qui duraient déjà depuis quelques ans, et confirmer son « désenchantement » irréductible, ainsi que le remarquait plus tard Grace Ellison, lorsque son amie n'était plus de ce monde : « Disenchanted with both Turkey, France and then later with the Turkey of the Young Turks, she realized she would be unhappy everywhere. 'Alas, I am neither French, nor Turkish', she wrote me. 'These civilizations are always at war in me.' » (1928 : 120).

Les « impressions européennes » de Zeyneb Hanoum, de son vrai nom Hadice Zennur, qui constituent la matière de notre article, sont parues en 1913, lorsque leur auteur se trouvait déjà en Turquie, ayant repris, avec des sentiments qu'il est difficile d'apprécier aujourd'hui en l'absence d'un témoignage plus précis, sa vie d'antan<sup>2</sup>. Il convient de rappeler dans ce cadre que Zeyneb Hanoum, qui venait de quitter la scène du vieux monde en tournant ainsi le dos à ce qui pourrait être défini comme « l'avenir d'une illusion », fut rendue célèbre par deux écrivains occidentaux qui, malgré leurs nobles intentions, se trouvèrent à l'origine de ses angoisses existentielles et de son drame ultérieur ; ce furent également eux qui créèrent son nom de plume et contribuèrent à la construction de sa nouvelle identité – une identité essentiellement publique, « ouverte », « occidentale ». Nous nous bornons à mentionner, afin de rafraîchir la mémoire de nos lecteurs, que Zeyneb (Hanoum) avait été l'une des inspiratrices du roman *Les Désenchantées* de Pierre Loti (1906)<sup>3</sup> et qu'elle devint plus tard l'un des sujets de prédilection de la journaliste anglaise Grace Ellison ; cette dernière l'évoqua à plusieurs reprises dans ses écrits sur la Turquie et, de plus, joua un rôle primordial dans la mise en œuvre et la parution du volume intitulé *A Turkish Woman's European Impressions* (1913) – le seul ouvrage signé du nom de Zeyneb Hanoum, mais « édité » et « introduit » par Grace Ellison<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Grace Ellison affirme qu'elle se serait donné la mort, sans être, pourtant, trop explicite à cet égard : « Too unhappy to live, she willed herself to die before she was thirty, and so ended the life of a brilliant, beautiful woman, the victim of many unfortunate circumstances, but above all, the error of others » (1928 : 120). D'ailleurs, d'après Zeyneb Hanoum, le phénomène du suicide n'était pas rare parmi les femmes turques, qui se sentaient réellement piégées dans leurs existences ternes, dépourvues de contours : « In Turkey our existence is so long, so intolerably long, that the temptation to drop a little deadly poison in our coffee is often too great to withstand. Death cannot be worse than life, let us try death » (Zeyneb Hanoum 1913 : 45 – cité désormais comme ZH) ; « [...] the Turkish woman, discontented with her lot, saw only two ways of ending her unhappy existence – flight or suicide ; she generally preferred the latter method » (ZH : 99). Taha Toros (1991 : 39-40) soutient en échange que Zeyneb Hanoum serait morte de la tuberculose, qu'elle avait peut-être attrapée lors de sa fuite de Turquie.

<sup>2</sup> « [...] c'est si drôle de voir ici Zénour, que j'avais connue en France si Parisienne, redevenue maintenant plus turque encore qu'au temps des 'désenchantées' », allait affirmer dans ses mémoires Pierre Loti (Loti & Viaud 1921 : 278), qui l'avait revue à Istanbul en septembre 1913.

<sup>3</sup> Le roman de Loti avait déclenché un véritable scandale dans la haute société ottomane, en sorte que Hadice Zennur, la future Zeyneb Hanoum, avait fui Istanbul pour se réfugier à Paris, en compagnie de sa sœur cadette, Nuriye Neyrûnnisa, connue plus tard sous les noms de Melek Hanoum et Nouryé Rohozinska ; cela se passait au tout début de l'année 1906.

<sup>4</sup> Cette expérience allait alimenter, à notre avis, un autre volume, publié par Grace Ellison en 1915, au

Bien qu'envisagé sous une forme quasi épistolaire, le volume susmentionné revêt plutôt une structure hybride ; de toute évidence, sa conception, du moins en ce qui concerne la sélection des lettres dont il était censé se composer, n'appartient pas à Zeyneb Hanoum, mais à Grace Ellison : celle-ci intervient maintes fois dans le texte afin d'assurer le passage d'un contexte à l'autre et de fournir des explications supplémentaires au sujet des protagonistes. Il est difficile d'apprécier, d'autre part, si la sélection des lettres attribuées à Zeyneb Hanoum, qui couvrent une période de six ans (1906-1912), a été supervisée ou non par leur signataire, qui était déjà revenue en Turquie lors de la sortie du livre. Grace Ellison, qui s'était chargée de leur publication et qui se trouvait, sans doute, à l'origine de cette entreprise, n'en souffle mot et, par ailleurs, ne trouve pas malencontreuse l'instrumentalisation de son amie turque ; elle manipule non seulement le matériel épistolaire qui lui avait été fourni par Zeyneb Hanoum, mais aussi le contenu de celui-ci puisqu'elle ne nous fournit aucune précision au sujet de ses critères de sélection et, aussi, des lettres (peut-être aussi des fragments) vraisemblablement éliminées dans ce processus ; autrement dit, les principes de son travail d'édition restent forcément obscurs. Ce qui nous semble hors de doute c'est que la conception du volume, y compris les titres des sous-chapitres et les légendes des illustrations dont il s'accompagne, appartient à la journaliste anglaise ; autrement dit, quoique signé par Zeyneb Hanoum, présentée par son amie (pour des raisons publicitaires ?) comme « heroine of Pierre Loti's novel 'Les Désenchantées' », le livre qui nous intéresse a été écrit, en réalité, à deux mains.

La contribution de Grace Ellison à la genèse des « impressions » attribuées à Zeyneb Hanoum ne se limite pas au texte proprement-dit : il faudrait y ajouter, à part le découpage d'un croquis réalisé par Auguste Rodin, les vingt-trois photographies « orientalisantes » qui parsèment le volume et qui ne font qu'amplifier la confusion du lecteur ; l'identité du ou des photographes, de même que celle de l'auteur de la sélection des images reste, une fois de plus, mystérieuse. Reina Lewis (2004 : 245) considère qu'à l'origine de l'ostentation vestimentaire dont elles témoignent se trouvait Zeyneb Hanoum même, qui se proposait d'exploiter de cette manière non seulement le paradigme, mais aussi la nostalgie orientaliste de l'Occident.<sup>5</sup> Pourtant, en analysant la distribution des rôles dans le livre et, aussi, le rôle d'« ange gardien » assumé par Grace Ellison dans ses rapports avec Zeyneb et Melek, les « petites proscriotes ottomanes », on serait plutôt porté à croire que la mise en scène des soi-disant « instantanés » de Zeyneb Hanoum (qui constitue le centre d'intérêt de la plupart de ces images), avec tous leurs excès en matière de costumes, d'accessoires et, en quelque sorte, de « jeux de masques », minutieusement élaborés, appartient à la suffragette anglaise ; celle-ci se sert d'ailleurs copieusement de ce genre de support visuel

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bout d'un autre séjour à Istanbul qui, à la différence de ses deux premiers voyages en Turquie, datant du 1906 et 1908, avait duré plusieurs mois (Lewis 2004 : 42-44) ; ce volume, intitulé *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*, faisait pendant au livre « édité » en 1913 et se composait d'articles parus dans *Daily Telegraph* en janvier et février 1914.

<sup>5</sup> « For Zeyneb Hanım, dress is central to her staging of identity and it behoves one to imagine the possible pleasures of presenting herself in Western and Ottoman clothing as well as the forms of political agency her complicated dress acts express. In this light can be analysed Zeyneb Hanım's packaging of Ottoman female experience as nostalgia whilst she Orientalises herself for Loti. The terms of this creative self-fashioning are not solely determined by the outside, they also point to the power of the choices made by the Ottoman émigré » (Lewis 2004 : 264).

dans ses livres sur la Turquie<sup>6</sup>, ce qui n'est pas rare chez les journalistes d'hier et d'aujourd'hui.

### **L'auteur comme protagoniste, entre texte et contexte**

Ainsi que nous venons de le constater, le « pourcentage » de l'immixtion réelle de Grace Ellison dans le livre signé par Zeyneb Hanoum s'avère difficile à établir de manière raisonnable, voire objective ; cela dit, nous nous proposons de nous concentrer dans ce qui suit sur les lettres supposées être issues de la plume de Zeyneb Hanoum, tout en faisant abstraction des obscurités du contexte, afin de suivre, autant que possible, sa perception sur la civilisation occidentale vers la fin de la Belle Époque.

La première lettre adressée par Zeyneb Hanoum à Grace Ellison est datée du septembre 1906, alors que la dernière – une sorte de lettre en feuillet – date du mars 1912 ; les autres épîtres dont se compose le volume intitulé *A Turkish Woman's European Impressions* remontent à 1906 (à peu près un quart du volume), 1907 (un autre quart du volume), 1908 (une seule lettre), 1909 (une seule lettre), 1911 (deux lettres) et 1912 (deux lettres) ; il serait à remarquer le déséquilibre évident de ces sources, de même que l'absence totale des lettres provenant de 1910 (une année terne, sans histoire ?!), bien que la relation épistolaire entre Zeyneb Hanoum et Grace Ellison semble avoir continué sans arrêt durant toute la période de l'exil de Zeyneb Hanoum. Le lecteur scrupuleux observera également l'abondance ou même la surabondance des points de suspension dont le rôle dans la conception du volume et, de nouveau, la provenance restent impossible à éclaircir : autrement dit, est-ce qu'ils indiquent l'élimination de certains passages ? Il semble improbable qu'ils appartiennent à Zeyneb Hanoum, car il s'agit d'une pratique tout à fait inusitée dans la correspondance, officielle ou privée ; en échange, elle est souvent employée, quoique sous des formes légèrement différentes, pour marquer les interventions des éditeurs dans les textes qu'ils sont censés gérer.

Quant à la préface qui, de manière plus générale, « introduit » le livre et comporte des indications sur la manière dont on devrait le décoder, elle implique, comme toute démarche liminaire, une tentative de contrôle de la part de celui qui s'en charge (White 1987 : 201) : tâcher d'orienter la lecture c'est, sans doute, tâcher de la contrôler, de la maintenir dans les limites tracées par l'auteur, qui ne fait que garder jalousement son rejeton. Mais, de nouveau, de quel auteur s'agit-il dans le cas de notre ouvrage ? À notre avis, Grace Ellison est loin de rester dans l'ombre, comme tout « éditeur » modeste qui s'occupe discrètement du « bon chemin » d'un livre, sans interférer dans son contenu proprement-dit : bien au contraire, elle impose une sorte de « contrôle parental » sur sa protégée et n'hésite pas à mettre en exergue son patronnage, qui sera également souligné par ses ingérences énergiques dans le texte d'un ouvrage hybride signé, pourtant, du nom de Zeyneb Hanoum.

Les premières lettres occidentales de Zeyneb Hanoum sont dominées par la remémoration de son passé récent, hanté par le fantôme d'Abdülhamid II et par les sombres

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<sup>6</sup> *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem* (1915), *An Englishwoman in Angora* (1923) et *Turkey Today* (1928).

souvenirs de son régime paranoïaque ; nostalgique, mais aussi soulagée d'avoir échappé à ses repréailles, Zeyneb Hanoum évoque sa première jeunesse, marquée de ce qu'elle appelle « the agony of waiting », « l'agonie de l'attente » – une attente stérile, dépourvue d'espérance, de joie de vivre, de perspective, « éreintante » (« this weary, weary waiting »). Elle se déclare, par ailleurs, déconcertée non seulement par la curiosité excessive, parfois importune des journalistes occidentaux au sujet de sa personne, mais aussi par leur ignorance de « la vie ottomane », qui semble inséparable de l'idée fantasque qu'ils se forgent du harem, en raison des stéréotypes orientalistes. Blessée dans son amour propre par l'indiscrétion grossière des reporters en quête de sensationnel, Zeyneb arrive à manifester une certaine hostilité même envers sa protectrice, Grace Ellison, qu'elle interpelle à un moment donné par le syntagme « dear Englishwoman » (1913 : 53). Lors de son arrivée en France, elle avouait avoir apprécié notamment le sentiment de liberté que lui procuraient les fenêtres sans grillage, largement ouvertes vers le monde<sup>7</sup> : c'était sa première expérience de ce genre, après l'existence en semi-réclusion qu'elle avait été tenue de mener en Turquie afin de conserver sa bonne réputation en tant que jeune fille de bonne famille.

Il n'est pas sans intérêt de rappeler que Zeyneb Hanoum, qui descendait d'un aïeul d'origine française converti à l'islam, mais aussi, du côté de sa mère, d'une famille circassienne, faisait partie d'une élite féminine ottomane qui avait bénéficié d'une formation fondamentalement occidentale ; de même que la plupart de ses semblables, elle avait été élevée et éduquée par des gouvernantes européennes, anglaises et françaises, qui étaient très en vogue dans la deuxième moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, notamment à Istanbul, mais qui ne représentaient pas toujours la meilleure solution puisque leur recrutement se produisait, à de rares exceptions près, d'une manière assez aléatoire. Suivant Zeyneb Hanim, le désastre en la matière avait commencé avec l'influence du Second Empire (1852-1870) et, de manière plus spéciale, avec la visite de l'impératrice Eugénie à Constantinople (1868), qui avait marqué le début d'une véritable frénésie occidentalisante et avait entraîné un exode interminable des gouvernantes françaises, mal adaptées aux besoins éducationnels réels des enfants turcs, vers Istanbul :

This desire for everything French lasted until our generation. No one seemed to understand how harmful it was to exaggerate the atmosphere of excitement in which we were living. With the craze for the education of the West, French governesses came to Constantinople in great numbers ; for it was soon known what high salaries the Turks paid, and how hospitable they were. If you had seen the list of books that these unfortunate Turkish girls read to get a knowledge of French literature, I think you would agree with me they must have been endowed with double moral purity for the books not to have done them more harm. For nearly thirty years this dangerous experiment went on. No parents seemed to see the grave error of having in one's house a woman about whom they knew nothing, and who in a very short time could exert a very disastrous influence over a young life. It was only when catastrophe after catastrophe had brought this to their notice, they began to take any interest in their

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<sup>7</sup> « For the first time in our lives we could look freely into space – no veil, no iron bars. It was worth the price we had paid, just to have the joy of being before that open window » (ZH : 55).

daughters' governesses, and occupy themselves a little more seriously about what they read. (ZH : 98-100)

Le français devint ainsi la langue de choix des élites ottomanes dans la deuxième moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, le siècle de la modernisation par excellence, de même que le véhicule d'un phénomène d'acculturation plus ou moins délibéré, qui affecta notamment les couches instruites de la société et qui trouva son écho dans la langue de communication employée dans certains cercles clos. Il était raisonnablement parlé par nombre de sultans, tels Abdülmecit I (1839-1861), Murad V (1876) ou Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) ; s'y ajoutaient, sans doute, nombre de résidentes du Harem impérial et, aussi, de membres des « entourages » des princes ottomans comme, par exemple, à l'époque de Murad V, Gevherriz, ancienne favorite (*gözde*) du sultan, qui arriva par la suite à enseigner le français aux princes et aux princesses du palais<sup>8</sup>, et la princesse Hadice (1870-1938) ; douée d'un tempérament romantique, cette dernière était une liseuse passionnée<sup>9</sup>, à l'encontre de sa sœur, la princesse Fehime (1875-1929), qui, malgré sa bonne maîtrise du français, ne manifestait aucun intérêt particulier pour la lecture. En échange, la passion de la princesse Hadice pour les livres et, paraît-il, pour le français était partagée par une autre fille de Murad V, la princesse Fatma (1879-1932), qui passait le plus clair de son temps à jouer au piano et à lire des livres en français (Brookes 2008 : 109), dont la nature reste, pourtant, inconnue. Enfin, il nous semble également significatif de rappeler que l'album réalisé à l'occasion de la participation de l'Empire Ottoman à l'Exposition Universelle de Vienne de 1873<sup>10</sup>, qui eut lieu durant le règne du sultan Abdülaziz, était entièrement rédigé en français. En outre, Abdülaziz avait été le premier sultan ottoman à visiter plusieurs pays européens, à la suite de sa participation à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris, en 1867, sur l'invitation de l'empereur Napoléon III. La fondation du lycée de Galatasaray et, de plus, le choix du français comme langue d'instruction de ses élèves, vivement encouragés par les autorités françaises, furent une conséquence directe de ce voyage parisien et de la bonne impression que fit sur le souverain ottoman le système éducatif français (Fortna 2002 : 101-102).

L'étude systématique du français fut introduite dans les programmes des collèges turcs à partir de 1879, constituant, d'autre part, une composante en quelque sorte obligée de l'éducation privée, y compris celle des jeunes filles, qui impliquait l'apprentissage de la grammaire turque, mais aussi de quelques langues européennes de prestige, telles que le français, l'anglais et l'allemand (Demir 2010 : 4). La plupart des familles de la haute

<sup>8</sup> Voir à cet égard le témoignage de la concubine Filizten (Brookes 2008 : 64, 71).

<sup>9</sup> « As she grew older her sentiments quickly became more apparent. She took up novels as soon as she learned to read. Once we had settled in Cırağan Palace she would surreptitiously pick out the novels from among our master's books, now and then staying up all night reading them. Most of these novels were the works of French authors, since she had been taught French by Gevherriz Kalfa as well as by our master. After she read them she would tell us what they were about, and as she was relating them to us we noticed she was particularly drawn to the complications of love. So it became apparent that Princess Hadice was a bit too romantic by nature and that most likely passion fired her soul » (Brookes 2008 : 106, 109).

<sup>10</sup> *Les costumes populaires de la Turquie en 1873. Ouvrage publié sous le patronage de la Commission Impériale Ottomane pour l'Exposition Universelle de Vienne. Texte par Son Excellence Hamdy Bey, Commissaire Général, et Marie de Launay, membre de la Commission Impériale et du Jury International. Prototypé de Sébah, 1873.* Le titre en turc ottoman de cet album était *Elbise-i Osmaniyye*.

bourgeoisie musulmane turque choisissaient, d'ailleurs, le système d'éducation privé ; Mina Urgan (2012 : 103-106) affirmait, par exemple, que sa mère, Şefika, qui provenait d'une bonne famille et qui n'avait jamais fréquenté une école publique, maîtrisait parfaitement le français et le cultivait constamment par la lecture. De même que la plupart des jeunes filles aisées de son époque – elle était née, probablement, vers la moitié des années 1880, donc à peu près à la même époque que Zeyneb Hanoum, dans une famille de la haute bourgeoisie ottomane, son père, Cemal Bey, étant archiviste au Ministère Ottoman des Affaires Étrangères –, elle avait bénéficié d'une éducation à la fois « orientale » et « occidentale » ; par conséquent, elle était familière avec le français, jouait du piano, aimait le théâtre et la musique classique occidentaux, mais n'ignorait pas, d'autre part, le Coran, la jurisprudence islamique, la littérature et l'histoire ottomanes. Şefika avait été préparée, tout comme les autres jeunes ottomanes de bonne souche, pour une vie agréable, paisible au sein de son foyer familial ; elle était censée devenir en premier lieu une bonne compagne pour son mari et, aussi, une bonne mère, capable d'éduquer ses enfants. Personne ne s'attendait, sans doute, à ce qu'elle arrivât un jour à pratiquer une profession quelconque ou à gagner son pain : cette éventualité était impensable dans le contexte de son époque, en Turquie comme ailleurs.

Une minorité de ces familles privilégiées « envoyait leurs filles dans les écoles françaises congréganistes ou laïques d'Istanbul », avec une certaine préférence, parfaitement justifiable, pour les laïques (Timur Agildere 2012 : 3-4)<sup>11</sup>. Tout cela explique l'apparition d'une élite intellectuelle féminine francophone qui, à la différence de la masculine, avait tendance à suivre son propre agenda, plus ou moins ancré dans les réalités sociales et politiques du temps. L'acquisition de la langue s'accompagnait dans leur cas, de manière en quelque sorte naturelle, de riches lectures en français<sup>12</sup>. Il est difficile, pourtant, de dresser une liste exhaustive des auteurs dont se régalaient le public féminin de l'époque, d'autant plus que l'homogénéité de celui-ci était assez relative. Nigâr Hanım (1856-1918), la célèbre poétesse ottomane, s'intéressait particulièrement aux poètes romantiques français du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, tels Chateaubriand, Hugo, Lamartine et Musset, ce dernier l'ayant influencée de manière assez manifeste (Demir 2010 : 7). Bien que formée notamment à l'école anglaise, Halide Edip Adıvar (1884-1964) était également familière avec la langue et la littérature françaises, ainsi qu'il ressort de ses mémoires (1992 : 96, 108).

Suivant Zeyneb Hanım, qui faisait partie de cette mince couche privilégiée de la bourgeoisie turque, les gouvernantes étrangères se montraient peu soucieuses des lectures des petites filles qu'elles prenaient en charge. Elles favorisaient notamment la lecture des

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<sup>11</sup> Le français était, en quelque sorte, une langue « chic » – sa maîtrise passait pour une marque de distinction, surtout chez les dames turques, car « l'apprentissage du français par les filles leur procurait une valorisation et une distinction au sein de la société ottomane » (Timur Agildere 2012 : 6).

<sup>12</sup> Ces lectures commençaient depuis l'âge le plus tendre ; Zeyneb avoue, par exemple, dans l'une de ses lettres (1913 : 81), que les merveilleux volumes de la *Bibliothèque Rose* avaient toujours fait les délices des petites filles turques, tout en leur instillant la croyance en une bonne fée qui allait arriver un jour pour changer à jamais leurs existences, en les touchant de sa baguette magique. Les lectures en français s'accompagnaient, d'ailleurs, de lectures en d'autres langues « étrangères », voire européennes : « [...] we Turkish women read a great deal of foreign literature », affirme Zeyneb Hanoum (1913 : 38) dans l'une de ses lettres. Parmi les livres préférés de notre protagoniste se trouvaient *Ships that Pass in the Night* de Beatrice Harraden (1864-1936) et les *Lettres* de Lady Mary Montagu (1689-1762).



romans français de qualité médiocre, plus appropriés à leurs goûts littéraires. Il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et dans les premières décennies du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, le roman français était en quelque sorte à la pointe de la mode, et cela un peu partout en Europe. La Turquie ottomane n'en faisait pas exception, vu la popularité dont jouissait la culture française notamment dans les milieux cosmopolites de la capitale impériale. Les romans populaires étaient lus passionnément par les femmes et les jeunes filles, étant regardés, d'autre part, avec une certaine méfiance par les hommes et, certainement, par les conservateurs car, provenant surtout « de Paris », ils étaient soupçonnés de renfermer tous les dangers « létaux » associés au style de vie occidental<sup>13</sup> avec, entre autres, « l'irruption de la dépravation et de l'immoralité qui menace les principes moraux de la famille musulmane » (Kreiser 2000 : 9). Pourtant, la lecture des romans n'était pas l'apanage exclusif du public féminin et, d'autre part, d'une catégorie sociale déterminée<sup>14</sup> : Bihruz Bey, le héros caricatural du roman *Araba Sevdasi*, « L'engouement pour la calèche », de Recaizâde Ekrem, paru en 1898, était non seulement un admirateur juré de la culture française, mais aussi un lecteur assidu des romans français contemporains, dont l'univers factice se trouvait à l'origine de ses mésaventures. La même remarque s'impose au sujet de Râkım Efendi, le « héros positif » du roman *Felâton Bey ile Râkım Efendi*, « Felâton Bey et Râkım Efendi », signé par Ahmet Mithat et paru en 1875, qui, à la différence de son ami, Felâton Bey, possédait une excellente maîtrise du français et, parmi d'autres, fréquentait assidûment la littérature française. Tous ces personnages employaient en réalité une sorte de pidgin, parsemé de mots empruntés au français qui, du moins pour une certaine couche de la société, semblait conforme aux bienséances, étant désigné par le syntagme *lisan-ı fusahâ*, « la langue distinguée, élégante » (Abdülaziz Bey 1995 : 404).

Le nombre de lecteurs restait, néanmoins, limité, puisque peu de Turcs étaient réellement lettrés ; selon un recensement datant des premières années de la République, plus précisément de 1927, « sur un total de population estimée à 13 660 000, il donne une proportion de 8,15 % de personnes sachant lire et écrire ; ramené à la population de 7 ans et plus, ce taux est de 10,6 % . [...] 17,4 % des hommes sont alphabétisés en 1927 contre seulement 4,6 % de femmes ; 32 % des citadins habitant dans des villes de plus de 10 000 habitants, contre 6 % des paysans » (Georgeon 1995 : 170). Pour ce qui est du taux d'alphabétisation de la population musulmane de l'Empire à la fin de l'époque ottomane, il semble encore plus difficile de se prononcer, en l'absence de chiffres officiels ; cela étant, les hypothèses avancées par les spécialistes du domaine semblent assez contradictoires. Pourtant, affirme François Georgeon, à la lumière des données – fort éparées, il est vrai – dont on dispose jusqu'à présent « il faut considérer comme probable qu'en 1914 entre 10 à 15% d'Ottomans savaient lire et écrire » (1995 : 173). Benjamin Fortna (2011 : 20-21) se déclare très sceptique au sujet de ce genre de statistiques, (plutôt) spéculatives de son point de vue, et se propose de se concentrer en particulier sur les contenus du processus d'alphabétisation.

<sup>13</sup> En fait, la province française n'en était pas moins méfiante, enfermée qu'elle était dans son conservatisme foncier : « Les dangers du mode de vie occidental sont évidents. Dans la province française, la réputation de Paris est probablement plus mauvaise que dans les familles orientales, où l'on n'a pas lu *Bel Ami* de Maupassant ni vu les affiches de Toulouse-Lautrec » (Kreiser 2000 : 9).

<sup>14</sup> « [...] French novels were popular with many from the sultan on down » (Fortna 2011 : 14).

Les langues étrangères, en tant qu'instruments d'accès à d'autres cultures, tenaient donc une place de choix dans l'éducation des enfants ottomanes de bonne famille ; ces dernières étaient supposées apprendre non seulement le français, mais aussi d'autres langues étrangères, modernes ou « classiques », telles l'anglais, l'arabe, le persan et, naturellement, le turc<sup>15</sup>. De surcroît, les jeunes filles devaient apprendre à jouer du piano, pour se plier aux usages et, en quelque sorte, à l'étiquette de leur classe sociale<sup>16</sup> ; dans le cas de Zeyneb Hanoum, le piano allait devenir une passion réelle, alimentée qu'elle était par son talent musical inné. L'éducation de ces fillettes, qui menaient leurs existences dans une ambiance plutôt « orientale », acquérait ainsi une forte teneur « occidentale », qui ne trouvait aucun support dans la réalité quotidienne et qui leur était infusée de manière fort artificielle, parce que peu préparée par leur éducation antérieure. Par conséquent, elles commençaient à se faire des illusions sur ce monde idéal qui semblait se dégager des livres qui leur tombaient sous la main et dont elles n'avaient qu'une connaissance assez vague. Leur Occident était, donc, un Occident prodigieux, inouï, tiré non seulement des bouquins ou, mieux dit, de la littérature sentimentale dont elles se nourrissaient, mais aussi des rêves qu'elles se forgeaient au sujet de ce territoire mitigé, édulcoré, empire de la liberté et de la félicité suprêmes. Avec la culture et tout ce qui s'ensuivait, elles perdaient non seulement leur innocence, mais aussi la chance d'être heureuses sans se laisser tourmenter par trop de questions : « Si nous avions possédé le fatalisme aveugle de nos grand-mères, nous aurions probablement moins souffert, mais avec la culture, nous avons commencé à douter, ainsi qu'il advient souvent, de la sagesse de la Croyance qui aurait du représenter notre consolation », affirme Zeyneb Hanoum (1913 : 34) qui, hantée par ses expériences, paraît envier parfois « le bonheur calme » de sa grand-mère<sup>17</sup>. Les existences de ces êtres frêles qui se trouvaient à mi-chemin entre « l'Orient » et « l'Occident » ressemblaient donc à une sorte de purgatoire, d'attente indéfinie d'un changement qui ne se produisait jamais et qui épuisait toutes leurs ressources – Zeyneb Hanoum revient souvent au sujet de cette « attente » épuisante, angoissante, sans espoir : « There are some sentiments which, when transplanted, make me suffer even as they did in the land of my birth. I am thinking particularly of the agony of waiting. [...] my whole youth had been so closely allied with this very anguish of waiting. » (1913 : 35); « This weary, weary waiting ! » (*ibid.* : 36) ; « There is nothing to do but to go on waiting, waiting. » (*ibid.* : 37).

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<sup>15</sup> Zennur, l'aînée de Nuri Bey, fit elle-même cette expérience, qui n'était pas facile à endurer, mais qui semblait incontournable pour les petites filles issues de la haute bourgeoisie turque, dont l'éducation et, en quelque sorte, la privation de liberté n'étaient pas sans rappeler celles de leurs semblables occidentales, qu'elles devaient peut-être rattraper et même dépasser : « At the age of ten, when I began the study of English, we were learning at the same time French, Arabic, and Persian, as well as Turkish. Not one of these languages is easy, but no one complained, and every educated Turkish girl had to undergo the same torture. What I disliked most bitterly in my school days was the awful regularity » (ZH : 101-102).

<sup>16</sup> Suivant Zeyneb Hanoum, il s'agissait également d'une manière d'occuper leur temps et de les empêcher de se laisser aller à une certaine léthargie : « My mother, rather the exception than the rule, found we must be always occupied. As a child of twelve, I sat almost whole days at the piano, and when I was exhausted, Mdlle. X. was told to give me needlework » (ZH : 102).

<sup>17</sup> « And yet a revoltée though I was, I think I envied my grandmother's calm happiness » (ZH : 120).

### La fin de l'illusion : les déceptions occidentales d'une romantique orientale

Les « impressions européennes » de Zeyneb Hanoum révèlent sa désillusion grandissante à l'égard de l'Europe réelle<sup>18</sup>, désillusion qui, à l'en croire, n'était qu'une triste conséquence des contes de fées ou, plutôt, des histoires à dormir debout qui avaient bercé son enfance :

It is the outcome of disillusion which every day become more complete. It seems to me that we Orientals are children to whom fairy tales have been told for too long – fairy tales which have every appearance of truth. You hear so much of the mirage of the East, but what is that compared to the mirage of the West, to which all Orientals are attracted ? (ZH : 186)

Zeyneb Hanoum apprécie d'autre part, non sans quelque raison, que le même phénomène, cette fois-ci en sens inverse, se trouvait à l'origine du « mirage oriental » qui avait alimenté au fil du temps l'idée déformée que s'étaient forgée les Occidentaux et, en particulier, les femmes occidentales du soi-disant « Orient » ; autrement dit, elle met en parallèle, en raison de leurs mécanismes similaires, « l'orientalisme » et « l'occidentalisme », avec tous leurs jeux de trompe-l'œil et tout le cortège de souffrances qui en découle et dénonce les « faiseurs de légendes », qu'elle tient coupables de cet infâme « enchantement » :

They tell you fairy tales, too, you women of the West – fairy tales which, like ours, have all the appearance of truth. I wonder, when the Englishwomen have really won their vote and the right to exercise all the tiring professions of men, what they will have gained ? Their faces will be a little sadder, a little more weary, and they will have become wholly disillusioned. (ZH : 187)

*They tell you fairy tales*, « ils vous racontent des contes de fées », s'exclame Zeyneb Hanoum, mais qui sont ils, ces « conteurs » ? Est-ce que Zeyneb se réfère aux « mâles », au monde masculin, étant donné qu'elle évoque (et déplore) « les femmes de l'Ouest » ? Pourtant, elle ne semble point androphobe, malgré les mésaventures de son mariage forcé – en d'autres termes, elle ne paraît pas encline à transformer son drame personnel en guerre universelle dirigée contre les hommes, quels qu'ils soient. Ses remarques sont dirigées plutôt contre la société et ses mécanismes de production et de vente d'illusions, plus spécialement contre les professionnels des mystifications sociales, orientaux et occidentaux.

La déception de Zeyneb Hanoum découlait, de toute évidence, de la constatation que le monde occidental dont elle avait rêvé depuis son âge le plus tendre n'existait pas en réalité – pour emprunter le concept de Benedict Anderson, l'Occident de Zeyneb Hanoum n'était qu'une autre « communauté imaginée », composée de chimères, de rêves, d'aspirations, mais aussi de préconceptions, de stéréotypes, de clichés, très semblables,

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<sup>18</sup> « I am indeed a disenchantée. I envy you even your reasonable illusions about us. We are hopelessly what we are. I have lost all mine about you, and you seem to me as hopelessly what you are » (1913 : 213), affirmait-elle en janvier 1909, après avoir passé trois ans en Europe.

dans leur essence même, à ceux qu'elle croyait avoir abandonnés lors de sa fuite précipitée de la Turquie hamidienne. Après les premiers moments d'euphorie et, aussi, de repos, elle avait commencé non seulement à se sentir mal à l'aise, mais aussi à haïr cet abri illusoire, dénué de stabilité, de substance et, finalement, de sens. La journaliste britannique Grace Ellison, qui assistait à l'époque à tous ses tourments, la radiographiait probablement de manière assez juste lorsqu'elle affirmait :

Then she began to hate Europe, and became passionately attached to Turkey, and everything Turkish, but in Europe she had to remain. To her, exile was agony. Seated at the piano, unaware of my presence, she would play for hours, composing as she went along ; the tears streaming down her face. If only someone could have taken it down ! Such exquisite music is only born of intense suffering. A fine talent is buried in Zeyneb's far-away Anatolian grave. Her exile ended with the Revolution of the Young Turks. She went back to Turkey. » (1928 : 120).

D'après la même Grace Ellison, le désenchantement de Zeyneb Hanoum découlait du fait qu'elle s'était créé « une Europe à elle-même »<sup>19</sup>, peu ancrée dans la réalité – une Europe idéalisée, fondamentalement livresque, forgée par une âme romantique qui n'arrivait pas à s'adapter à la fadeur de la vie courante, fût-elle « orientale » ou « occidentale »<sup>20</sup>. Cette déception la poussait d'ailleurs à affirmer, dans une lettre adressée à Grace Ellison en décembre 1906, donc vers la fin de sa première année en Europe, « do you know, I begin to regret that I ever came in contact with your Western education and culture ! » (1913 : 78). Pourtant, Zeyneb était loin d'être une « orientale » pur-sang, égarée dans les « forêts de symboles » occidentaux ; ce qui la déconcertait, c'était l'écart entre la réalité banale du quotidien occidental et l'Occident merveilleux, exemplaire qu'elle avait façonné dans son esprit à partir de ses expériences livresques – autrement dit, l'Occident réel n'était point « le chevalier sans peur et sans reproche » de ses rêves et cessait, peu à peu, de se présenter à son esprit comme une solution à ses dilemmes fondamentaux.

Une fois arrivée à la pleine conscience de cet écart, Zeyneb Hanım se déclara lasse de l'agitation perpétuelle des grandes villes européennes et désireuse de retrouver l'atmosphère paisible, calme, sereine qui régnait dans les demeures ottomanes du temps jadis – autrement dit, dans les harems qu'elle avait fui autrefois en quête de liberté : « And yet a revoltée though I was, I think I envied my grandmother's calm happiness » (1913 : 120), réfléchissait-elle à un moment donné, en plein désarroi. Les emplois du temps favorisés des bourgeoises occidentales qu'elle avait connues pendant son exil lui semblaient, à quelques exceptions près, futiles, dérisoires, insensés. À la différence de celles-ci, elle

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<sup>19</sup> « Zeyneb was not perhaps the best guide one could have had. Is a person of dual nationality ever quite an accurate judge? Out of the unhappiness of her short married life, she had created a Europe of herself. The real Europe was to her a bitter disappointment, and caused her real physical pain. We wrote together *A Turkish Woman's European Impressions*, frank, accurate criticisms of our European civilization, heavily tinged with bitterness. That she might prevent other Turkish women from making the mistake she had made seemed to give her relief » (Ellison 1928 : 119).

<sup>20</sup> « It seems to me as if Zeyneb was determined to live out in Europe a fiction she had assimilated in Turkey », affirmait Yeshim Yashar Ternar dans un autre contexte (1989 : 156), en parlant du roman anglais favori de Zeyneb, *Ships That Pass in the Night*, signé par Beatrice Harraden (1893).

n'agréait pas les sports (elle exprime longuement son déplaisir au sujet du tennis<sup>21</sup>, par exemple) qui, de son point de vue, ne faisaient qu'altérer la nature féminine et, d'autre part, ne représentaient qu'un gaspillage de temps et d'énergie ; pourtant, en évoquant ailleurs l'ennui de la « vie orientale », elle semblait regretter la prohibition de ce genre d'amusements parmi les jeunes filles de son pays : « Tennis, croquet, and other games are impossible for us, neither is rowing allowed : to have indulged in that sport was to expose myself to the criticism of the whole capital » (ZH : 175). Pour ce qui est des danses de salon, elle estimait qu'elles ne représentaient qu'une manière mal déguisée de flirter avec son partenaire, cet aspect apparemment mineur étant, à son avis, très révélateur de sa nature futile. Zeyneb Hanoum ne comprenait pas non plus la passion des Européens pour d'autres passe-temps, tels la randonnée et l'escalade, qu'elle jugeait fort gratuits, sinon puérils : « I cannot understand why they employ all this muscular force to no higher end than to give themselves an unnatural appetite » (ZH : 67). Il faudrait quand-même préciser qu'elle faisait ces remarques en Suisse, où la plupart des gens dont elle avait fait la connaissance pendant une cure prescrite pour améliorer sa santé chancelante étaient en vacances. L'ambiance générale des stations d'hiver suisses, où elle séjourna plusieurs mois pendant l'hiver 1906-1907, lui semblait parfaitement artificielle et ennuyeuse ; elle se déclara donc une fois de plus totalement opaque aux jouissances des sports d'hiver, aux plaisirs de la luge et du patinage, qu'elle trouvait inadéquats, sinon disgracieux pour les femmes. Les seules personnes authentiques et, de ce fait, dignes d'intérêt dans ce brouhaha mondain restaient, de son point de vue, les gens du pays, qu'elle regardait avec une considération manifeste : « The people who interest me most are not the smart ladies, but the Swiss themselves. They alone in all this cosmopolitan crowd know that the sun has flooded with its golden tints the wonderful panorama of their mountains, the lake stretches out in a mystery of mauve and rose, and they alone have time to bow in admiration to the Creator of Beauty and the great Poet of Nature » (ZH : 109). C'est justement dans ces circonstances que Zeyneb Hanoum commença à douter de la soi-disant « félicité occidentale » qu'elle avait tellement exaltée auparavant : est-ce que les Occidentaux étaient réellement contents de leur condition, de leur destinée, de leur place dans le monde, se demandait-elle circonspecte ?<sup>22</sup> Selon ses dires, elle éprouvait en quelque sorte l'impression que l'effervescence, l'agitation et la frénésie qui l'entouraient ne faisaient que dissimuler une sorte d'angoisse du vide, qui l'emportait sur la substance de l'existence. Le culte démesuré du corps et de l'exercice physique au détriment de la vie psychique, de la réflexion offrait, de son point de vue, un spectacle navrant, enfantin, même écoeurant.

Pour empirer les choses, Zeyneb Hanım n'aima pas la France, malgré son ascendance et son éducation françaises ; elle détesta par-dessus tout Paris, qui constitua sa grande déception, s'ensuivant à la grande illusion d'antan : « Here in France they do not

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<sup>21</sup> « I watch them with interest, yet even were I able I should not indulge in this unfeminine sport. Women rush about the court, from left to right, up and down, forwards and backwards. Their hair is all out of curl, often it comes down; and they wear unbecoming flat shoes and men's shirts and collars and ties. The ball comes scarcely over the net, a woman rushes forward, her leg is bared to the sight of all... » (ZH : 67).

<sup>22</sup> « What I should like to ask these people, if I dared, is, are they really satisfied with their lot, or are they only pretending to be happy, as we in Turkey pretended to be happy ? Are they not tired of flirting and enjoying themselves so uselessly ? » (ZH : 68-69).

understand the elements of hospitality. You cannot imagine how it shocked me when I first heard a French son paid his father for board, and that here in France for a meal received, a meal must be returned », notait-elle (ZH : 140) ; elle jugeait les Français et, surtout, les Parisiens comme étant xénophobes, totalement dépourvus de compassion et d'empathie envers les étrangers, égoïstes et repliés sur eux-mêmes. Dans un autre contexte, elle comparait les demeures des Anglais, qu'elle trouvait fort semblables à celles des Turcs du point de vue du confort, de l'espace, de leur aspect en quelque sorte « humain » avec celles des Français, dont les pièces exiguës et basses lui faisaient réellement horreur : « en France on flaire l'économie avant même d'atteindre le paillason », constatait-elle ironique (ZH : 213).

En échange, elle s'enticha de Londres, qu'elle trouva non seulement magnifique, mais aussi aristocratique et qui lui procura un sentiment d'ordre, de sécurité jamais éprouvé dans les autres villes qu'elle avait visitées en Europe<sup>23</sup>. Le visage grave, l'air apparemment indifférent à l'égard des femmes, le regard témoignant d'une détermination entêtée, le comportement de maître du foyer (« sultan ») des Anglais lui semblaient fort semblables à ceux des Turcs. Par contre, les Anglaises, bien que jolies, lui apparaissaient comme insipides, dépourvues de charme ; de surcroît, elles étaient « têtues comme des mules », brutalement sincères et manquaient de diplomatie, ce qui ne les empêchait pas d'être des amies fidèles. Leurs vies privées restaient fondamentalement mystérieuses ; la plupart d'entre elles manifestaient, néanmoins, une vive préoccupation pour les petits amusements innocents de chaque jour. En parlant du paysage féminin anglais, Zeyneb Hanoum s'attaquait de nouveau à la superficialité de ses contemporaines européennes, en remarquant le peu d'intérêt qu'elles montraient pour la lecture et pour la qualité des livres qu'elle daignaient lire : « I suppose we Turkish women who have so much time to devote to culture become unreasonably exacting. But everywhere I have been – in England, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain – I have found how little and how uselessly the women read, and how society plays havoc with their taste for good books » (ZH : 215).

Outre Londres et, d'une manière plus générale, l'Angleterre, notre exilée se montra transportée d'admiration pour Venise, avec son ciel bleu et sa vie calme, nonchalante, qu'elle percevait comme un véritable remède contre la fatigue et l'angoisse procurées par les grandes villes du vieux continent. Les eaux de Venise suscitaient en elle le doux souvenir du Bosphore, qui lui manquait tellement. D'autre part, Venise, tout comme l'Angleterre, jouissait d'une aristocratie de vieille date qui, malgré sa décadence, ne manquait pas de charme, d'élégance, de raffinement intellectuel qu'elle trouvait particulièrement reposants après la tension nerveuse qui lui avait été inoculée par ce qu'elle appelait « la démocratie exagérée » de France.

Il n'est pas dépourvu d'intérêt de remarquer, d'autre part, que Zeyneb Hanoum, la grande « désenchantée » préoccupée jadis par l'émancipation des femmes, s'avérait plutôt sceptique sur la liberté des femmes occidentales ; d'après elle, cette liberté tellement clamée était plutôt illusoire puisqu'elle ne menait qu'à l'abattement, à la solitude, au *spleen*. Elle se mit donc à s'interroger sérieusement sur la nature réelle de la liberté, en Occident

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<sup>23</sup> « Here in London I have a feeling of security, which I have had nowhere else in the world. It is the only capital in Europe I have so far seen that gives me a sense of orderliness not dependent on authority » (ZH : 212-213).

comme ailleurs, en s'appuyant sur ses propres souvenirs et expériences<sup>24</sup>. Ainsi qu'elle l'avouait dans une lettre adressée à Grace Ellison en janvier 1909, sa manière de concevoir cet état de grâce était assez différente de celle de ses congénères européennes : « Yet I ask myself, is a lonely old age worth a youth of effort ? Have they not confused individual liberty, which is the right to live as one pleases, with true liberty, which to my Oriental mind is the right to choose one's own joys and forbearances? » (ZH : 204). Notre « dépaycée orientale » se redécouvrait ainsi peu à peu, à l'instar des grands voyageurs et exilés qui ne parviennent à la pleine intelligence de leur nature profonde et de leur propre culture qu'après la rencontre avec la réalité de « l'autre ».

Confrontée à la factualité pure et dure des suffragettes anglaises, Zeyneb Hanoum constatait, par exemple, que malgré son attachement sincère à la cause de l'affranchissement de la femme, elle éprouvait une sorte de répulsion stylistique à leur égard : en tant que représentante du « monde d'hier » et, suivant ses dires, de « conservatrice », elle déplorait leur descente dans la rue, parmi les roturiers, et, en quelque sorte, le sacrifice de leur féminité<sup>25</sup>. De ce point de vue, elle partageait la manière de penser et, aussi, les préjugés des élites politiques, qui ne tenaient pas en haute estime l'activisme agressif, provocateur de cette nouvelle espèce de rebelles ; l'ironie du sort fit qu'un membre du parlement britannique arriva à confondre Zeyneb Hanoum avec les adeptes de ce mouvement qu'ils blâmaient, de fait, tous les deux, malgré leurs perspectives différentes : « 'Are these suffragettes ?' he asked the policeman, staring at me and the other women. 'No, sir,' answered the policeman, 'ladies' » (ZH : 193).

L'aversion de Zeyneb Hanoum contre les suffragettes découlait de la conscience de son identité « aristocratique », qu'elle refusait délibérément d'abandonner – elle s'entêtait à rester une *lady*, dans le bonheur comme dans le malheur, car, pour la citer, nulle souffrance physique ne lui semblait plus terrible que l'éventualité de ne pas être tenue pour une grande dame<sup>26</sup>. Reina Lewis remarquait, à juste titre, le souci de Zeyneb de ne pas être confondue avec les femmes du bas peuple, notamment avec les ouvrières<sup>27</sup>, dont la présence sur la scène publique était très visible en Angleterre au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, à la différence de la Turquie, qui manquait de prolétariat industriel à l'époque. Cette préoccupation, issue d'une incompatibilité insurmontable, explique, sans doute, ses réserves foncières au sujet des suffragettes, d'autant plus qu'elle ne partageait point la conception occidentale de la démocratie et, surtout, la confusion des classes et des catégories sociales dont elle

<sup>24</sup> « The silence of the room was restful, there was an atmosphere almost of peace, but it is not the peace which follows strife, it is the peace of apathy. Is this, then, what the Turkish women dream of becoming one day ? Is this their ideal of independence and liberty ? » (ZH : 185).

<sup>25</sup> « The most pitiful part of it all to me is the blind faith these women have in their cause, and the confidence they have that in explaining their policy to the street ruffians, who cannot even understand that they are ladies, they will further their cause by half an inch » (ZH : 190-191).

<sup>26</sup> « No physical pain could be more awful to me than not to be taken for a lady » (ZH : 190).

<sup>27</sup> « Zeyneb Hanım's need to be separated from race 'primitives' occurs infrequently in her writing but another separation – between herself and the European working class – is frequently constructed. It was clearly imperative for Zeyneb Hanım to be recognised as a lady and seen as distinct from a primitivised working class. She regularly remarked on Western activities that seem to her unladylike (sporting exercise that leaves women with red cheeks and disordered clothes for example) and was traumatised by the possibility of not being 'taken for a lady'. This potential loss of class status colours her response to English feminists » (Lewis 2004 : 133).

s'accompagnait. D'ailleurs, Zeyneb Hanoum mettait le spectacle « pitoyable » offert par ces amazones de fraîche date sur le compte des différences profondes qui séparaient la démocratie « orientale » et l'« occidentale » : « The Democracy of the East is so different from that of the West, of which I had so pitiful an example at the street corner » (ZH : 191).

Zennur (Zeyneb), la « désenchantée » la plus pathétique du roman de Pierre Loti, revint à Istanbul en 1912, après six longues années d'absence et, de manière surprenante, reprit son tcharchaf, bien qu'elle s'en plaignît souvent à l'époque de sa première jeunesse et que le port de celui-ci cessât d'être indispensable à l'époque des Jeunes Turcs<sup>28</sup>. Par cela, elle revêtit de manière volontaire son ancienne identité, faisait ses adieux au monde et, peut-être, dénonçait sa défaite, se préparant à passer de vie à trépas ; ainsi que nous l'avons déjà mentionné au début de notre article, les circonstances de sa mort, survenue probablement en 1923, restent obscures. Elle répétait de cette manière la destinée tragique de Djénane, l'autre grande « désenchantée » de Loti, au sujet de laquelle Zeyneb, l'alter-ego romanesque de notre héroïne, affirmait, dans une lettre adressée à André Lhéry, le double fictionnel de Pierre Loti : « C'est l'Occident qui l'a tuée, André... Si on l'avait laissée primitive et ignorante, belle seulement, je la verrais là près de moi, et j'entendrais sa voix... Et mes yeux n'auraient pas pleuré, comme ils pleureront des jours et des nuits encore... Je n'aurais pas eu ce désespoir, André, si elle était restée la petite princesse des plaines d'Asie... » (Loti 1906 : 428). Grace Ellison avait, peut-être, raison d'affirmer, après sa rencontre avec Zennur (Zeyneb) à Istanbul, en 1914, que son amie turque n'avait pas été préparée pour la rencontre avec l'Europe réelle – l'Europe éblouissante, insouciant, optimiste de la Belle Époque qui, pourtant, valsait imperceptiblement vers sa fin : « She was not prepared for our civilization, she was not armed for the fray, the hurricane of progress took her off her feet, and now ... she is back in the little Yali again » (Ellison 1915 : 187). Trop sensible pour ce monde, oriental comme occidental, Zeyneb Hanoum se préparait peut-être à faire, dans les années à venir, un choix téméraire ; de toute façon, elle quitta la scène discrètement, avant l'heure, pour gagner la paix éternelle des cimetières qui, d'après elle, lui avaient toujours procuré une quiétude infinie.

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<sup>28</sup> « [...] to have a veil over your eyes, and your soul ; to be always silent, always forgotten, to be always and always a thing » (ZH : 89), se lamentait jadis sa sœur, Neyr (mieux connue en Occident comme Melek Hanoum et Nouryé Rohozinska), qui allait finalement se libérer des contraintes de son pays et mener une existence plus conforme à sa nature exubérante. À l'en croire, ce qui l'avait déterminée à se révolter contre sa condition avait été justement l'obligation imposée aux femmes de se voiler le visage dans l'espace public.



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## AMRĪKĀ ŠĪKĀ BĪKĀ AND THE REINVENTION OF ROMANIA

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**Abstract.** In the Egyptian cinema, the American Dream has often been represented as a mirage, doomed to clash against complex realities. *Amrīkā šīkā bīkā* (“America Abracadabra”, 1993), by Ḥayrī Bišāra, displays a stereotyped image of an unknown country that is not a dreamt-of destination, but, anyway, is more than a background for a history of migration: Romania. I argue that its excessive folklorization turns to be a tool to reinvent this country, for commercial purposes, but the remarkable point is that Romania is placed, for certain aspects, closer than the usual western “Other”. The pessimistic vision of the project of migration, clearly evoked by the film title, seems to be a tool to draw, more than an easy critic against Romania, a melodramatic narrative of the theme of the migrant’s identity, his reflection over Egyptianity, as well as gender, social and economic issues. The dominant nostalgic narration anticipates the predictable ending of the film, and helps build a strong nationalist discourse.

**Keywords:** immigration, folklorization, Romania, othering, Dracula.

### 1. Introduction

In the Egyptian cinema Western countries are mainly represented as settings and/or background for spy activities, love stories and honeymoon trips (al-Hamarneh 2005). Since the nineties of the last century, several films dealing with migration topics were released<sup>1</sup>. They are remarkable first because they show direct contacts and inter-actions between Egyptians and foreigners; second, they allow the viewers to explore the other's culture, space and lifestyle, while helping redefine national identity issues. *Amrīkā šīkā bīkā* (“America Abracadabra”<sup>2</sup>, 1993)<sup>3</sup>, directed by the Egyptian Ḥayrī Bišāra<sup>4</sup>, explores the

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<sup>1</sup> Among them we mention “The Land of Dreams” (1993), by Dāwūd ‘Abd al-Sayyid, that is the only one about an unsuccessful attempt to migrate to the United States. “Hammam in Amsterdam” (1999), by Sa‘īd Ḥāmid, “The City” (1999), by Yusrī Naṣrallāh, “Hello America” (1998), by Nādir Ġalāl, “Alexandria–New York” (1999), by Yūsuf Shāhīn.

<sup>2</sup> The script was written by Miḥṭat al-‘Adl, well-know Egyptian author and poet. The title has also been translated as “America: a fake dream”, see Gebril 2017, and Bassiouney 2017. It’s noteworthy to add that it’s a reworking of the title of a famous song, *Šīkā bīkā*, whose lyrics were written by the famous intellectual Ṣalāḥ Jāhīn. It was sung by the mythical star Su‘ād Ḥusnī, in the seventies.

<sup>3</sup> Produced by El-Rania films, it stars, besides the famous singer Muḥammad Fu‘ād, Sāmī al-‘Adl, al-Shahḥāt Mabruk, Nahla Salāma, Šuwaykār, Aḥmad ‘Aql, ‘Imād Rashād.

<sup>4</sup> Born in 1947, he is considered one the leading filmmakers of the neo-realistic wave in the Egyptian cinema: among his blockbusters we mention “House Boat n.70” (1982), “The Collar and the

dynamics of an encounter, almost not intentional, between Romania, which is not a dreamed-of Eldorado, and an Egyptian group of migrants. Through this encounter between a marginal and peripheral West and the Arab world, the film provides some gender and ethnic stereotypes about the "other", while challenging some other ones. In spite of that, as far as I know, it is the first and unique case in which Romania is cinematically represented by an Arab filmmaker<sup>5</sup>. Besides stereotypes it features many realistic elements, but it is more proper to classify it in the musical melodrama genre (starring the famous singer Muhammad Fu'ād<sup>6</sup> as main character), with some action scenes (chasing and wrestling).

Following the mainstream vision of Egyptian cinema, *Amrīkā šīkā bīkā* shows a pessimistic vision of emigration<sup>7</sup>, clearly evoked by the title<sup>8</sup>. The film poster misleads the viewers, portraying some characters sitting on a countryside grass and the upper part of the Statue of Liberty behind them. Only myths about America freedom and wealth are voiced by some migrants, and the theme of economic crisis has a pivotal role in the film narrative. Another constant shared with the abovementioned wave of films is that the most negative characters who try to swindle and to cheat the new migrants are other Arabs: "thieves, traffickers and 'westernized' relatives" (al-Hamarneh 2005).

I argue that the exaggerated processes of folklorization and exoticization turn to be tools to reinvent a stereotyped country, undoubtedly for commercial purposes. The new element is that Romania is placed, for certain aspects, "far and not far from Egypt", as one of the characters affirms. It appears, at least, closer than the usual western "Other", through the polarization of an idealized countryside and a urban (potentially) dangerous environment. The pessimistic vision of the migration project aims at drawing, more than an easy critic against Romania, a melodramatic narrative of faithful Egyptianity. Its overwhelming nostalgic tone anticipates the predictable ending of the film, and help build a strong nationalist discourse.

## 2. Synopsis and main characters

A small group of Egyptians are stranded in Romania, on their way to the United States. They are cheated by an Egyptian *passseur*, who, instead of getting their visas, suggests them to cross Romania, till the Hungarian borders. He ends up abandoning them in a thick forest. After many misadventures they decide to go back to their homeland.

The main characters of the film come from different social and cultural backgrounds, even though all of them are stricken by a tough economic crisis. The most influential one is Aḥmad al-Mansī, a poor singer who has had bad work experiences in Arabic countries,

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Bracelet" (1986), "Crab" (1990), "Ice Cream in Glim" (1992), "Strawberry War" (1993), "Traffic Light (1995).

<sup>5</sup> Romania was a set of some episodes of the Egyptian soap-opera *Ḥarb al-ġawāsīs* ("War of spies", 2009) by Nādir Ġalāl.

<sup>6</sup> He performs most of his songs in an extra-diegetic way. Each of them accompanies the atmosphere of the scene, often stressing nostalgic ties to the homeland. He starred in another musical, "Ice cream in Glim", directed by the same filmmaker, in 1992. See Shafik 1998.

<sup>7</sup> Pagès-el Karoui 2016, analysing a corpus of seven Egyptian about emigration, wonders if migrants do not not also contribute to questions surrounding the national imaginary.

<sup>8</sup> The lyrics of the song will be discussed in the next paragraph.

and even fought in Iraq-Iran war. His antagonist, for most of the film, is Fu'ād, a doctor who "gets a salary hardly enough to buy a good pair of shoes"<sup>9</sup>. He is the only Christian in the group, but his religious identity is kept hidden till the end of the film, and then exploited for a nationalist didactic message. Suhā, a bank clerk, is escaping from an marriage arranged by her relatives with a man she doesn't love. She fights for her emancipation even in Romania, in the Egyptian microcosm. Dūsa, an ex dancer, with a dark past after her husband's death, has only a dream: to cure her small daughter, Fatima, who is suffering from a serious kidney disease. Rambo, a young body-builder, is always in couple with al-Bannā: both come from the poorest Egyptian suburbs, and changed many jobs in their lives. Ġamrāwī is a tailor from Upper Egypt, obliged to emigrate to feed his numerous family, because of the crisis of the clothes manufacturing sector in Egypt. Ġābir Fawwāz, the *porteur*, belongs to the second generation of immigrants, and is married to a foreigner woman. Through the Romanian Embassy, he arranges visas for USA. Rodica, a cheese seller from countryside, is the only well-developed Romanian character, whereas the rest of her countrymen are mere extras. The past of each Egyptian character is narrated orally in short *flashbacks*: while images of Egypt streets and places are shot on the screen, a voice off not only highlights his/her family background, pains, expectations, but also functions as a trigger for a nostalgic rediscovery of the homeland.

### 3. "Romania is far and not far from Egypt"

The abovementioned Egyptian films about emigration issues usually provide narratives where relations with the nationals of the destination country are few or are limited to the role of opponents. In *Amrĭkā šĭkā bĭkā* Romania is seen as an "other" but closer to Arabic culture values more than expected. While Bucharest and other cities are portrayed as full of sexual temptations and potential dangers, the Romanian countryside is highly idealized as a cradle of unlimited hospitality and openness. This process of polarization between countryside and city is a constant throughout the film, and reminds us of a similar binary opposition found in the Egyptian literature and cinema, in order to affirm that the purest and most authentic spirit of Egypt is to be searched in the *fallāhin*'s world<sup>10</sup>.

For the Egyptian group, stranded in an unknown country like Romania, the sense of alienation, *ġurba*, is softened by unexpected surprises. At the beginning of the film, while they are gathering at Bucharest central railway station, one comments: "It looks like Cairo railway station, but without the statue"<sup>11</sup>. Later on, while they are invited to a marriage banquet, in the countryside, one happily remarks: "They are *fallāhin*, peasants, like us".

Most of the researchers have investigated colonial discourse in gender issues. In Orientalist films, paintings and photographs, as Shohat argues, the "process of exposing

<sup>9</sup> In a dialogue doctor Fu'ād and Suhā discuss about that subject. Since eighties Romania was boasting high standards in technical and medical education. So tens of thousands Arabs, especially from Middle East area, used to study in its universities. After graduation most of them came back to their countries. Then some decided to return and settle in Romania to open their business.

<sup>10</sup> See Baron 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Cairo Railway Station is still called in Egypt "Ramses Square", because this pharaoh's huge statue dominated the area. In 2006 it was removed and transferred into another place. See Gordon 2002: 221

the female Other, of denuding her literally, comes to allegorize the power of Western man to possess her” (Shohat 1990: 42). Whereas the West was engaged in a process of othering that depicted the Eastern woman in an inferior and sensual light, so in a specular way, Occidental views of Western moral standards try to other those women, transforming them in the object of spectacle for the Arab voyeuristic gaze<sup>12</sup>.

In *Amrīkā šīkā bīkā* this pattern is followed to visualize young Romanian women of the capital and Braşov: often over-erotized and over-sexualised, wearing scanty dresses or miniskirts. Some of them hug with passion Rambo and al-Bannā, and seem to be willing to have sex with them. These two young Egyptians show off their masculine power and virility and bet that they will accept their advances even without money. In a cabaret we watch some half-naked women dancing, smoking and drinking alcohol<sup>13</sup>. “Europeans women are very easy, and we are the well-known pharaohs all over the world”, says al-Bannā, who boasts a glorious past as *gigolo* for old tourists, at the Pyramids and in other famous sites, but just to gain his daily bread.

Ġamrāwī writes in a letter to his family: “European women are very strange. Most of them don’t wear bras”. Rambo and al-Bannā claim they have the right to harass Rodica, when they get a lift in a horse cart, driven by her old dad. When they are blamed by the other members of the group, one replies to justify himself: “But...they are Europeans”. In the square of Bucharest central railway station, Rambo takes off his shirt, and immediately rebuked by the singer (who is also attracted by blonde Romanians), replies: “I am in Europe and I do what I want”.

In Braşov, while looking for a hotel, doctor Fu’ād and Ġamrāwī meet two prostitutes, in front of a door. The former accepts the invitation of one of them and offers to pay for his compatriot’s prostitute, in order “to try the white flesh”. The doctor is cheated and beaten up by their pimps, while Ġamrāwī has the luck to spend a sort of “honeymoon” with the other prostitute. One of the group, making fun of him, comments on his state: “He is drowned but breathes under the water”.

A more articulated love story concerns the singer and Rodica, but it is doomed to finish very soon. Suhā, the young Egyptian that is object of conquest by both the singer and doctor Fu’ād, shows a modest behaviour towards them, while looking for personal freedom. More controversial is the story of Dūsa, the ex dancer, and her experience, in my opinion, marks a clear-cut boundary between Western and Eastern ethics.

Dūsa bitterly confesses to Suhā that in her life in Egypt she has been exploited by many men. In Romania, left without money, food or medicine for her daughter, she sees herself forced into prostitution. She offers to pay food for the entire group, showing solidarity with countrymen who are not able to manage the situation, and even try to harass her.

So the need for money is the reason why she sells her body. In the case of the Romanian prostitutes, viewers are not informed about their circumstances. That aims at

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<sup>12</sup> Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, reversing the E. W. Said’s perspective, have defined “Occidentalism” as a “dehumanizing picture of the West painted by its enemies” and made up of a “cluster of prejudices” (Buruma and Margalit, 2004, p. 5). See Nicosia 2016.

<sup>13</sup> In a very comical scene, they are cheated by illegal money-changers, who give them banknotes that are cuttings of newspapers featuring half naked women. At that point comes the comment of one Egyptian: “This is their money? Very beautiful money!”

emphasising their immorality in comparison with the female Arab behaviour displayed abroad, that can be qualified as decent, and indecent only in case of *force majeure*.

#### 4. Folklorization of the Romanian countryside

Besides chasing Romanian women, the Egyptian male members of the group seem not interested in discovering the country. Ġamrāwī is even seeking for a mosque where to perform his daily prayers. Doctor Fu'ād is the only character who comments the Romanian reality, but not with the other compatriots. It's noteworthy that throughout the film he delivers negative and classist remarks about some fellows of the group. While he is sitting on a bank in the square where the Romanian dictator delivered his last speech, he writes a letter to his sister: "An old lady has told me that after the revolution life got expensive, but she thinks that freedom is better than the humiliating loaf given by Ceaușescu. I am astonished to hear these words from a woman who is going to die soon". He even offers some cigarettes to the (supposedly) same old lady.

While they are gathering in front on their hotel, in Bucharest, we watch a folk group performing traditional Romanian dances in the street, just in front of them: this scene seems completely unconnected with the plot, just pasted there out of easy exoticism or mere touristic advertising. When the group tries to pass illegally the borders with Hungary, viewers can admire the natural beauty of the country, its thick forests, clean rivers, green mountains. The Egyptians cannot enjoy this wonderful spectacle, since they are facing risky situations, such as the hospitalization of the daughter and then the sickness of the tailor.

In Brașov the group witnesses a public transportation strike, which directly evokes the social unrest of the post-revolution period, but also functions to justify a spectacular action scene: the singer steals a van and runs away with the group. Immediately after that, while being chased by police, they cannot help pay a visit to Dracula's castle. This reference is preceded by another one, in the first part of the film, when doctor Fu'ād asks the *passeur* if that castle is situated on their way to the Hungarian borders. When he affirms to ignore who Dracula is (very strange for a well connected person in Romanian society), the doctor defines him as the worldwide famous *maṣṣāš al-dam* ("blood sucker"). This scene turns out to be comical and highly ironical, since the *passeur* is stealing him and the Egyptian group a lot of money, or, in other words, "is sucking their blood".

Dracula tourism is a topic studied by many researchers (Huovi, 2014), and in the specific case of this film, as I have demonstrated before, is inserted in an integrated formula of cultural generalisations and shared standardisations of the Romanian culture. This tourism is also combined with local folklore and history. I argue here that the Romanian editor of the film seems to have been subjected to local authorities' pressures to promote a positive Romanian image, especially after showing the difficulties of the immediate post-revolutionary period.

In this interpretative paradigm we can analyze the scenes shot in the countryside where they attend a traditional marriage party. Villagers, wearing nice traditional clothes, invite the Egyptians, hungry, desperate, lost in the thick forest, in the banquet. Then they perform popular dances and sing traditional songs. Aḥmad, satisfied and grateful for their

kind invitation, responds with the song *Amrīkā štkā bīkā*. All the invited Romanians, with enthusiasm and spontaneity, participate to the dance performed by Dūsa.

Later on, the thirsty and exhausted Egyptians are offered water by other villagers. After that, in a desperate need to come back from forests to any town, they are accompanied back to Braşov, by a cart, as I have shown before. The kindness and humanity of the villagers is appreciated to the singer's words: "Nice people of Romania. *Viva Romania*". If compared with the urban swindlers (fake change men, pimps, in addition to the Egyptian *passeur*), the Romanian countryside seems a completely different world.

### 5. From the American Dream to the rediscovery of the homeland

In *Amrīkā štkā bīkā* Romanians and Egyptians share the same pains, because they are stricken by common bad economical situations. Both cultivate the American Dream. The following dialogue between Rodica (R) and Aḥmad (A), the singer, is bitterly comical:

R- *My only dream is to go to America.*

A- *Come with me Amrika.*

R- *What about visa?*

A- *In Egypt it's very easy. I have very rich uncle in Amrika. My uncle mafia. Very much money.*

The failure of their love story coincides with the abandon of the migration project by the singer, and the blossoming of his new feelings towards Suhā. The recent misadventures have already changed his mind. Later on, he asks Rodica, in an incorrect survival English, spotted with a final strong Arabic word:

A- *You want me or you want America?*

R- *I want both (...)*

A- *What?*

R- *You and America.*

A- *I no go Amrika Ḥalāş! (I absolutely won't go to America)*

The irresistible call of the homeland is accelerated by the tragic death of the already sick Ġamrāwī: the nostalgic memories of rare sweet moments of his miserable life make all his Egyptians fellows cry, since they feel that they are his last words. He is buried in the countryside in a moving funeral ceremony, lead by the singer, who, noticing Fu'ād making the sign of the cross, abruptly asks him: "Are you Christian, Fu'ād?". Immediately they hug each other. This scene puts the seal to their reconciliation after long fighting about the leadership of the group, and competing to get the heart of Suha. In this precise context is inserted the song of Ahmad, entitled *Ya'nī ēh kilmit waṭan* ("What does the word 'homeland' mean?"<sup>14</sup>):

<sup>14</sup> See Gebiril 2017: 53. The words of the song are written by Midḥat al-'Adl. It has become very popular during national feasts.

*What does the word “homeland” mean?  
Does it mean land, borders, places or sadness?  
Or what else? What else?  
Is it a tea with milk in a café in al-Ḍāhir district?  
Is it an evening breeze in Sayyidat (Zaynab<sup>15</sup>) area or at the monastery of Angels?*

In this last line the song quotes the names of two places that have strong religious relevance in the hearts of the Egyptians, respectively Muslims and Christians, making the message of Egyptian unity and inclusiveness reach the viewers more directly and effectively. Through the hardships of the *ḡurba* egyptianity gets stronger.

After obtaining financial help from the Egyptian Embassy, to get air tickets back to their homeland, they arrive at Bucharest airport. While waiting for their flight, they happen to see the *paqueur* with his wife near the entrance. It's the time to settle old scores and take their revenge on him: they begin to beat him up, open his luggage and throw away in the air all its contents. Here starts again the song *Amrĭkā šĭkā bĭkā*. The scenes where his belongings are thrown away are repeated, with slow motion effects: clothes, whisky and Coca and Pepsi Cola bottles fly in the air, then fall down on the floor, leaking out their liquids. At a symbolic level, the *paqueur* represents the worst evil: corrupted by Western values and drinks, becomes more othered than the Romanians. The sharp passage from the idealization to the rejection of the West is expressed by the lines of the song:

*America abracadabra...America abracadabra  
It puts you in troubles, and gets you depressed  
This world, folks, is ephemeral and finishes in a second  
God's willing you will go to Romania.  
It will say to you  
“Go to hell”(...)*

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<sup>15</sup> Sayyidat Zaynab is a popular quarter where the famous mosque of the saint is found. The Monastery of the Angels is another strong highlight of the Coptic Christian community, in the north part of Cairo.



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## SOME PECULIARITIES OF PAUL OF ALEPPO'S WRITING STYLE AS FOUND IN HIS TRAVEL ACCOUNT

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**Abstract.** The famous 17<sup>th</sup> century historical source “The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch” written by Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo (ca. 1627–1669), who accompanied his father in his journey to the countries of Eastern Europe (1652–1659), is a unique travel account from a number of perspectives. On the one hand, the linguistic material of the text of the *Journal* reflects first of all the features specific to the Arabic Christian literature of that epoch (mixture of Standard and colloquial Arabic), on the other hand it presents features of the author’s individual style, reflecting to some extent his identity. The *Journal* gives us some idea of the author’s attempts to put his work in a context of the Arabic literary tradition (*e.g.* by using rhymed prose), but at the same time the text reflects the unique impact that the long-term contacts within the post-Byzantine Orthodox space had on the linguistic means used by the author. His lexical preferences, abundant foreign vocabulary (Greek, Turkish, Slavic, Russian, Romanian lexemes), its stylistic functions and the author’s linguistic attitudes are of special interest for the research.

**Keywords:** *Paul of Aleppo, travel literature, Middle Arabic, writing style, rhymed prose, language contacts, foreign vocabulary.*

“The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch” is a well-known historical source composed by Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo (ca. 1627–1669), a prominent figure in the history of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch. He was the son and the secretary of Patriarch Macarius III Ibn al-Za‘īm (in office 1647–1672) and accompanied him in all his voyages. “The Travels of Macarius” is the journal of their first journey to Moscow through Anatolia, Constantinople, Moldavia, Wallachia, and Ukraine, which was undertaken in the period of 1652–1659 with the purpose of seeking financial support for the Church of Antioch, and along with this – for establishing new contacts within the post-Byzantine Orthodox space.

Paul of Aleppo’s *Journal* is considered to be a masterpiece of the Christian Arabic literature of the Ottoman epoch. It was composed during the period of cultural and literary revival among the Arab Orthodox Christians named “the Melkite Renaissance”. Macarius and Paul, being the most prominent figures of this revival, made their best to enrich the Arabic Christian literature with translations from Greek and with their own works, mostly of a historiographic character (Panchenko 2016: 446, 449). Thus, the *Journal* by Paul of Aleppo contains numerous details on the social, political and religious life of the peoples among which he stayed with his father during a period marked by important historical events in Eastern Europe. The author witnessed many of the events described in his work

and felt free in presenting his opinion and emotional reaction to them; he was in close contact with the religious and political leaders of the Orthodox countries he visited and he participated personally in all the ceremonies, unlike the majority of the foreign travelers of those times. That is why the *Journal* is of special importance as an outstanding historical source.

The complete Arabic text of the “Travels of Macarius” has never been published, due to its large volume (622 pages in the most complete manuscript<sup>1</sup>, each one containing 25 lines with small handwriting). The original was partially edited and translated into several languages – English (Belfour 1833; 1836), French (Radu 1930; 1933; 1949), Russian (Murkos 2005; Petrova 2015), Polish (Kowalska 1986), Romanian (Feodorov 2014). The four manuscripts preserved in Paris, London, St. Petersburg, and Kiev are being currently studied in the framework of the international project for the preparation of the critical edition, supervised by Dr. Ioana Feodorov (Romanian Academy).

Until recently the scholars paid less attention to linguistic issues of Paul of Aleppo’s *Journal* compared to historical, social and geographical aspects of his notes. Unfortunately, the autograph of the manuscript has been lost, and the research of Paul of Aleppo’s language is based on the extant manuscript versions. Having recently completed the collation of the four manuscripts as a part of the academic project mentioned above, we have traced a number of language peculiarities found in the text of the *Journal* that contains unique linguistic material. Let us examine some of them in detail.

### **The language of the epoch and the environment**

It is known that Paul of Aleppo’s *Journal*, as well as a large number of works produced by the Arab Christians till the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was written in a language variety named “Middle Arabic”. The academic community currently recognizes it as a mixed variety of *written* Arabic, irrespective of time, based on the approach developed by G. Mejdell (den Heijer 2012: 8, 22). To be exact, in our case we deal with the Christian Middle Arabic of the Ottoman age – a late stage of Middle Arabic represented in one of its confessional variants. The wide usage of mixed (classical vs. colloquial) forms became a typical feature of the non-Muslim manuscript traditions in the Middle Ages, when Classical Arabic in its canonized form had come to be for most ordinary Arabic speakers an exclusively written, almost foreign language (Holes 1995: 34). According to Hasan Çolak, the fact that Paul of Aleppo composed his recollections in Arabic, his mother tongue, with a number of colloquial elements, was an evidence of his identity as a Syrian, of his local affiliation with Syria which he called بلادنا ‘our country’ (Çolak 2012: 379).

The language variety used by Paul of Aleppo in his *Journal* may be characterized as a semi-classical Middle Arabic, according to the well-known classification proposed by J. Blau (Blau 1966: 50–51). The author, who had received some education available to him as a Patriarch’s son, and not lacking good literary taste, made efforts to follow the standard written norm of Arabic as far as he could learn it within his environment. At the structural

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<sup>1</sup> Manuscrit *Arabe 6016*. Fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

level of his language one can observe three major parallel trends specific to the Christian Arabic manuscript tradition in general:

### 1. Colloquial influence, e.g.<sup>2</sup>:

وفي كل ليلة عشية علي مدار السنة بيدوروا من المغرب علي الدور جميعها بيتسولوا، وهم مترنمين من فم واحد بلحن لديد يجرح القلب، مدايح للعدري

'Every evening at sunset throughout the year they get round all the houses asking for alms, chanting harmoniously hymns to the Virgin with a sweet voice that touches the heart' (fol. 64v).

اعلم ان في هذه بلاد القزق خمر ما فيه، ولكنهم بيشربوا ما الشعير المطبوخ اللديد وهو طيب جداً

'You should know that there is no wine in this country of the Cossacks, but they drink the sweet barley water which is very delicious' (fol. 71v).

واما الاولاد البالغين، فاي من كان وجده منهم كنا نتوسل اليه ونرضيه عنه يا بقرش يا باتنين، وناخذ منه ورقه بخته علامه لكي لا يمسه تاني مره، لانه بعد تتميم الدقتر طلع يفتش مع غلمانه، فاي من وجده كان يمسه، ويجزم اهله واهل محلاته لايش ما كتبوه

'As for the boys who were of age, when [the agha] found any of them, we interceded for him and satisfied the agha with a piastre or two, taking from him a paper signed and sealed by him, so that the youth could not be captured again. Because after finishing the census [the agha] started with his attendants on the search and seized whomever he found, imposing a fine upon his family and the dwellers of the quarter, for not having registered him' (fol. 310r).

Along with the colloquial influence at the level of orthography (e.g. dentals instead of interdentials), grammar (e.g. the Imperfect preformative *b-*; the ending *-īn* instead of *-ūn*), and vocabulary (e.g. 'there is no' ما فيه; 'either... or' يا... يا; 'why' لايش) we can observe in the sentences mentioned the agreement patterns specific to the norm of urban koine.

2. **Hypercorrections**, resulting from the writer's wish to use a more prestigious variety and to avoid stigmatized forms (Hary 2007: 275), i.e. to apply certain rules (mostly of orthography and grammar) of the standard language in an environment where they cannot be used. This phenomenon is a typical feature of Christian Arabic manuscripts, composed or copied by non-Muslims who did not have a good command of the Classical language, but nevertheless tried to demonstrate their linguistic competence, sometimes going too far. The following fragment from the *Journal* demonstrates the mistaken use of the Nominative dual as a case of hypercorrection:

وخرجا الشماسان الثالثان بتاجان البطرکان في صحنان فضه مجلان بمحارم بالطون

<sup>2</sup> Examples cited here are extracted from the Paris manuscript *Arabe 6016*, being the oldest, most complete and most thoroughly copied version. However, taking into account the fact that the autograph of Paul's manuscript was lost, the spelling and grammar variants presented should be attributed to him with care.

*'Then the third pair of deacons came out, holding the mitres of the patriarchs on two silver trays covered with kerchiefs with gold'* (fol. 23r).

3. **Hybrid forms**, where the classical and colloquial norms are combined. In the following examples we encounter the combination of both types of agreement within one structure:

a) combination of typical syntactic structures of colloquial and literary Arabic:

لأنهم بغير منثبات ما بيمكن ان يخرجوا لبرا حسب عادة رهبان هذه البلاد الدايمه  
'... because they may not go outside without mantles, as is the usual custom of the monks in this country' (fol. 96r);

b) mixture of genders for the plural form of the inanimate noun which in Classical Arabic would agree with the Feminine singular:

وحين كرازة الشمساس او الكاهن بيفتح ابواب الهيكل الخشب المدهبه المخرمه، واذا فرغ بيغلقهم، وهم لا يزالوا دايمه  
مغلوقات  
'During the litany the deacon or the priest opens the wooden gilded carved doors of the altar, and after finishing he shuts them, and they remain closed all the time' (fol. 114r);

c) colloquialized agreement (plural form of the verb in preposition) and classical one (dual verbal form in agreement with the noun):

ثم قاموا وصلوا البطرکان علي المايده وبارکا علي الملك  
'Then both Patriarchs rose, prayed over the food, and blessed the Emperor' (fol. 135v);

d) different grammar forms of adjectives for the same plural noun:

وفي هذه الكنيسه اربع صناديق ايقونات سنويات صغار لطاف مفضضات مديه علي اربع قرايات  
'In this church there are four boxes with small elegant silvered and gilded icons for all the year, on four analogions' (fol. 201v).

The independence of Paul of Aleppo's writing style from the Arabic literary tradition made his narrative very lively and original. The author felt free not only in presenting his thoughts and attitudes, but also in choosing the language means for this. As Acad. Ignaty Krachkovsky noticed, the choice of standard vs. colloquial grammar forms / vocabulary could depend on the emotional state of the author. Thus, whenever his narrative became more informal and vivid, he switched to structures that were closer to the spoken norm (Krachkovsky 1955: 267). The mixed forms at all the levels are so interwoven in the text of the *Journal* that it is hard to find sentences that may be characterized as pure standard or pure colloquial.

### **Influence of the literary tradition: the rhymed prose**

It is something of a surprise to encounter, along with the informal manner of expression, a feature of another kind distinguishing the writing style of Paul of Aleppo. It seems that for him the highest ideal of the literary style was represented in the rhymed prose (*sağ*'), as a much-favoured mode of prose expression for the intellectual elite of the Arabic-speaking world. The *Journal* contains numerous samples of attempts to compose rhyming structures. Probably, the Syrian archdeacon was familiar with some Arabic literary texts written in the genre of *maqāmah* and tried to apply this method himself, wishing to write in an elevated style. Thus, the incipit of his manuscript demonstrates his wish to introduce it to the reader by means of the rhymed prose:

الحمد لله الذي زين السماء ورفعها بغير عماد وبسط الارض ووضعها لسكناء العباد وانما ابناء ابينا ادم فصارت امماً  
لا يضبطها قط اعداد، وتكاثروا فيها وعمروا القري والمدن والبلاد  
'Praise to God, who embellished the heaven and raised it without pillars, who spread the earth and laid it as an habitation for His servants; so that the sons of our father Adam have become nations exceeding all number, and have multiplied on it, and populated towns, and cities, and countries' (fol. 1v).

He continues keeping to this method on the first pages of the manuscript, trying to elaborate his literary style in accordance with the written tradition. I. Krachkovsky considered Paul's attempts to decorate his narrative with rhymed structures as producing "sometimes comic, sometimes poor impression" (ibidem), as the author used to apply the rhyme with both colloquial and hypercorrect forms – a combination resulting in the emergence of some artificial constructions, e.g:

وجاء معه الي حلب ودخلها يوم اول شهر حزيران قادماً، سنة ٧١٥٨ لاينا ادماً  
'He came with him to Aleppo and entered it on the 1<sup>st</sup> June, of the year 7158 from [the creation of] our father Adam' (fol. 10r);

والغريه طالتي الي متي متغريون، ولا تسمح ان يموت احداً بنا قيل وفاة هذه الدينون، يا منبع الجود والصلاح ارحمنا  
نحن المساكون  
'How long shall we wander in the strange lands? Permit not that any of us die before the payment of these debts, Thou Source of reaches and good, but have mercy on us poor wretches!' (fol. 118r).

It is evident that Paul subsequently refused to overuse the experiments with the *sağ*' and preferred more natural means of expression. Nevertheless, we encounter in the *Journal* from time to time some rhymed fragments of various length. According to I. Krachkovsky, the author marked in this way some descriptions of solemn character (ibidem). One can notice, however, that in many cases such stylistic switching is explained by the author's emotional attitude or reaction to what he learnt or saw. This trend is especially observed in the parts of the text covering the description of Ukraine and the Tsardom of Muscovy, where the rhymed fragments suddenly appear:

ولماذا اسميهم الملاعين، لانهم ظهروا انجس واشتر من عباد الأصنام المنافقين، في عذابهم للمسيحيين، ليبتلوا علي زعمهم اسم الارثوذكسيين، آدام الله دولة الترك الي ابد الأبد  
 ‘Why do I call them [the Poles] accursed? Because they appeared to be more vile and wicked than the hypocrite worshippers of idols, by their torments of the Christians, thinking to abolish the very name of the Orthodox. May God perpetuate the Empire of the Turks for ever and ever!’ (fol. 64v);

لان الضبط الذي عندهم لو انه عند الروم كان يكون، كانوا بعد للان لملكهم ضابطون، لانهم متي ما نظروا من امر خطأ كبيراً ام صغيراً يكون، للحال يرسلونه لبلاد الظلمات ومع اجناد الغضب له يبسيرون، حيث لا مفاص ولا رجوع ولا خلاص لانهم الي بلاد سيمييريا ينفون، لكي يجمع من هناك سمور كثير مع سنجاب وتعلب اسود وقاقوم، مسيرة ثلاث اعوام ونصف من السنون كاملون، حيث بحر او كيانوس ولا معمور بقا يكون، حسبما اخبرونا بذلك الصادقون المحررون

‘If such strict morals as exist among them [the Muscovites] had existed likewise among the Greeks, they would have retained their rule to the present moment. Whenever they [the Muscovites] catch any person guilty of either a great or a small fault, they send him immediately, under escort, to the land of darkness, whence there is no escape, no return, and no rescue, because they exile him to the land of Siberia, to labour at collecting numerous sable, squirrel, black-fox, and ermine furs, so remote that one has to travel three years and a half to get there, where there is the ocean and no inhabited land, as we were informed by trustworthy and knowledgeable people’ (fol. 95v).

As can be observed, Paul in his free experiments with the *sağ* ‘ did not follow the classical rule of the genre – his rhymed structures sometimes are very long, they are far from syntactic parallelism and contain very different constructions. We notice in most fragments the domination of the rhyme based on the grammar forms (e.g. the ending -*īn* / -*ūn*, as in the examples cited above), since it made it easier to find the morphological correspondence. This method resulted in the emergence of numerous hypercorrections (the ending -*ūn* instead of -*īn*) and even some artificial forms invented by the author (e.g. the above-mentioned *al-masākūn* instead of *al-masākīn*).

### Linguistic curiosity: attitude towards foreign languages

It is obvious that the abundance of foreign words – the feature that has attracted attention of many researchers – distinguishes Paul of Aleppo’s *Journal*, from a linguistic point of view, from many other works by the Arab Christians of that epoch. It has been pointed out that the foreign vocabulary was widely used by Paul of Aleppo in his travel notes to designate the specific realia of the countries of Eastern Europe visited by Patriarch Macarius with his retinue. As proposed by Ioana Feodorov, the foreign lexemes in the *Journal*, from the chronological point of view, may be divided into: a) loanwords known to the author before his travels, being a part of the vocabulary used by the Syrians in the Ottoman Empire; 2) those learnt during the travels and used in the *Journal* for designating specific realia (Feodorov 2011: 198).

The first of these groups is represented mostly by numerous Turkish and Greek loanwords that were well-integrated in the Arabic language of that epoch, especially in

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Middle Arabic of the Arab Christians, e.g. بوغاز 'strait' (Tur. *boğaz*), الای 'procession' (Tur. *alay*), سنجق '(Church) banner' (Tur. *sancak*), یوزباشی 'centurion' (Tur. *yüzbaşı*), بیوردی '(written) order' (Tur. *buyuruldu*), سنار 'border' (Tur. *sınır*), أرخن 'nobleman' (Gr. *άρχων*), غراماتیکوس 'secretary' (Gr. *γραμματικός*), اسپیرینون 'Vespers' (Gr. *Εσπερινός*), آجیازما 'holy water / spring' (Gr. *Αγίασμα*).

It is known that any description of foreign lands contains a certain number of exoticisms – lexemes designating realia specific to other cultures. From this point of view the travel account by Paul of Aleppo is very rich in lexical items from other European languages (Russian, Church Slavonic, Romanian), acquired during his long journey. While reading the *Journal*, one may notice its author's curiosity towards foreign languages lexicon and his endeavor to describe the realia of other cultures by appropriate linguistic means.

The foreign words used in the part of the text that covers Patriarch Macarius's stay in the countries of Eastern Europe should be examined according to such criteria as motivated / non-motivated borrowing. Thus, the foreign terms used by Paul of Aleppo are to be viewed as a part of one of the following categories:

- a) non-equivalent foreign words, designating specific realia of other countries;
- b) foreign terms equivalent to those existing in the recipient language (including the adopted borrowings from Greek and Turkish in the Arabic language of that epoch, along with the Arabic equivalents).

The first group is what may really be called "exoticisms", according to the definition of this term in linguistics. The use of non-equivalent exotic lexemes designating realia specific to other peoples and cultures is considered to be stylistically reasonable. Among such motivated borrowings widely used in the text of the *Journal* we find lexemes belonging to different thematic groups: فورستی 'verst' (old measure of distance) (Rus. *versta*), صانیات / صانیه 'sledge' (Rus. *sani*, Rom. *sanie*), قبیقه 'kopeck' (Rus. *kopejka*), قفاصو 'kvass' (Rus. *kvas*), فویفوزا 'voivode' (Rus. *vojevoda*, Rom. *voievod*), etc.

The foreign lexemes of the second group, having equivalents in the Arabic language of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, may be called "barbarisms" in terms of linguistics. Unlike the loanwords, they are not fully adopted by the recipient language and are used only occasionally with stylistic purposes, for adding a specific colour to a narrative or description (Marinova 2012: 66). The systematic usage of a number of such terms by Paul of Aleppo is of special interest. The examples of lexical pairs (a word in general use with the 17<sup>th</sup> century Syrians vs. a "barbarism") are as follows:

Foreign lexeme	Original	Equivalent term	Translation
فودفودس	Rus. <i>podvody</i>	عرايات	Carts
فیشنا	Rus. <i>višnja</i>	الکراز	Cherry
بیساری	Rus. <i>pisar'</i>	کاتب / غراماتیکوس	Secretary/ Scribe
صوتنیکس	Rus. <i>sotnik</i>	یوزباشی	Centurion
البرکاز	Rus. <i>Prikaz</i>	دیوان	Bureau
فاسیلوبولو	Gr. <i>βασιλόπουλο</i>	ابن الملك	Prince
پنایر	Gr. <i>πανηγύρι</i>	بیع و شرا	Fair
اراخته	Gr. <i>άρχων</i>	اکابر	Noblemen / Boyars



فيليم شاريو	Gr. <i>φίλημα χειριού</i>	تقبيل اليد	Hand-kissing
اليامشيكيه	Rus. <i>jamšiki</i>	المكاريه	Coachmen
بلطات	Rus./ Ukr. <i>boloto</i>	بحرات صاز	Swamps

One may wonder why the author preferred in many cases a foreign word rather than a well-known equivalent, when there was no need for this. It is noticeable that he made effort to demonstrate his knowledge of foreign languages and his acquaintance with the realia of other countries. If we take into consideration the educational activities of both Patriarch Macarius and his son Archdeacon Paul, aimed at the enlightenment of their compatriots – the clergy and the faithful of the Church of Antioch (Panchenko 2016: 445), we may suppose that such lexical diversity is explained by the purpose to convey new knowledge to them – not only through historiographic writing, but using linguistic means as well. It is not ruled out that the author of such a rich and important chronicle tried consciously to introduce new loanwords to the Arabic language variety used within his milieu (Feodorov 2011: 212). This is supported by the fact that a number of foreign terms are repeated systematically in the *Journal*, after being explained by the author once or twice. It seems that his intention was to make such lexemes (designating mostly local realia, administrative and military titles) well-known to the reader.

The examples of the high-frequency foreign terms (learnt by Paul of Aleppo outside the Middle Eastern region) found in the *Journal* are as follows<sup>3</sup>:

Foreign lexeme	Original	Translation	Frequency in the <i>Journal</i>
فورستي	Rus. <i>versta</i>	Verst	160 times
الصابور	Rus. <i>sobor</i>	Cathedral	100 times
صانيه – صانيات	Rus. <i>sani</i> , Rom. <i>sanie</i>	Sledge	76 times
القرطة	Rom. <i>curte</i>	Palace; Court	64 times
ضومنا	Rom. <i>doamnă</i>	Prince's spouse	64 times
كناز / كنازي – كنازيه	Rus. <i>knjaz'</i>	Prince – Princes	63 times
صرق	Rus. <i>sorok</i>	Forty (sable pelts)	45 times
قبيقة	Rus. <i>kopejka</i>	Kopeck	36 times
روبي	Rus. <i>rubl'</i>	Ruble	27 times
قبطور – قباطير	Rom. <i>cuptor</i>	Oven – Ovens	22 times
فودفودس	Rus. <i>podvody</i>	Carts	20 times
باريفوجيكوس – باريفوجيكي	Rus. <i>perevodčik</i> – pl. <i>perevodčiki</i>	(Official) translator	15 times
چولوفيطا / چولوفيطا	Rus. <i>čelobitnaja</i>	Petition	13 times
خالستاو	Rom. <i>heleşteu</i>	Pond	11 times

<sup>3</sup> Our calculations are based on the text of the Paris manuscript *Arabe 6016*, which is currently being prepared as a basis for the future critical edition of the text of the *Journal*. Different orthographic variants were taken into consideration.

Every foreign term, either “exoticism” or “barbarism”, when mentioned in the text for the first time, is explained by the author for the readers, some of them twice or thrice. It seems that Paul made effort to elaborate his methods for presenting the meaning of foreign words or expressions. In most cases, he used to accompany foreign words with a well-known equivalent, translation or explanation, seeking an appropriate stylistic application of them. Some examples extracted from the part of the *Journal* covering Moldavia and Wallachia were mentioned by I. Feodorov (2011: 210–211), who considers Paul’s methods of presentation of non-Arabic words resembling those employed in the classical Arabic dictionaries (ibidem: 209). This issue is worth a further special survey, with due regard for the whole text of the manuscript.

One of the most distinctive features of Paul’s approach to foreign terms is presenting many of them through the prism of the Turkish and Greek languages. While speaking of administrative titles, military ranks, local realia etc., he often prefers the vocabulary of Ottoman Turkish. It is known that a lot of Turkish terms entered the Arabic vocabulary of the Ottoman epoch. Thus, the Russian guardsmen units ‘streltsy’ are exclusively referred to as الينكچاريه ‘Janissaries’, the Tsardom of Muscovy is sometimes called السلطنة ‘sultanate’ (meaning ‘Empire’), the orders issued by the Russian Tsar are named خط شريف ‘hatti-sherif’, etc. Moreover, the Turkish title “efendi” appears even in the official title of the Tsar as conveyed by Paul: نحن، كبير الافنديه، وملك وكبير الكنازيه، اللكسيوس ميخايلوفيتش: *We, Grand Efendi (Prince), Emperor and Grand Duke Alexei Mikhailovich*’ (fol. 252v).

One of the tasks of the future research is to differentiate between the Turkish loanwords adopted by the Arabic of that epoch and Turkish (foreign) lexemes used by Paul for certain purposes, e.g.: ويسمون الحمار بلسانهم كالتركي ايشك: *They [the Muscovites] call the donkey ‘ishak’ like the Turks*’ (fol. 235v); وعمل الملك خارج المدينه كتشك عظيم وعمل بقلم، اي احصا *The Emperor [of Muscovy] set a big pavilion outside the city and made a ‘yoqlama’, i.e. census of his troops*’. In this context H. Çolak came to the interesting conclusion that “Paul’s insistence to prove his knowledge of Turkish in the end might be regarded as a constituent aspect of his identity as an Ottoman subject” (Çolak 2012: 382).

As for the Greek language, its high degree of influence on Paul’s writing style is explained by the fact that his Orthodox identity was “the most dominant one” (ibidem). Many exotic realia are presented and explained by means of the Greek language and worldview. Thus, the Lapps (the Sami people) met by Paul in Moscow are referred to as سكيلوكافالي، اي وجوه الكلاب *skilūkāfālī* (Gr. σκυλοκέφαλοι, “the cynocephali”), i.e. the dog-faced ones; their characteristics as “the savage people” is combined with the equivalent terms in both Turkish and Greek:

ويسمونهم بالتركي بيان اداميسي، وبالرومي اأغريو انثروپوئ وبالعربي اناس بريه وحشيه  
*‘In Turkish they are called ‘yaban adamısı’, in Greek ‘أغريو انثروپوئ’, and in Arabic ‘the savage people’* (fol. 150r).

The audience with the Tsar is mentioned as a ceremony of اي تقبيل اليد، اي فيليما شاريو، *‘fīlīmā šāriyū* (Gr. φίλημα χειρού), i.e. hand-kissing’. Moreover, under the emotional influence, while expressing his admiration for Alexei Mikhailovich, the author applies a combination of Arabic and Greek forms interwoven in rhymed prose:

ما كفاك شغل راسك في مهمات السفر يا اعظم ملوك الارض، وملك روميه الجديده التي هي مصكوفياس، وافطوكراطور ماغاليس كه ميكرييس روسياس، وماغس افنديس باسيس جيس ايفارياس، وانت الآن ما نسيت كير ماكاريوس بطريك انديوشياس  
*'It was not enough for you to be occupied with the preparations for the military campaign, O Greatest of the Kings of the Earth, Emperor of the New Rome which is 'Muškūfīyās' (Gen. 'of Moscow'), 'Aftūkrātūr māgālīs ke mīkrīs Rūsīyās' (Αυτοκράτωρ Μεγάλης και Μικρής Ρωσίας 'Autocrat of Great and Little Russia'), and 'Māgis 'Afanḏīs bāsīs gīs 'Īfārīyās' (Μέγας Αφέντης πάσης γῆς Ἰβηρίας 'Great Lord of all the land of Iberia'), but you would not forget Kyr Macarius, Patriarch 'Andīyūšīyās' (Gen. 'of Antioch')! (fol. 171r).*

The influence of the Greek language is observed at the level of morphology as well. A number of hybrid forms resulting from the combination of non-Arabic (e.g. the Slavic) stems with Greek suffixes are found in the text: صوتتيكوس 'centurion' (Nom. masc. -oc), فودفودس 'carts' (pl. fem. -ec), مدينة نوفوغراديو 'the city of Novgorod' (Gen. masc. -ou). I. Feodorov proposed to see in the "lexical freedom" of Paul's writing a particular feature, lexical and stylistic, of Levantine Arabic in pre-modern times and an evidence of the existence of the cross-cultural role of the Middle Eastern Christians (Feodorov 2016: 244). This interesting phenomenon needs further diachronic research based on a corpus of texts created in the Arab Christian milieu.

Thus, the linguistic peculiarities found in the text of the *Journal* by Paul of Aleppo reflect those specific to the Arab Christian manuscript tradition of the Ottoman epoch (colloquial, archaic and borrowed vocabulary, mixed forms, hybrid constructions, etc.) and may shed light on a number of sociolinguistic aspects in the Arabic language history. At the same time, the author's "multiculturalism", shaped by his Orthodox, Syrian and Ottoman identities (Çolak 2012: 378), is to be taken into consideration, as it may be a key to a closer understanding of the linguistic preferences and the writing style applied in his remarkable account on the travels of his father, Patriarch Macarius, described against a background of the social, political and religious life of those times.

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SOME PECULIARITIES OF PAUL OF ALEPPO'S WRITING STYLE  
AS FOUND IN HIS TRAVEL ACCOUNT

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## THE CHARACTER OF BARZAWAYH IN AN ANONYMOUS SYRIAC TRANSLATION OF IBN AL-MUQAFFA<sup>c</sup>'S *KALĪLA AND DIMNA*

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**Abstract.** This paper is meant to look into the manner in which the character of Barzawayh, the Persian physician who reputedly brought from India and translated into Middle Persian the book whose Arabic version would become, under the title *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, a fixture of high and popular literature in the Arab world and, through subsequent translations, beyond, is portrayed in an anonymous Syriac translation of the Arabic version of the book authored by <sup>c</sup>Abd Allāh b. al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>. We will be looking at the significant changes that the text has incurred in the process of its translation and have a bearing on the way in which the “Syriacized” Barzawayh acquires distinctive features that set him aside from his counterpart in the text of Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>, with the aim of also determining the extent to which these changes can be correlated with stylistic choices or proclivities of the translator or can be traced back to ideological leanings specific to his cultural and/or religious background. **Keywords:** *Arabic literature, Syriac literature, translation, narrative, narrative voice, framed story, character.*

The character of Barzawayh<sup>1</sup>, the Persian physician who etched himself in the memory of generations of readers of *Kalīla and Dimna* as the one who travelled all the way to India to

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the character appears in rather numerous forms in English sources: Burzōy, Burzōē, Borzuy, Borzūya, (which are all attempts at rendering the form of the name in Middle Persian), alongside Barzawayh, the pausal form of *Barzawayhi*, the name's adaptation into Arabic as it is to be found in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>'s version of the book; in the present paper we have chosen to use the Arabic form, since the Arabic version lies at the basis of the Syriac translation we are dealing with and hence, in this particular context, can be treated as if it were the original. As for the form of the name in the Syriac translation, it appears written, without vocalization, as *brzwy*; its vocalization might be *Barzūy/Barzōy*, the option for [a] as the nucleus of the first syllable being justified by the fact that Syriac orthography generally requires that [u] and [o], the vowels suggested by some of the aforementioned forms of the name, be written with the letter *wāw* as a *mater lectionis*, irrespective of syllabic structure or vowel length (an additional argument in favor of this choice is the form of the name in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>'s Arabic version); establishing the quality of the vowel of the second syllable is problematic if we take into account the phonological distinction between the high back rounded [u] and the mid-high back rounded [o], which was originally extant in Syriac and subsequently preserved only in its Eastern variety, whereas the merging of the two phonemes in Western Syriac makes it clear that the pronunciation of the name in this variety would have been *Barzūy* (another possibility would be for the name to be even closer to the form it takes on in Arabic and have the vowel [a] also in its last syllable – *Barz<sup>c</sup>way* – in which case the [o]/[u] dilemma would become moot). If the assumption of William Wright, the editor of the text, about the translation having been achieved in the X<sup>th</sup> or the XI<sup>th</sup> century, is correct, then the question of the East-West dialectal divide, which is supposed to have emerged at a

bring back with him what turned out to be a treasured book of wisdom, features prominently in the version of the book authored by °Abd Allāh b. al-Muqaffa° (VIIIth century CE). He is, after all, the central figure of two of the chapters that make up the introductory part of the book, in which readers are made aware of its purpose, the correct way of approaching it and its trajectory up to the stage where Ibn al-Muqaffa° took it upon him to translate and adapt it. Out of the two chapters that give a measure of consistency to the life and profile of Barzawayh and the part he played in the destiny of the book, the first one, which comes as the second of the four introductory chapters and bears the title *Bāb ba°tat Barzawayh °ilā bilād al-Hind* (“The chapter of Barzawayh’s mission to India”), is an account of his travel to India on the commission of the Sassanid king Ḥosrow I Anūšīrwān (531-579) with the task of retrieving the book for the king’s benefit. The narrative in this chapter starts with the king finding out about the existence of a precious book in India that is reputedly “the origin of all instruction and the beginning of all science” (*°ašlu kulli °adabin wa-ra°su kulli °ilmīn*) and asking his vizier, Buzurḡamihr<sup>2</sup>, to find a man able to bring him that book. Buzurḡamihr then recommends Barzawayh, a man described as a well educated, intelligent physician knowledgeable of the “Indian and Persian” languages, whom the king entrusts with the task of bringing him the book in question, along with other books that his treasury might lack, promising him all the necessary material support<sup>3</sup>. Upon arriving in India, Barzawayh ingratiates himself with the local political and intellectual elite in order to gain access to the coveted writings he was after, and, with the help of an intuitive confidant who

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much earlier stage (cf. Duval 1881: VII-VIII), would not be without relevance in relation to this text, but is not one that we envisage tackling in our paper (concordantly, the transcription of the Syriac passages included herein aims to reflect a unified pronunciation, not bound by a particular dialectal tradition).

- <sup>2</sup> This character has a much less salient profile in the story: his role consists in introducing Barzawayh to the king and, after his successful return from his mission to India, in writing down the story of his life up to this last endeavor. He appears to correspond to a historical figure quite notorious as a high ranking official at the Sassanid court during the VI<sup>th</sup> and VII<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, who is also celebrated as a wise man in a Middle Persian moral treatise containing pieces of advice attributed to him, besides having reputedly had a part to play in the introduction of the chess game to Iran and also invented the board game known as nard (Christensen 1936: 52, 481; 1930: 81, 82). Having listed the Middle Persian, Persian and Arabic writings containing references to Buzurḡamihr and branding them as unreliable because of their contradictions and the conspicuously stereotypical nature of the episodes whose protagonist they make him out to be, the Danish Iranologist Arthur Christensen deems himself justified in concluding that, under this name, he is a mere fictional character, whose historical counterpart is none other than Barzawayh himself, the name *Buzurjmihr* having emerged as an alteration of Barzawayh’s real name, *Burzmihr*, whose hypocoristic form is *Burzōē* (=Barzawayh) and, as this transition between the two names can be better explained based on their Arabicized forms, he assumes that this process took place after the Arab conquest of Iran. The hypothesis of the two characters’ real-life identity is, in his view, reinforced by the way in which different traditions describe their relation with *Kalīla and Dimna*, either having Barzawayh bring the book from India and Buzurḡamihr translate it and write its preface, or having Buzurḡamihr write some parts of it (Christensen 1930: 103-111).
- <sup>3</sup> There are sources that point to an alternative reason for Barzawayh’s trip: according to a partially parallel narrative that was developed in Middle Persian literature and has found its way in Ferdowsi’s *Šāhnāmeḥ*, Barzawayh traveled to India after he had found out about a miraculous plant capable of resurrecting a corpse, only to be told, after his arrival and his failure to make an effective potion out of the plant in question, that the story of the plant was in fact an allegory about a book that could, with the wisdom contained therein, “resurrect” people from the “death” of their ignorance, which sets him on the track of finding it (de Sacy 1816: 22-24; de Blois 1990: 41; Grigore 2010: 201-202).

becomes aware of the true purpose of his journey and happens to be the treasurer of the local king, manages to gain access to *Kalila and Dimna* and other books<sup>4</sup>, which he then proceeds to transcribe and translate into Persian. As soon as he finishes, he sends a message to the king, who summons him back to Persia. Upon his arrival, he is given a very warm welcome and offered great riches as a reward for his success, to which he responds by saying that his wish is to have his memory immortalized by means of a chapter written about him by Buzurġamihr and inserted in the book, before the chapter of the “Lion and the Bull”, a wish the king happily grants him and Buzurġamihr is honored to fulfill (Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 45-60). The second chapter revolving around Barzawayh and the last of the four introductory chapters of the book, titled *Bāb Barzawayh – tarġamat Buzurġamihr bin al-Baḥtakān* (“The Chapter of Barzawayh – the biography [written] by Buzurġamihr b. al-Baḥtakān”), is introduced, by means of the title, as the work of Buzurġamihr, although the story is told from a first-person perspective, the narrative voice belonging to the protagonist himself<sup>5</sup>. Based on the structure of this chapter – mainly its linear narrative and the type of events it covers – it can be described as an autobiographical writing: it starts with informations about the social background of Barzawayh’s family and his upbringing, then moves on to his career, more precisely to how he chose to become a physician and what were the moral tenets he adhered to in practicing his craft. From this point on, the chapter veers away from being an account of strictly objective facts towards dwelling mostly on his spiritual quests, his inner musings about moral and religious matters (and, one might add, the narrative character of the chapter becomes tenuous at best and reduced to mere formal features – if it were not for the verbs in the perfect form punctuating the text, it could very well be read as a lengthy soliloquy; on the other hand, it already exhibits a hallmark of the narrative technique of *Kalīla and Dimna* as a whole, namely the frame story, as it contains a number of fables meant to illustrate the points Barzawayh is trying to make). After settling upon taking on a physician’s career, he initiates a dialogue with his own soul in which he questions it about the true meaning and purpose of one’s life, rebuking it for its choices and its failure to seek the afterlife. He then begins exploring the different paths one can take in one’s attempt to live a wholesome life, and, being taken aback by the divergent opinions people held on these issues, he goes on to look into the stances of different religions, whose representatives do not provide him with satisfactory answers, which makes him decide to stick to the religion of his parents. His soul, however, is still restless and keen to keep on searching, and thus he ends up following a moral code of his own, made up of what he thinks are universally acceptable principles. Then,

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<sup>4</sup> Silvestre de Sacy assumes that, according to the internal evidence provided by the structure and contents of the book of *Kalila and Dimna* itself, it can be conjectured that these other books are, in fact, at the origin of the chapters following the one containing the story of the two jackals (de Sacy 1816: 2-3). Modern scholarship has, in fact, identified additional sources that were supposedly used for the stories contained within the book in its Middle Persian version, besides the primary one, represented by the *Pañcatantra*, and there are also chapters included in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>’s version whose sources are hitherto unknown (Scott Meisami & Starky (eds.) 2003: 423; Grigore 2010: 202, 205). This is, however, far from being a validation of de Sacy’s opinion, which relies heavily on his contention that there are no reasons to question the historical accuracy of the story in its essentials (de Sacy *ibidem*).

<sup>5</sup> This apparent internal contradiction is viewed by Christensen as one of the hints towards Barzawayh and Buzurġamihr being in fact one and the same (Christiansen 1930: 110; v. note 2).



becoming convinced of the futility of worldly goods, he embraces asceticism<sup>6</sup>, although he is apprehensive about his capacity of enduring the hardships of such a life choice. Further meditation upon the matter helps him overcome his hesitations and, even if he worries about the fickleness of his inconstant nature, the long-term advantages of being an ascetic convince him to be steadfast on this path. The arguments in favor of this option are drawn from his medical background, as he launches in a rather detailed account of man's pains and sorrows, either physical or otherwise, in the different stages of his life. He also finds it appropriate to choose afterlife over earthly gains in light of the moral decay of his times, that manifests itself by good and evil, the good and the wicked switching places. In light of all this, he marvels at how people can choose ephemeral pleasures over eternal happiness, and ultimately decides to pursue his path and improve himself as much as he can<sup>7</sup>. The chapter ends with a brief mention of him copying a lot of books and leaving India after having copied the book he had initially set out to find (Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 78-95).

The objective of this paper is to draw a comparison between the character of Barzawayh as it is portrayed in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>'s *Kalīla and Dimna* and its counterpart in an anonymous Syriac translation based on the version of Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>. This Syriac translation<sup>8</sup> was published by the British orientalist William Wright in 1884 under the title *The Book of Kalīlah and Dimnah Translated from Arabic into Syriac*<sup>9</sup>. The sheets of the

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<sup>6</sup> The propensity for such a choice, deemed rather unusual for a purely Zoroastrian milieu, is seen by Christensen as a result of influences exerted by Christianity, Gnosticism, Manichaeism and Mazdakism, as well as a reflection of the impact of Indian thought, of which a "historical" Barzawayh might have been a promoter (Christensen 1936: 426).

<sup>7</sup> The contents of this chapter have given reason for it to be read and interpreted sometimes less as an autobiography than as a polemical text advocating for religious skepticism: al-Bīrūnī (X<sup>th</sup>-XI<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) went as far as to accuse Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> of furthering his own agenda by means of this chapter; in connection with this issue, it has also been discussed whether the authorship of the chapter can be ascribed to Barzawayh or, either entirely or partially, to Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>, with each of the hypotheses being backed up by more or less conclusive arguments, an overview of which is provided by de Blois, who credits the idea that the medically oriented content of the chapter reflects "Indian medical thinking", which would be in tune with the profile of Barzawayh as a physician who traveled to India (de Blois 1990: 25-28). This last point could also be of value for adding to the plausibility of Barzawayh as a historical figure.

<sup>8</sup> This is, in fact, the second translation into Syriac of the book of *Kalīla and Dimna*: another one was made from the Middle Persian version of the book during the VI<sup>th</sup> century CE, apparently by an official of the Nestorian Church named Bōd, and was lost (and, in all likelihood, forgotten by the time the second translation into Syriac was made, even if there appear to be some commonalities between the proper nouns of the two – Wright 1884: xxi-xxii) until it was rediscovered in 1870 in a monastery in Mardin, Turkey, by the German orientalist Gustav Bickell, who also published its first critical edition, together with a German translation, in 1876 (Wright 1894: 123-124; de Blois 1990: 1-2; Grigore 2010: 205). The chapter containing the story of Barzawayh's life is missing from this version, which precludes us from using it in the present paper.

<sup>9</sup> The translation, its discovery by Wright in a manuscript at the library of Trinity College in Dublin and his assessment of what can be inferred about the identity of its author and the time of its completion are also mentioned in a brief account in his *Short History of Syriac Literature*, where this work is included in a series of anonymous translations going back to the X<sup>th</sup> and XI<sup>th</sup> centuries, that "are interesting as showing what the popular literature of the Syrians was, compared with that of their theologians and men of science" (Wright 1894: 239-240) This Syriac version was translated into English by the Scottish missionary and Arabic and Syriac scholar Ion Grant Neville Keith-Falconer (1856-1887), who, according to his own account, embarked on this work at the request of William Wright himself (Keith-

book were read by the German orientalist Theodor Nöldeke, whose emendations were included in an Appendix to the introduction. In the book's preface Wright states that, according to his evaluation of the features of the different hands used throughout the manuscript and other data, it appears that its oldest part was copied in the latter part of the XIII<sup>th</sup> century, with later additions made in different stages up until the XVII<sup>th</sup> century (Wright 1884: viii-ix). As for the translation itself, he places it in the X<sup>th</sup> or XI<sup>th</sup> century, arguing that this can be inferred from lamentations about the state of society that might reflect the realities of that era, and also from the fact that the translator's mastery of Syriac seems to be acquired "in the schools" and that he seems to have been "more familiar with Arabic than with Syriac as the language of daily intercourse" (Wright 1884: xiii-xiv). The religious references and frequent quotations from the Scriptures have determined Wright to assume that the translator must have been a Christian priest, who has added these elements "in the hope of rendering the book still more acceptable and edifying to the public for whom he wrote" (Wright 1884: xi-xiii).

Out of the four introductory chapters, this translation has retained, and placed at the end of the book, only the story of Barzawayh's life, which means that, in our attempt at isolating features of Barzawayh that come as a result of the Syriac translator's contribution and intervention and thus help us set aside a profile of this character distinctive from the one drawn by the pen of Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>, we will have to rely solely on this chapter. After having already listed the main events and developments making up the story of Barzawayh according to Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>'s *Kalīla and Dimna*, we will now only concentrate upon those parts of the story where there is a marked and significant contrast to be noticed between the Arabic "original" and its Syriac translation in this respect.

The first noticeable difference comes at the very beginning of the chapter, and may be connected with the absence, from the Syriac version, of the account of Barzawayh's trip to India, where Buzurġamihr is mentioned as the one who introduced him to the king and later wrote his story. If, in the Arabic version, Buzurġamihr is, as we have already mentioned, the one who, according to the title of the chapter, has written it as an (auto)biography of Barzawayh, the Syriac version does away with the title, having instead a rubric-like paragraph in which we are introduced to Barzawayh as the translator of the book (*tūḅ b<sup>e</sup>-yaḡ 'alāhā kāṭḅīnnan taš<sup>c</sup>īṭā d<sup>e</sup>-brzwy mall<sup>e</sup>pānā hend<sup>e</sup>wāyā, d<sup>e</sup>-hū h<sup>e</sup>wā meḥapp<sup>e</sup>ṭānā w<sup>e</sup>-targem l<sup>e</sup>-hānā k<sup>e</sup>tāḅā men seprā hend<sup>e</sup>wāyā l<sup>e</sup>-seprā 'ara 'bāyā* – "now (lit. "again"), with God's help, we are writing the story of Brzwy<sup>10</sup>, the Indian teacher, who was diligent and translated this book from Indian into Arabic" – Wright 1884: 375), while the chapter itself introduces Barzawayh's speech with the formula *šarrī kaḡ 'āmar* ("he began saying"), thus leaving him as the sole, undisputed author of the chapter. The rubric appears to roughly correspond to the first sentence of the chapter in the Arabic version (*qāla barzawayhi ra'su 'aṭibbā'i fārisa wa-huwa llaḡī tawallā ntisāḡa hāḡā l-kitābi wa-tarġamahu min kutubi l-hindi wa-qad maḡā ḡikru ḡālika min qablu* – "Barzawayhi, the chief physician of Persia, the one who took it upon himself to copy this book and translated it from the books of India – as it has been mentioned before – said" – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991:

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Falconer 1885: vii). For the purpose of this paper, we have used this translation in order to compare with it our own translation of the passages included herein in a few key points, signaled in notes.

<sup>10</sup> See note 1.

78). The comparison between the wording of this passage in the two versions points to (almost) literal correspondences especially at the level of some of the lexical units or phrases (as between *tawallā* and *h<sup>e</sup>wā meḥapp<sup>e</sup>ṭānā* or between *min kutubi l-hindi* and *men seprā hend<sup>e</sup>wāyā*, although in this last case there are significant semantic differences: the Arabic phrase is used to signify the plurality of sources that Barzawayh drew upon in compiling his book, the noun *kitāb* in its plural form being used with its primary meaning (“book”, “writing”), whereas in its Syriac counterpart the word *seprā* (lit. “book”) acquires the meaning of “speech”/“language” (lit. “from the Indian book” = “from the Indian language/speech”)<sup>11</sup>). The modifications incurred by the passage in Syriac can indeed be interpreted as readjustments needed in order to make the contents fit with the disappearance of the first chapter dealing with Barzawayh: the circumstantial *wa-qad maḏā ḏikru ḏālika min qablu* is unsurprisingly left out; as for the character of Barzawayh, it does seem that the changes operated on his profile reflect the fact that a whole portion of his story, namely the one that has him firmly anchored in an unmistakably Persian setting, in a specific moment of the history of the Sassanid dynasty, has simply vanished: this is, most likely, why he is no longer the “chief physician of Persia”, but “the Indian teacher”, and also why the translation work that is ascribed to him involves the “Indian” and the “Arabic” languages. Whether these changes are related to the absence of the aforementioned chapter or not, it is quite conspicuous that their common denominator is an effort to downplay the Persianness of the character, to circumvent, as much as possible, the Persian stage of his story and also of the book’s trajectory<sup>12</sup>.

The family of Barzawayh is, in the Arabic version, a part of the elite of Persian society: *’abī kāna mina l-muqātilati wa-kānat ’ummī min ’uḏamā’i buyūti z-zamāzimati* (“my father belonged to the warrior class and my mother was one of the prominent members of the houses of the *zamāzima*”<sup>13</sup>) – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 78). When looking into the Syriac version of this sequence, we can notice that the differences revolve around the

<sup>11</sup> Cf. R. Payne-Smith 1879: 2708; J. Payne-Smith 1903: 387.

<sup>12</sup> This is not to say that the translator is thorough in his “indianization” of Barzawayh: at the end of the chapter, Barzawayh, in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>’s version, “leave[s] India” (*wa-nšarāftu min bilādi l-hindi* – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 95), and in the Syriac translation he “return[s] from India to [his] own country” (*wa-p<sup>e</sup>nēt men hendū l-aṭrā ḏil(y)*) – Wright 1884: 406).

<sup>13</sup> This internal plural on the pattern *fa<sup>c</sup>ālila*, usually associated with nouns belonging to the category of rational (*’āqil*) beings, appears to be, based on negative evidence from such lexicographical works as Ibn Manẓūr’s *Lisān al-’arab* or Edward Lane’s *Arabic-English Lexicon*, in which no particular singular noun corresponding to it is to be found and neither is the plural form itself attested – a *plurale tantum* (we wouldn’t venture, however, and go as far as to say it is also a *hapax legomenon*, based on this evidence alone). The closest we can get to its supposed meaning in the present context in *Lisān al-’arab* is by means of one of the definitions provided for the verbal noun *zamzama*, whose general meaning is given as “a barely discernible muffled sound” (*šawṭun ḥaṣṭiyun lā yakādu yuḥamu*): *kalāmu l-maḡūsi ’inda ’aklihim* (“the speech of the Magi/Zoroastrians when they eat”) (Ibn Manẓūr s.a.: 1866); if we admit that there must be a semantic connection between *zamāzima* and this particular meaning of *zamzama*, then we might assume that the term designates a class of Zoroastrian religious ministers entrusted with specific ritual duties, and maybe, by extension, the priestly class in general. De Sacy adopts this last, broader interpretation, translating the sentence in question “ma mère [était] d’une des principales familles des Mages”, relying apparently on the same lexicographical data as the ones provided by *Lisān al-’arab*, as he specifies in a note that *zamāzima* « signifie proprement ceux qui parlent bas, entre les dents, et sans, pour ainsi dire, remuer les lèvres » (de Sacy 1816: 26).

way in which the translator has understood and rendered the two key terms designating the social/professional classes of Barzawayh's parents, namely *muqātīla* and *zamāzima*: 'abā dīl(y) h<sup>e</sup>wā men p<sup>e</sup>rīšē w-emmā dīl(y) men rēšē 'aššīnē da-m<sup>e</sup>zamz<sup>e</sup>mānē ("my father belonged to [the class of] men of distinction and my mother was from among the powerful chieftains of the m<sup>e</sup>zamz<sup>e</sup>mānē" – Wright 1884: 375). The equivalent of *muqātīla* ("fighters", "warriors") – p<sup>e</sup>rīšē – is primarily a passive participle (here in the emphatic state plural form) of the verb p<sup>e</sup>raš ("to separate", "to set apart", "to distinguish") and is also lexicalized with the meanings of "distinguished", "special", "noble" (coincidentally, this last meaning is exemplified in the dictionary of J. Payne Smith with no other sentence than the one taken from this Syriac translation of *Kalīla and Dimna*, translated as "my father was a noble" – J. Payne Smith 1903: 460), besides being the term currently used in the Gospels to designate the Pharisees (R. Payne Smith 1879: 3302). There are two possible explanations for this equivalence. The first and, maybe, also the more plausible one, is that this is nothing more than a mistake on the part of the copyist, because the noun p<sup>e</sup>rīšē is suspiciously close in form and, at least as importantly, in orthography to another noun that could have served as a semantically very close equivalent of *muqātīla*, parrāšē ("horsemen", "mounted soldiers", etymologically related to the Arabic noun *fāris* bearing the same meaning). The consonantal, unvocalized forms of the two nouns in writing, p<sup>r</sup>yš' and, respectively, p<sup>r</sup>s' are only differentiated by the letter yōd coming before the šīn in the former, which makes it highly likely that this is nothing more than a copyist's error. This departure from the Arabic original could thus be traced back not to an intervention of the translator himself, but to a later change, inconsequential for the discussion about the specificities of a "Syriac" Barzawayh (if, however, we take into account the perspective of the readership that has relied on the Syriac text in this form for becoming acquainted with his story, we must admit that, irrespective of the origin of this reading, it did have a part to play in shaping the image of Barzawayh for that particular readership). The second and, admittedly, less likely explanation would be that this change was operated by the translator himself, which raises the question of what the goal behind such an initiative might be. There are no reasons to think that there would have been, on his part, any other intention than to boost Barzawayh's credentials, therefore it must be assumed that he deemed having a military background somewhat less appealing than having a father belonging to a category he chose to designate with the noun p<sup>e</sup>rīšā. Given that the features that make this character stand out the most are related to his intellectual prowess, his intrepidity in the quest for knowledge, and that a modification of his background meant to further improve his image would probably not go too far away from these lines, it may be that nobility by birth, in its narrowest sense, is not necessarily the quality that the translator had in mind for his father, but rather a more loosely definable attribute, such as being a member of moral or intellectual elites (which is why we have chosen to translate p<sup>e</sup>rīšē with a formula reflecting a relatively simpler, less complex sememe, that leaves room for a vaguer understanding of the noun in this context than the one suggested by the translation of J. Payne Smith)<sup>14</sup>. The translator's take on the family of Barzawayh's mother reflects a considerable degree of uncertainty about the exact meaning of the term *zamāzima*. This is the most probable reason

<sup>14</sup> Keith-Falconer seems to have opted for a similarly vague, convenient solution: "my father belonged to a distinguished race" (Keith-Falconer 1885: 248).

why he has chosen the safest, least venturesome way of translating it, by resorting to the closest he could get to a literal rendition – *m<sup>e</sup>zamz<sup>e</sup>mānē*, an active participle of the verb *zamzem* (“to make resound”, “to make a bubbling noise”), a reduplicated derivate of the verb *zam* (“to sound”, “to resound”, “to buzz”), substantivized as a *nomen agentis*, which means that whatever assumptions we made concerning the meaning of the Arabic term can also be made about its Syriac equivalent. If there is a difference to be found between them, it is restricted to the field of morphology (although it has a bearing on the semantic field as well) – the *nomen agentis* in Syriac reflects somewhat more overtly the fact that it is supposed to designate a category of professionals, of people that are expected to perform a certain duty<sup>15</sup>.

The upbringing of Barzawayh is described in the Arabic version of *Kalīla and Dimna* in nothing but bright colors: he was the favorite son of his parents, had a happy childhood and a good education. The Syriac translation, while reflecting quite accurately the factual elements of this part of the narrative on the whole, initiates what will prove to be a read thread of its treatment of the story in general: emphasizing, at every juncture, God’s agency, making it clear, in explicit terms, that God has a part to play in the progression of the events, whether they are directly connected to Barzawayh’s life or pertain to the greater scheme of things. The impact this intervention has on the text is twofold, as it reshapes the narrative itself and, since the narrative voice belongs to Barzawayh, makes him appear closer to the mindset of a man interested in spiritual matters (as he already is, in many ways, in the Arabic version) according to the expectations of a readership steeped in the cultural and religious heritage of the Syriac-speaking (or at least reading, by the time the translation was made) world. The first instance of such a change is illustrative of the same approach that was put to work in the very first paragraph of the chapter – the literal rendition of one particular term of the original, within a context that requires a different interpretation of that term – if, in the first case, we could see how the equivalent *seprā* for the Arabic *kutub* acquires a different meaning than the primary, literal one it is used to designate, in this case the pivotal Arabic term, whose literal rendition serves as a pretext for inserting a reference to God, is *nī<sup>c</sup>ma* (“benefit”, “favor”, “grace”, “kindness” etc.): *wa-kāna manša’ī fī nī<sup>c</sup>matin kāmilatin, wa-kuntu ’akrama waladi ’abawayya <sup>c</sup>alayhimā*, (“my upbringing went on in [a state of] complete wellbeing, and I was, for my parents, the most honored of their children” – Ibn al-Muqaffac 1991: 78). The meaning attached to this term is very straightforwardly deductible from the context, which emphasizes the comfort that surrounded Barzawayh in growing up. Its literal equivalent in Syriac, however, *ṭaybūtā*, being modified by the genitival attribute *d-alāhā* (“of God”), is clearly used with the meaning of “grace”: *w<sup>e</sup>-men š<sup>e</sup>p<sup>r</sup>ūt ṭaybūtēh d-alāhā da-<sup>ce</sup>lay, h<sup>e</sup>wēt m<sup>e</sup>yaqqar bēth ’abāhay men kull<sup>e</sup>hōn b<sup>e</sup>nayyā dīlhōn* (“by the abundance of God’s grace upon me, I was held in higher esteem in the house of my parents than all their [other] sons” – Wright 1884: 375).

<sup>15</sup> The term *m<sup>e</sup>zamz<sup>e</sup>mānē* is actually listed in Brockelmann’s *Lexicon Syriacum* and translated as *magi*, but the reference to de Sacy’s edition of the Arabic text of *Kalīla wa-Dimna* makes it clear that Brockelmann was influenced by de Sacy’s understanding of *zamāzima* (Brockelmann 1928: 199; v. note 12). The same rendition can be found in Keith-Falconer translation as well: “my mother was descended from the mighty chiefs of the Magi” (Keith-Falconer 1885: 248).

The second instance of inserting a reference to God is more or less in line with the first one – it is still a recognition by Barzawayh of the part God had to play in his upbringing, but this time not as a narrator but as a character within the story. The treatment of the Arabic original in this case is much less restrained, involving additions and expansions that make the Syriac translation seem closer to a rewriting: *fa-lammā ḥadiqtu l-kitābata šakartu 'abawayya wa-nažartu fī l-'ilmi fa-kāna 'awwala mā btada 'tu bihi wa-ḥaraštu 'alayhi 'ilmu ṭ-ṭibbi* (“when I had mastered writing, I thanked my parents, looked into science and the first thing that I began [practicing] and was interested in was the science of medicine” – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 78); *w<sup>e</sup>-kaḍ yelpēt kulmeddem 'a(y)k<sup>e</sup> 'yādā d<sup>e</sup>-nāmōsan, qabb<sup>e</sup>lēt taybūtēh d-alāhā wa-d<sup>e</sup>-mawl<sup>e</sup> dānay, 'al yutrānē d<sup>e</sup>-qeṭpēt men rabbānē w<sup>e</sup>-sukkālā da-q<sup>e</sup>nēt men mall<sup>e</sup>pānē, w<sup>e</sup>-kaḍ hārēt b<sup>e</sup>-tē'ōrīs kull<sup>e</sup>hēn, w<sup>e</sup>-behnēt l-ummānwātā w<sup>e</sup>-teqlēt be-hawnā da-q<sup>e</sup>bīc<sup>e</sup> ba-k<sup>e</sup>yānā l<sup>e</sup>-kull<sup>e</sup>hōn su'rānē, h<sup>e</sup>wāt lī h<sup>e</sup>pītūtā 'al yulpānē d-āsūtā w<sup>e</sup>-yēspēt dīlāh b<sup>e</sup>-kullēh ḥayl(y)* (“when I had learned everything in accordance with the custom of our law, I thanked God and my parents for the benefits I had reaped from [my] masters and the understanding that I acquired from [my] teachers, and after having looked into all theories, examined all crafts and weighed, with the mind that has been planted inside [my] being, all deeds, I was eager for the teachings of medicine and became invested in it with all my power” – Wright 1884: 375). The modification involving God is telling in that he is inserted before Barzawayh’s parents and, therefore, given priority over them as an entity that deserves gratitude for the care and education he received. The expansions exhibited by this passage are also revealing from other points of view: it appears that the mere mention of “writing” as the kind of instruction received by Barzawayh seemed utterly unsatisfactory for the translator, therefore he had him learn “everything in accordance with the custom of [his] law”; but, besides being an attempt to make Barzawayh appear to have a more sophisticated intellectual background, this expansion could also be interpreted as a reference to the religious otherness of the character only thinly, almost clumsily disguised as a part of his own speech, being in reality a nod of the translator towards his Christian readership – having Barzawayh talk about “his law” makes little sense unless he is supposed to address an audience having a different religious affiliation than his own. As for the other expansions contained within this paragraph, they can be ascribed to stylistic choices reflecting a propensity for a certain degree of verbosity, prolixity and for making explicit many elements of the content that might otherwise remain latent, that resonates with the predominant literary taste of Syriac writers and their audiences<sup>16</sup>. The same concern for acknowledging the plurality of religions (and, thus, leaving the door open for Barzawayh to become, as a non-Christian, more palatable for a Christian audience) can be noticed in an addition made by the Syriac translator dealing with the incentives that determined Barzawayh to become a physician: *w<sup>e</sup>-hāydēn henyōkā*

<sup>16</sup> In addressing the objections one might raise about the quality of the writings of Ephrem the Syrian (IV<sup>th</sup> century CE), Rubens Duval has this to say about some of the most prominent of the general features of literary writing in Syriac: « quant à la prolixité de saint Éphrem que nous trouvons parfois fastidieuse, on ne peut la condamner sans tenir compte du goût des Syriens qui aimaient les répétitions et les développements de la même pensée, et voyaient des qualités là où nous trouvons des défauts; ces défauts, nous les rencontrons les mêmes non seulement chez les poètes les plus estimés, Isaac d’Antioche, Narsès, Jacques de Saroug, mais aussi chez les prosateurs de la meilleure époque, Aphraate et Philoxène de Mabboug » (Duval 1900: 19-20).

*m<sup>e</sup>dabb<sup>e</sup>rānāh d-elpan qarr<sup>e</sup>ban l<sup>e</sup>-nīšā d-āsyūtā kaḏ 'eškahtāh d<sup>e</sup>-saggī m<sup>e</sup>qall<sup>e</sup>sā bêt pārōšē w<sup>e</sup>-ḥakkīmē, w<sup>e</sup>-lā 'ešk<sup>e</sup>hēt h<sup>e</sup>dā men tawd<sup>e</sup>yātā da-m<sup>e</sup>ḡann<sup>e</sup>yā lāh* (“and then the captain, the leader of our ship, drew us closer to the goal of [practicing] medicine, as I had found it to be given much praise among discerning and wise men, and had not found any of the religions blaming it” – Wright 1884: 376). This addition is stylistically reminiscent of the previous passage, particularly by the florid use of metaphors to designate God, the “captain” and the “leader” of his “ship”. Having Barzawayh express his concern for making sure that medicine is in accordance with the teachings of all the religions he could know about can also be interpreted as an expansion and an anticipation of Barzoy’s religious quest that is to come later in the chapter, in its Syriac version as well as in its Arabic one. Based on this interpretation, this addition can be viewed as yet another instance of the tendency of further fleshing out and developing trends that are not necessarily absent in the Arabic version, but whose presence can nevertheless be deemed more virtual than actual.

The concern for making Barzawayh appear even godlier than he already is in the Arabic version becomes manifest not only by his expressions of gratitude towards God, but also by means of enhancing the virtues he appears to be endowed with. In describing his take on the moral aspects of practicing medicine, his preoccupation revolves, in the Arabic version, first and foremost around the wellbeing of his patients, and the ultimate goal in doing this is the pursuit of the afterlife. He is determined to help them in any way he can, and this is why, if he is not able to personally treat them, he still gives them prescriptions and provides them with drugs, without expecting material gains in return: *wa-man lam 'aqdir 'alā l-qiyāmi 'alayhi waṣaftu lahu mā yuṣliḥu wa-'a'taytuhu mina d-dawā'i mā yu'ālaḡu bihi wa-lam 'urid mimman fa'altu mā'ahu dālīka ḡazā'an wa-lā mukāfa'atan* (“to the one that I was unable to take care of I would prescribe what is beneficial and give the medicine required for his treatment, and I did not want from the one that I treated in this manner any reward or compensation” – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 79-80). The same holds true for the character in the Syriac version, but this time, in accordance with the tendencies already noticeable in the previously signaled passages, there is an even stronger emphasis on the virtuous behavior of Barzawayh towards his patients, that goes hand in hand with an expansion of the passage at the level of linguistic expression: *w<sup>e</sup>-l-aynā d<sup>e</sup>-lā 'ešk<sup>e</sup>hēt d-eššamm<sup>e</sup>šw(hy) paqq<sup>e</sup>dēt puqqādā w<sup>e</sup>-yehbēt 'ešābā, w<sup>e</sup>-yehbēt naqqātā la-š<sup>e</sup>rīkē 'am sammānē w<sup>e</sup>-laa teb<sup>e</sup>ēt men ḥaḏ menn<sup>e</sup>hōn 'agrā d<sup>e</sup>-meḥ<sup>e</sup>zē, w<sup>e</sup>-lā qullāsā w<sup>e</sup>-qubbāl taybūtā, 'ellā men ḥaḏ haw d<sup>e</sup>-yāheb ba-š<sup>e</sup>pī'ū w<sup>e</sup>-pāra<sup>c</sup> ḥaḏ ba-m<sup>e</sup>'ā 'a(y)k šuwdāyēh lā metdag<sup>e</sup>lānā* (“to the one that I was unable to serve I would prescribe the [required] recipe and give the [necessary] remedy, and I would give to the ones in need [money to cover] expenses and drugs, and I did not seek from any of them a visible reward, or praise or gratitude, except from the one that gives in abundance and pays back a hundredfold, according to his undeniable promise” – Wright 1884: 378). This is how in the Syriac version he appears even more charitable, by not only providing patients with recipes and treatments, but also covering the expenses of the needy. The lack of interest for being compensated for his efforts and good deeds in the Arabic version is matched, in the Syriac translation, with an eagerness for being rewarded by God, designated here with a periphrastic formula meant to convey God’s generosity towards those who fulfill his

commands<sup>17</sup>. The same treatment of the Arabic original can be seen, in both form and content, when Barzawayh talks about his dealings with his fellow physicians, towards whom, in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>'s version, he would not feel any kind of jealousy for earthly reasons: *wa-lam 'aḡbiṭ 'aḡadan min nuḡarā'ī llaḡīna hum dūnī fī l-<sup>c</sup>ilmi wa-fawqī fī l-ḡāhi wa-l-māli wa-ḡayrihimā mimmā lā ya'ūdu bi-ḡalāḡin wa-lā ḡusni sīratin qawlan wa-lā 'amalan* (“I did not envy anyone of my peers that were below me in science and above me in status and wealth, or in other things that do not bring back rectitude and good behavior in speech and in deed” – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 80). In the Syriac translation, Barzawayh exhibits the same disinterest for comparing himself with other physicians based on worldly criteria but, in yet another instance of actualizing the latent, potential meanings of the Arabic text in order to further brighten his profile, he does display a competitive spirit when it comes to moral rectitude, envying them only if they surpass him in moral qualities: *w<sup>e</sup>-lā ḡesmēt 'āplā qall<sup>e</sup>sēt l-aynā da-b<sup>e</sup>-hādē 'ummānūtā pālah, lā ba-d<sup>e</sup>-dāmē lī w<sup>e</sup>-lā b<sup>e</sup>-haw da-m<sup>e</sup>yattar menn(y) wa-m<sup>e</sup>ḡartaḡ b<sup>e</sup>-neḡsē wa-b<sup>e</sup>-ḡenyānē, 'ellā b<sup>e</sup>-haw da-q<sup>e</sup>nē m<sup>e</sup>yatt<sup>e</sup>rūtā wa-m<sup>e</sup>ḡabbat b<sup>e</sup>-ḡappīrūt z<sup>e</sup>nayyā, b<sup>e</sup>-ḡubbārē luḡdam, w<sup>e</sup>-ḡen b<sup>e</sup>-maml<sup>e</sup>lā d<sup>e</sup>-pūmā...* (“I did not envy or praise someone who worked in this craft, neither because he resembled me nor because he was superior to me and opulent in wealth and possessions, but because he had acquired virtue and was adorned with good habits, first in behavior and then in the speech of the mouth” – Wright 1884: 378).

The speech of Barzawayh becomes increasingly Christianized and more and more frequently interspersed with biblical references and expressions, to the point where the earlier recognition of the specificity of his religious background is made to appear almost completely neutralized or irrelevant. In the long soliloquies in which he argues with his own soul about the right path, the arguments in favor of choosing the pursuit of spiritual gains and, ultimately, the afterlife are oftentimes molded into the shape of samples of Christian sermons. In the following, we will provide a few examples that can bear witness to this particular factor that contributes to the emergence of a distinctively “Christianized” and “Syriacized” Barzawayh. A telling example of this trend is one of the injunctions for his soul to choose the permanent, lasting benefits that come as a result of a virtuous behavior:

*w<sup>e</sup>-ḡanneš(y) l-aylên da-m<sup>e</sup>ḡatt<sup>e</sup>rān wa-m<sup>e</sup>ḡadd<sup>e</sup>yān; ḡallên m<sup>e</sup>ḡass<sup>e</sup>mān lēḡ(y) b<sup>e</sup>-ḡartā, w<sup>e</sup>-ḡennên m<sup>e</sup>zakk<sup>e</sup>yān lēḡ(y) q<sup>e</sup>dām dayyānā, w<sup>e</sup>-ḡennên m<sup>e</sup>ḡawz<sup>e</sup>ḡān lēḡ(y) men neḡdē d<sup>e</sup>-ḡēḡannā, w<sup>e</sup>-ḡennên m<sup>e</sup>ḡūmān lēḡ(y) men ḡabbā yammīnāyā, w<sup>e</sup>-ḡennên pārḡān lēḡ(y) men nūrā d<sup>e</sup>-lā dā<sup>e</sup>kā* (“choose those things that are durable and provide joy; those will make you rejoice in the end, and they are the ones that will justify you before the judge, save you from the torments of Gehenna, make you stand at the right side and deliver you from the inextinguishable fire” – Wright 1884: 379)<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> God's promise for those who seek to do his will of paying them back a hundredfold is most likely a reference to biblical passages where Jesus promises those who choose to forsake worldly attachments and riches in order to follow him that they will be compensated a hundredfold (Mat. 19: 28-29; Mk. 10: 29-30).

<sup>18</sup> The translation of this fragment (which we have not used here) is included, alongside that of a few others, by Wright in his introduction as proof that the translator is a Christian priest from the X<sup>th</sup> or XI<sup>th</sup> centuries (Wright 1884: xiii).



This passage, having no particular equivalent in the Arabic version, exhibits formal characteristics that are all the more easily traceable to the translator's own choices – in this case, a marked redundancy, sustained by a series of semantically close clauses reunited by a loose syntactic parallelism detectable mainly at their beginning and reinforced by an anaphora, namely the repetition of the IIIrd person feminine plural personal pronoun *hennên* (this is not to say that parallelism is absent from the Arabic version, which has its own share of rhetoric devices of this kind). The biblically inspired vocabulary is detectable in almost all the clauses making up the fragment: *ḥartā* (“extremity”, “latter end”, “end”) can designate, in the Syriac Bible, the end of one's life (Num. 23: 10) or the ultimate outcome of one's deeds and existence (Rom. 6: 22); *dayyānā* (“judge”) can be used in reference to God (Ps. 94: 2; 1 Cor. 4:4; James 4: 12); the phrase *gabbā yammīnāyā* (“right side”) is reminiscent of the instances when the name *yammīnā* (“right hand”) is used in formulas that have Jesus sit “at the right hand” (cal *yammīnā* or men *yammīnā*) of God (Mk. 14: 62; Lk. 22: 69; Rom. 8: 34; Eph. 1: 20; Hebr. 1: 3) and shares with them the same conceptual basis that associates the right hand or side with favorability and auspiciousness; the phrase *nūrā de-lā dāckā* (“inextinguishable fire”) is used in the Gospels to designate eternal damnation (Mat. 3: 12; Lk. 3: 17).

The taste for symmetry is apparent in another expansion, carrying a message very similar to that of the previous one, in which antithesis is the prevalent relation linking its constituents: ...*w<sup>e</sup>-tē'špīn d<sup>e</sup>-hālīn 'ābōryātā m<sup>e</sup>hīlātā, w<sup>e</sup>-tawb<sup>e</sup> dīn la-m<sup>ec</sup>all<sup>e</sup>yātā da-m<sup>e</sup>katt<sup>r</sup>rān w<sup>e</sup>-lā pātrān, wa-m<sup>e</sup>qaww<sup>e</sup>yān w<sup>e</sup>-lā 'ābrān* (“...you are interested in transient and scanty things, and do away with exalted things, that are durable and do not go away, that are persistent and do not vanish” – Wright 1884: 382).

The “Christianized” Barzawayh comes even more unabashedly to the fore in the Syriac version as he decides, in the last stages of his spiritual quest, to go beyond the religion of his forefathers and follow a moral code that seems acceptable, in his view, to the follower of any religion and, unlike his counterpart in the Arabic version, who does not provide us with a particular reason for his decision other than his soul's eagerness for further inquiring about different religions (Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 84), he states that the reason for his decision is the idolatrous nature of his ancestral religion:

*hāydēn yeldat lī maḥšabtā dīl(y) ma'kk<sup>e</sup>sānūtā kaḍ 'āmrā: d<sup>e</sup>-'ō šānyā, hālīn d-abāhayhōn sāgday p<sup>e</sup>takrē (h)waw ḥarrāšē l<sup>e</sup>-mē'mar w<sup>e</sup>-qāšōmē, mānā yutrānā q<sup>e</sup>ṭap(w) l<sup>e</sup>-napš<sup>e</sup>hōn d<sup>e</sup>-nerdōn b<sup>e</sup>nayhōn bātarhōn? lā gēhannā d<sup>e</sup>-nūrā m<sup>e</sup>ṭayy<sup>e</sup>bīn l<sup>e</sup>-mē'raṭ h<sup>e</sup>lāp k<sup>e</sup>pūrīhōn d<sup>e</sup>-b-alāhā?* (“then my mind generated a reprimand for me, saying: ‘You fool, what benefits did those whose fathers were idol worshippers, sorcerers and soothsayers reap for themselves from their sons following in their footsteps? Are they not set for inheriting the Gehenna of fire for their rejection of God?’” – Wright 1884: 387).

Barzawayh's Christianization is reinforced when, recollecting how he had resolved to work on improving himself by trying to lead a virtuous existence, he brings forth arguments explicitly framed as quotations from the Christian scriptures: ...*wa-s<sup>e</sup>leq<sup>c</sup> al bāl(y) hāy d-amīrā l<sup>e</sup>-mell<sup>e</sup>tā 'alāhā, d<sup>e</sup>-kaḍ kulmeddem d<sup>e</sup>-ṭāb te<sup>c</sup>b<sup>e</sup>dūn, 'emar(w) d<sup>e</sup>-'abdē baṭṭīlē h<sup>e</sup>nan* (“that which was said by the Word God came to my mind: ‘when you do anything good, say ‘we are unprofitable servants’” – Wright 1884: 389). Jesus is

designated here with the unmistakably Christian title “the Word God” (*mell<sup>e</sup>tā ’alāhā*), and the saying referred to is taken from a sermon of Jesus to the apostles whereby he urges them to do what is required of them as a duty rather than as a favor (Luke 17: 5-10). More precisely, it is recognizable as a part of Luke 17: 10, the final verse of the sermon (*hākannā ’āp ’a(n)tōn, mā da-<sup>ce</sup>ḅadtōn kull<sup>e</sup>hēn ’aylēn da-ḅqīdān l<sup>e</sup>kōn, ’emar(w) d<sup>e</sup>-<sup>c</sup>abdē h<sup>e</sup>nan baḫḫilē, d<sup>e</sup>-meddem d<sup>e</sup>-ḫayyāḫīn (h)wayn l<sup>e</sup>-me<sup>c</sup>baḫ<sup>c</sup>baḫn* – “so likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘we are unprofitable servants, we have done what was our duty to do’”). The first part of the quotation was subjected to a quite substantial rephrasing (*kaḫ kulmeddem d<sup>e</sup>-ḫāḅ te<sup>c</sup>b<sup>e</sup>dūn*, “when you do anything good”, instead of *mā da-<sup>ce</sup>ḅadtōn kull<sup>e</sup>hēn ’aylēn da-ḅqīdān l<sup>e</sup>kōn*, “when you have done all those things which you are commanded”), most likely because the context requires an explicit reference to “good” behavior, whereas the second part is almost identical to the form it has in the current version of the Peshitta (*’emar(w) d<sup>e</sup>-<sup>c</sup>abdē baḫḫilē h<sup>e</sup>nan* – “say ‘we are unprofitable servants’”), except for the enclitically used 1<sup>st</sup> person plural independent pronoun *h<sup>e</sup>nan*, which here comes after the phrase *’abdē baḫḫilē* (“unprofitable servants”), instead of being inserted after its head. The second quotation is also introduced with a formula marking it as such, and it is taken from Mat. 22: 13, which is the penultimate verse of the parable of the wedding feast (Mat. 22: 1-14), at the end of which a guest who has inappropriate clothing is thrown out, “into outer darkness”, into a place filled with “weeping and gnashing of teeth”: *w<sup>e</sup>-dehlēḫ men hāy d-amīrā, d-asor(w) ’īdaw(hy) w<sup>e</sup>-reḡlaw(hy) w-app<sup>e</sup>qū(h)y l<sup>e</sup>-ḫeššōkā barrāyā* (“I feared that which was said: ‘bind his hands and his feet and cast him into outer darkness’” – Wright 1884: 389). The “weeping and gnashing of teeth” (in Syriac *beḫyā w<sup>e</sup>-ḫurrāq šennē*), a formula used seven times in the Gospels to designate the torments of Hell (Mat. 8: 12; 13: 42, 50; 22: 13; 24: 51; 25: 30; Lk. 13: 28), while absent here, is instead present in Barzawayh’s speech when, in the context of adducing the sorrowful state of affairs of his times as yet another argument for giving priority to the afterlife, he mentions the torments awaiting those who make the opposite choice (Wright 1884: 401), and also, slightly modified (*beḫyā ’amīnā w<sup>e</sup>-ḫurrāq šennē* – “perpetual weeping and gnashing of teeth”), when he describes how he faced his fears and apprehensions about being able to successfully face the hardships of asceticism (Wright 1884: 397). In the same context, he talks about the “narrow path” of asceticism, using another formula inspired by the Gospels: *w<sup>e</sup>- hāydēn šepṛat b<sup>e</sup>-<sup>c</sup>aynay n<sup>e</sup>zīrūtā w<sup>e</sup>-besmaḫ lī<sup>c</sup>anwāyūtā, w-āpen qaḫḫīnā ’urḫāh w<sup>e</sup>-<sup>c</sup>asqā mardītā dīlāh* (“then asceticism was pleasing in my sight and continence pleased me, even if its path is narrow and its journey is difficult” – Wright 1884: 398). The wording is admittedly not exactly identical to the one of the Peshitta, where the adjective *qaḫḫīn* (“narrow”), used here (*qaḫḫīnā ’urḫāh* – lit. “narrow is its path”), is used as a predicate for *tar<sup>c</sup>ā* (gate), but *’urḫā* (“way”, “path”) is in very close proximity to them as the subject of the immediately following sentence (*’ol(w) b<sup>e</sup>-tar<sup>c</sup>ā ’alīšā... mā qaḫḫīn tar<sup>c</sup>ā w-’alīšā ’urḫā d<sup>e</sup>-mawb<sup>e</sup>lā l<sup>e</sup>-ḫayyē... – “enter by the narrow gate... how narrow is the gate and strait the way which leads to life...” – Mat. 7: 13, 14), the substitution of *’alīš* (“strait”, “narrow”, primarily the passive participle of vb. *’elaṣ*, “to press”, “to straiten”, “to compel”, “to oppress”) with *qaḫḫīn* (“strait”, “narrow”, “fine”, “sharp”, “subtle” etc.) being facilitated by their quasi-synonymy. Moreover, the two passages are remarkably similar syntactically, each of them containing a pair of semantically close nominal sentences reunited by syntactic parallelism (*qaḫḫīnā ’urḫāh w<sup>e</sup>-**

*‘asqā mardīyā dīlāh* – “its path is narrow and its journey is difficult” and *mā qaṭṭīn tar‘ā w-‘alīṣā ‘urhā* – “how narrow is the gate and strait the way”), which suggests that this very biblical passage might indeed be the source of inspiration for the fragment in question.

Going back to the Syriac translator’s habit of superimposing divine agency to actions and developments ascribed to humans in the Arabic version, one particular case of this kind has drawn our attention for its impact on a level that may transcend the discussion about Barzawayh as a mere literary character. In the Arabic version, Barzawayh states, towards the end of his plea for choosing to earn the rewards awaiting the virtuous in the afterlife instead of the ephemeral pleasures of the earthly existence, that this option is especially validated by the current realities of his own time, which, according to him, has seen an upsurge in immorality and a disheartening reversal of good and evil, of virtue and vice (Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 91-92). In the midst of his passionate speech about the moral decay of his times, however, he exhibits, since the very beginning, a conspicuous keenness to extricate the king from the messy state of affairs he is describing, to exonerate him from any wrongdoing or from having had any part to play in the turn of events he is complaining about, stating that all this has happened in spite of the extraordinary qualities he is endowed with:

*...wa-‘in kāna l-maliku hāziman ‘aẓīma l-maqdurati, raḥḥa l-himmati balīga l-fahṣi, ‘adlan marḡuwwan ṣadūqan ṣakūran, raḥba d-ḡirā‘i muftaqidan muwāziban mustamirran ‘āliman bi-n-nāsi wa-l-‘umūri muḥibban li-l-‘ilmi wa-l-ḥayri wa-l-‘ahyāri, ṣadīdan ‘alā z-zalamati, ḡayra ḡabānin wa-lā ḥafīfi l-qiyaḍi, raḥṭan bi-tawassu‘i ‘alā r-ra‘iyyati fī mā yuḥibbūna, wa-d-ḡaḥi li-mā yakrahūna...* (“...even if the king is resolute and has great strength, is high-minded, far-reaching in his research, just, looked-up-to, sincere, grateful, wide-armed, inquisitive, assiduous, persistent, knowledgeable of people and issues, a lover of science, of good and of good people, harsh with the unjust, not coward or easily tractable, kind in amply providing his subjects with what they like and in pushing away what they dislike...” – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 91).

Barzawayh’s care to prevent his speech from being interpreted as a critical stance against the king seems to be fitting for a real life author and not just for a purely fictitious character. The lavish praise he heaps on his sovereign, meant to counterbalance the negative aspects he points to and to protect him from any bad light they might cast upon his reign, does seem to reflect the genuine concern of a man who is close to the circles of power and has acquired a status that is bound to bring attention to whatever he might have to say about matters related to public affairs. The encomiastic tone of this passage would make considerably more sense if it were taken as reflecting the worries of an author who stands to lose a lot if he appears to speak against his monarch, rather than if it were viewed as the speech of an exclusively literary character who happens to be a staunch supporter of a king who, while crucially involved in the plot, has somewhat sketchily traced outlines as a character. Barzawayh does not, in fact, adopt this reverential attitude towards the king only in this instance in Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>’s *Kalīla and Dimna*, as he praises him for his intelligence and vast knowledge at the beginning of the chapter about his trip to India (Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 46), but the most meaningful correlation can be established with another part of that same chapter, namely the dialogue that takes place between Barzawayh and the Indian friend who helps him gain access to the book he is looking for: during the

conversation they have after the secret purpose of Barzawayh's visit is revealed, this Indian friend expresses his opinion about the features of an intelligent man, two of which are especially significant in this context: *wa-'inna 'aqla r-raḡuli la-yabīnu fī tamānī ḥiṣālin... wa-t-ṭālītatu ṭā'atu l-mulūki wa-t-taḥarrī li-mā yurḏihim... wa-l-ḥāmisatu 'an takūna 'alā 'abwābi l-mulūki 'adīban maliqa l-lisāni* ("one's reason is highlighted by eight features ... the third is obeying kings and seeking to find out what pleases them... and the fifth is to stand at kings' doors well-mannered and flattering-tongued" – Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup> 1991: 50). These two principles are very representative for the profile of a pragmatist and a savvy politician, whose utmost concern is his own safety and success, and Barzawayh seems to apply these very principles when he tries to avoid appearing as an opponent of the king. Could this be just a coincidence, could he be heeding, as a character within a story, the advice of his friend, or could it be that we are, in fact, dealing with one and the same mind, that of an author who adheres to these principles in his own life? If, on the other hand, we look at the Syriac rendition of this passage, we can easily see how the translator's own agenda and ideology overrule any possible concerns of this kind that a "real" Barzawayh might have had:

*w-āpen 'alāhā ba-m<sup>e</sup>rahḥ<sup>e</sup>mānūtēh 'atqen l<sup>e-c</sup>ālmā b<sup>e</sup>-ṭaybūtēh wa-m<sup>e</sup>lāy(hy) šumnā d<sup>e</sup>-ṭābātēh, w-aqīm bēh l<sup>e</sup>-malkē w<sup>e</sup>-naṣṣah 'ennōn b<sup>e</sup>-zākawātā, w<sup>e</sup>-labbeh 'ennōn b<sup>e</sup>-ḡa(n)bārūtā, wa-m<sup>e</sup>tah 'a(y)k qeštēh d<sup>e</sup>rā'ayhōn, wa-q<sup>e</sup>ba<sup>c</sup> b<sup>e</sup>hōn kē'nūtā, wa-m<sup>e</sup>lā 'awš<sup>e</sup>raw(hy) ṭābātā, d<sup>e</sup>-nerdē l<sup>e</sup>-šallītā 'a(y)k d<sup>e</sup>-šābē, wa-l<sup>e</sup>-qaššīšē meqaššē 'al saklē b<sup>e</sup>-kē'nūtēh, wa-m<sup>e</sup>palleg dāšnē l<sup>e</sup>-ṭābē ba-š<sup>e</sup>p<sup>r</sup>ūtēh, m<sup>e</sup>parnes<sup>19</sup> l<sup>e</sup>-ḥē'rē men 'utrēh, w<sup>e</sup>-ṭāba<sup>c</sup> men ḥarmē b<sup>e</sup>-azzizūtēh, lā hedyoṭ b<sup>e</sup>-pārōšūtēh, w<sup>e</sup>-lā m<sup>e</sup>ḥīl tūb b-īdā'ētēh, yāšep d<sup>e</sup>-erbaw(hy) w<sup>e</sup>-lā mahmē men n<sup>e</sup>qawūtēh, m<sup>e</sup>mallē ḥassīrūtā d-emm<sup>e</sup>raw(hy) w<sup>e</sup>-lā qāpes men ḥašḥāthōn, r<sup>e</sup>ḡīḡ saggī la-n<sup>e</sup>yāḥayhōn<sup>20</sup> w<sup>e</sup>-ya'īb d<sup>e</sup>-lā ba-z<sup>e</sup>ōr ba-p<sup>e</sup>šīhūtēh* ("...even if God, in his mercy, has provided the world with his grace and filled it with the abundance of his goods, and established in it kings, glorified them with victories, strengthened them with bravery, stretched their arms like his bow and planted righteousness in them, and filled his storehouses with goods so that he may instruct the powerful one as he pleases, and empowers the elders over the feebleminded with his righteousness, and, in his munificence, distributes gifts to the good, provides for the free (i.e. "the honorable") from his wealth and holds the accursed accountable with his sternness, not [being] ignorant in his discerning power or weak in his knowledge, takes care of his flock and does not neglect his sheep, makes up for the indigence of his lambs and does not refrain from [supplying] their needs, is very keen for their enjoyments and most eager for their happiness" – Wright 1884: 401).

The first aspect that draws our attention is, of course, the substitution of God to the king as the purveyor of justice and all other good things, possibly because allowing a mortal to hold such an outstanding position would have been in collusion with the translator's

<sup>19</sup> *Parnes* ("he provided for") according to Wright's edition of the text, emended by Nöldeke to the participle *m<sup>e</sup>parnes* ("he provides for"), which we have opted for in light of the participial form of the verbs in the adjacent clauses.

<sup>20</sup> *L<sup>e</sup>-ḥayyayhōn* ("for their life") according to Wright's edition of the text, emended by Nöldeke to *la-n<sup>e</sup>yāḥayhōn* ("for their enjoyments"), which we have preferred based on its semantic proximity to the phrase *ba-p<sup>e</sup>šīhūtēh* ("for their happiness") in the following clause. So does Keith-Falconer, who translates it "for their welfare" (Keith-Falconer 1885: 264).

beliefs and convictions, besides his general interest in asserting God's unrivaled position in the order of things. But of no less significance is the disappearance of one single king and his replacement with "kings", so that the statement seems to concern not a particular monarch in a specific time and place, but a general, recurrent situation. Whatever political and personal priorities the author of those anxiously reverential remarks might have had are effaced by the pious considerations of the translator, being thus relegated to a barely discernible, if not totally obliterated, background.

As we have already mentioned, this chapter exhibits, in its Arabic version, an outstanding narrative feature of the book as a whole – the framed story. It could be argued that the fables included in this chapter, whose insertion in the speech of the characters is, as everywhere else in the book, a mere literary artifice, have little part to play in shaping the profile of the character that is supposed to narrate them. There are, however, two such stories within this chapter whose treatment by the Syriac translator is significant in that it reveals more about his approach to the Arabic text and helps us picture a somewhat broader frame for the treatment of Barzawayh himself. The first fable we will deal with comes before Barzawayh decides to adhere to what he deems a universally acceptable set of moral and religious principles, when he finds himself hesitant about which way to follow. At this moment, he compares himself to a man who has an affair with a married woman, who, in order to facilitate their liaison, digs a secret passageway linking her house to the road, so that her lover may safely escape if her husband arrives, and marks the entry of the passageway with a stone water jar. One day the husband arrives home while they were together, and the woman urges her lover to disappear quickly through the passageway, but he finds himself at a loss when he does not find the jar that was supposed to mark the secret entry. As they keep arguing and going back and forth because of the man's persistence in blaming her for the missing sign they had agreed upon, the husband catches him and, after beating him, delivers him to the authorities (de Sacy 1816: 66-67)<sup>21</sup>. The moral of the story is, in the Arabic version, about the dire consequences of "hesitancy" (*taraddud*) and "unsteadiness" (*tahawwul*), and there appears to be no particular sign of an interest in its moral dimension. When looking at the Syriac version, the general picture emerging is quite different. The narrative itself (Wright 1884: 389-391) is rendered faithfully, but the changes operated by the translator are, nevertheless, consequential, as they concern the way in which this version makes abundantly clear how much the two adulterers are to be blamed and reviled, by saturating the text with deprecatory epithets (such as *m<sup>e</sup>ša<sup>cc</sup>raṭ ḥē'rūtāh* – "the one who dishonors her freedom (i.e. "chastity"), *hāy 'a(n)tā m<sup>e</sup>hall<sup>e</sup>kaṭ 'am ba'lāh lā kē'nā'ūt* – "that woman who behaves dishonestly with her husband", *m<sup>e</sup>zabb<sup>e</sup>naṭ ḥē'rūtāh* – the seller of her (own) freedom (i.e. "chastity"), *m<sup>e</sup>šah<sup>e</sup>raṭ 'appē* – "(the woman) with a blackened face", to designate the woman, or *ṭālōmāh* – "the one who wronged her" or *gayyārā šātyā* – "foolish fornicator", for her lover) that are quite effective in conveying an outpouring of scorn and disdain directed at the two protagonists and in "hijacking" the moral of the story and ultimately the narrative itself, so as to make it seem, quite

<sup>21</sup> As we have realized, early on, that the edition of *Kalīla and Dimna* we were using contained one of those expurgated texts that are stripped of the "racier" parts, deemed unsuitable for a certain target readership, we have confronted the text that we had primarily at our disposal with Silvestre de Sacy's edition, in which this fable is included.

surreptitiously, at least as much about the abhorrence of immorality as it is about foolishness and undecidedness. The translation of the concise ending of the Arabic version (*ḥattā dahāla rabbu l-bayti fa-’aḥadahu wa-’awġa’ahu ḍarban wa-rafa’ahu ’ilā s-ṣulṭāni* – “until the master of the house entered, took hold of him, gave him a severe beating and took him to the authorities” – de Sacy 1816: 67) contributes a great deal to this overall impression: *‘al haw šawtāpā t’līmā w<sup>e</sup>-labkēh l<sup>e</sup>-haw m<sup>e</sup>hall<sup>e</sup>šānā wa-m<sup>e</sup>hāy(hy) qašyā’ūt, w<sup>e</sup>-šallep l<sup>e</sup>-ḡuṣmēh zedqā’ūt, w<sup>e</sup>-šahḥar l<sup>e</sup>-pa’tēh qānōnā’ūt, w-ašl<sup>e</sup>mēh la-m<sup>e</sup>nagg<sup>e</sup>dānē kē’nā’ūt, wa-t<sup>e</sup>ba<sup>c</sup> mennēh <sup>e</sup>yārtēh quštānā’ūt* – “that wronged consort entered, seized that spoiler, beat him severely, bruised his body deservedly, blackened his cheek lawfully, handed him to the torturers righteously and exacted vengeance on him fairly” – Wright 1884: 391). The inescapable syntactic parallelism is, of course, present once more, this time reinforced by the rhyme, reminiscent of the Arabic *saġ<sup>c</sup>*, achieved through the adverbial ending *-ā’ūt*, but it is by no means gratuitous, since the translator obviously takes great delight in elaborately depicting the punishment incurred by the adulterer and in making it clear that he deserved every bit of it. In connection to this ending, we think that a particular epithet used to derogatorily designate the adulteress (*m<sup>e</sup>šahḥ<sup>e</sup>rat’ appē* – “(the woman) with a blackened face”) deserves special attention, as it echoes the sentence *šahḥar l<sup>e</sup>-pa’tēh qānōnā’ūt* (“blackened his cheek lawfully”), that describes one of the punishments inflicted upon the man she fornicated with, which we think must have been meant to be physical (meaning that the verb is used here with its literal sense and that his face is supposed to have been “blackened” one way or another), given the physical nature of the punishments described by the other sentences<sup>22</sup>. This could be a coincidence, void of any special significance, but at the same time it could very well be more than that, and the interpretation of this possible correlation relies heavily on the meaning one ascribes here to the verb *šahḥar* (lit. “to blacken”), whose passive participle is used in the phrase *m<sup>e</sup>šahḥ<sup>e</sup>rat’ appē*. The dismissal of the similitude between the two formulas as a mere coincidence would most likely be correlated with a figurative understanding of the verb in the case of its use in *m<sup>e</sup>šahḥ<sup>e</sup>rat’ appē*, whereby it would mean “to shame”, “to disgrace”, entailing that this is nothing more than yet another deprecatory epithet used to designate the adulteress – this interpretation is certainly supported by lexicographical data and we could assume that the different wording of the two expressions, namely the use of *’appē* in one and of *pa’tā* in the other, must be mirrored by a semantic difference (v. note 21). However, we cannot totally dismiss the possibility that this participle convey a literal meaning, in which case we could conclude that the translator, in his eagerness to see both sinners be punished, did tamper with the narrative after all and, in order to be minimally invasive in his intervention, sneakily introduced this epithet among the ones he used to excoriate the unfaithful wife and

<sup>22</sup> The use of *pa’tā* (“side”, “corner of the beard”, “mustache”, “face”, “forehead”, “cheek”) instead of *’appē* (primary meaning “nostrils”, mostly “face”), which occurs in collocations where *šahḥar* acquires a figurative meaning (e.g. *šahḥart l-appay*, translated as *vultum meum dedecore affecisti* – R. Payne Smith 1879: 4126; *’appayhōn meštahḥ<sup>e</sup>rān (h)way*, “their faces were covered with shame” – J. Payne Smith 1903: 572), is, in our opinion, an additional argument in favor of a literal interpretation. Keith-Falconer understands *šahḥar* in this context as designating a physical punishment as well, translating it interpretatively with “to bruise” (*w<sup>e</sup>-šallep l<sup>e</sup>-ḡuṣmēh zedqā’ūt w<sup>e</sup>-šahḥar l<sup>e</sup>-pa’tēh qānōnā’ūt* – “smote his body and bruised him with good right”); on the other hand, he apparently sees no special connection with the epithet *m<sup>e</sup>šahḥ<sup>e</sup>rat’ appē*, which he translates with “base” (Keith-Falconer 1885: 257, 258).

purposefully formulated it so that it may lend itself to different interpretations. The third and perhaps the most remote possibility would be to assume that the participle acquires a modal coloring, more precisely a deontic one, and that the meaning of the phrase would consequently be “(the woman) whose face *should* be blackened”<sup>23</sup>, in which case his intervention would be considerably more restrained. At any rate, in the treatment of this story the Syriac translator gets remarkably close to Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>, who, in order to morally “sanitize” the story of the two jackals, notoriously interpolates a whole chapter that has Dimna judged and punished for his wrongdoing, in order to meet the expectations of a readership accustomed to see the wicked receive their comeuppance (Grigore 2010: 205), and we have to admit that, based on his approach to this fable, he appears to be, at the same time, both more heavy-handed, by the abundant use of epithets meant to convey his moral outrage, and more subtle, by his reluctance to radically alter the narrative.

The second fable whose treatment contributes to a fuller understanding of the Syriac translator’s approach to the text comes at the end of the chapter, being, in fact, the very last fable inserted therein. It is used to illustrate, in an allegorical fashion, how those who are fooled by the fleeting pleasures of the senses fail to save their own souls. Its main character is a man who, fleeing from an elephant, hides in a pit, where he faces a number of animals, all of which are symbols of elements impacting man’s life explained at the end of the fable, and, being distracted by the sweetness of the honey he finds in a beehive, ends up falling on the bottom of the pit, where he is eaten by a dragon (Ibn al-Muqaffac 1991: 93-94). The fable is reproduced quite faithfully in the Syriac version (Wright 1884: 404-406), except for the beginning, where the elephant that makes the man go down in the pit (...’*iqā maṭaluhu maṭalu raḡulin naḡā min ḥawfi flin hā’iḡin ’ilā bi’rin fa-tadallā fthā*... – “...it occurred to me that he is like a man who has escaped from the danger of an agitated elephant to a pit and let himself down into it...” – Ibn al-Muqaffac 1991: 93) simply disappears: *dāmē barnāšā l’-ḡabrā da-<sup>ce</sup>raq men q<sup>e</sup>dām dehl<sup>e</sup>tā meddem w-eškah haww<sup>e</sup>tā da-ḥ<sup>e</sup>pīrā ’awkēt ḥabbārā <sup>c</sup>ammīqā wa-n<sup>e</sup>ḥet bāh d<sup>e</sup>-nettaššē*... (“man [in such a situation] is similar to a man that has fled from some [object of] fear, found a dug out hole, that is a deep pit, and went down in it in order to hide...” – Wright 1884: 404). It is true that there is no symbolic value attached to the elephant in the key to the fable’s interpretation provided at the end, which means that the Syriac translator might just have decided to do away with a nonessential part of the fable. At the same time, the fact that this animal is an elephant, a part of the Indian natural landscape, provides us with yet another situation where the Syriac translation veers away from significant elements of the original settings of the narratives making up the story of Barzawayh, this time from what may have been, as a part of the specifically Indian fauna, a link to the background provided by the subcontinent for this and other stories.

The character of Barzawayh in the Arabic version of *Kalīla and Dimna* has, first and foremost, the profile of a wise man and an intellectual: he is a renowned physician who has

<sup>23</sup> Theodor Nöldeke does acknowledge, in his *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, that participles can acquire modal meaning (“a beginning has been made in employing the participle in room of the imperfect, even in optative and other moods”), providing examples such as *m<sup>e</sup>sakkēnan* – “have we to look for?” and *‘al mānā mā’et* – “why is he to die?” (Nöldeke 1904: 216). Admitting such a development in the case of a (passive) participle occurring in a noun phrase would mean, however, taking things a step further than that.

acquired a reputation for wisdom and intelligence; in his travel to India, he makes use of his sagacity in order to retrieve the book he was sent to look for; upon his return to his homeland and after winning the king's gratitude and appreciation for successfully accomplishing his task, he chooses to be immortalized in the pages of the book he brought back with him and translated as a reward. He is, at the same time, a deeply spiritual man, concerned with finding the most appropriate way to save his soul and win the afterlife. However, even in his spiritual and religious quests, he appears remarkably detached from the idea of upholding an established religious tradition, exerting his own reasoning powers each time he decides to take a new turn in the look for the optimal way of leading his own life.

The changes incurred by the character in the Syriac translation can be traced back to different reasons, one of the first to be noticed being the disappearance of the chapter about his trip to India, which necessarily truncates the general picture and automatically gives precedence to the more spiritualized part of his persona, given the predominant themes treated in the remaining chapter. A defining factor is, however, the religious background of the translator, which also goes hand in hand with an easily detectable moral agenda. If, at the beginning of the chapter, there is a formula that might be interpreted as an implicit recognition of Barzawayh's specific, non-Christian identity, as we go on reading we are met with an increasingly Christianized Barzawayh (the treatment of this particular character in this respect is consonant with the treatment of the book as a whole, which is one of the main arguments on which Wright relies in his conjecture about the identity of the translator). From a strictly theological point of view, the most conspicuous preoccupation is the unequivocal assertion of God's presence and agency both in Barzawayh's own life and in the fate of mankind and society at large. As for the formal manifestations of this sustained effort of making the character more palatable to a Christian audience, they consist mainly in expressions and quotations either inspired or taken verbatim from the Christian scriptures, particularly the Gospels, sometimes even explicitly presented as such. The moral agenda of the translator becomes most visible when Barzawayh, already a virtuous person in the Arabic version, is made even more so by expansions that make room for bringing to the surface possibly latent elements of the text, enhancing or expanding upon already extant qualities or expressing the character's outrage at what constitutes improper behavior according to a Christian moral code.

The stylistic choices and preferences of the translator seem to be a facilitating factor for many of these changes. His propensity for a certain prolixity and lack of reservations when it comes to redundancy and repetition (which can be attributed to a literary taste shaped by his Syriac cultural heritage), paired with a sustained cultivation of parallelism as a rhetorical device, enable him to indulge in numerous expansions that contribute, on many occasions, to the reshaping of the chapter in content as well as in form.

A series of noticeable differences have the common denominator of marking a certain disconnection of the Syriac text from rather significant elements of the original background and settings of the story. Each one of these differences can be ascribed to a specific factor: the apparent downplaying of Barzawayh's Persianness can be linked to the loss of the chapter concerning his voyage to India, which contains much of what places the character in a specifically Persian setting; the erasure of what might have been palpable traces of the personal and political concerns of a "real" Barzawayh comes mainly as a result of the theological priorities of the translator, but can also be correlated with the sheer



temporal distance that comes between the translator and anything that might have shaped the mind and thoughts of the author of the book in general or of this chapter in particular; the same eroding effect of distance, this time of a geographical and maybe cultural nature, is the one that removes the exotic elephant from the last fable of the chapter. All these alterations converge towards creating a “Syriacized” Barzawayh with somewhat simplified, less complex outlines and a hazier profile, parts of which seem to fade away into the distance, in spite of the obvious and undeniably strong connection that links him to the Barzawayh of Ibn al-Muqaffa<sup>c</sup>.

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## DEFINING A MODERN ARAB IMAGE OF ITALY THROUGH THE TRAVEL MEMOIRES OF 'ISĀ 'IBRAHIM AL-NĀ'ŪRĪ

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**Abstract.** On the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 1960 the Jordanian writer, translator and intellectual 'Īsā Ibrāhīm al-Nā'ūrī (d. 1985) set foot for the first time in a Western country: Italy. The memories and impressions of this travelling experience are gathered in the volume *Rihla ilā Īṭāliyā 1960-61* posthumously published in 2004. The work is first of all the account of a mission (*ba'ṭ*) assigned by UNESCO, whose aim was to explore and collect data on the cultural status of Italy at that time, visiting important institutions and establishing contact with intellectuals and important personalities in the literary field. During his six month stay in Italy, he does not only report the experiences and impressions of his itinerary throughout the country, but also describes his personal encounters with writers such as Alberto Moravia, Italo Calvino, Elsa Morante, and many others. Thus, this paper intends to explore the reality of Italy as it has been portrayed in the text, with particular regard to how the perception of this country is re-elaborated into the dialectic of the East-West encounter.

**Keywords:** East-West encounter, Italy, Occidentalism, modernity, *rihla*, Jordan, Palestine.

### 1. Context

It is indisputable the significant contribution given by 19<sup>th</sup> century Arab travel writing to the shaping of a new and, at the same time, mythical image of the West. These travelogues, which can roughly be inscribed under the generic label of the Arabic *al-rihla*, embodied the spirit of their time: the need of an Arab society in search for change and development. Since its first appearance, *Ṭahlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Ṭalḥīṣ Bārīz* (The Refinement of Gold in the Description of Paris) written by Rifā'a Rafī' al-Ṭaḥṭāwī became the first 'ethnographic' work made by an Arab on modern and industrialized Western Europe, as well as the first literary product of the *Nahḍa*. As Ibrahim Abu-Lughod has pointed out in his seminal work, *The Arab Rediscovery of Europe* (1963), the "Arab awareness of the West" was taking place and the increasing number of envoys or student missions sent to Europe – initiated in Muḥammad 'Alī's reign – brought a great shift into "the world-focus of the Arabs" (Abu-Lughod 2011: 94). A new kind of traveller-intellectual emerged in this period, one who prefers travelling more often toward Europe and Paris, rather than to Mecca and the Arab Peninsula for his own search for knowledge.

That said, unlike France, Great Britain, and, to some extent, Germany, little regard has been paid to Italy by Arab travellers in the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As it has been illustrated in a prospect by Newman (Newman 2002a: 213) Italy appears in twelve accounts of this period. However, with the exception of the monumental work of Ḥayār al-

Dīn and the notable account of another Tunisian, Bayrām al-Ḥāmis (d. 1889) the major literary contributions in travelogues were those of Arab Christians. Eastern clerics used to travel to Rome not only for visiting the holy places, but also for receiving religious formation. Revealing a phenomenon that reflects the persistence of strong ties between the Roman Catholic Church and the eastern cults<sup>1</sup> which dates back long before the advent of the *Nahḍa*. Nevertheless, in most of these works the country remains a mere stop in a journey toward a more appealing Northern Europe. Indeed only between 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, curiosity starts arousing in the mind of the traveller. Surely, from a wider point of view, the new tourist conception (*siyāḥa*) (Newman 2002b: 32) of travelling toward Europe had its role in this context, but there were other reasons as well.

Avino, for example, observes that, at the turn of the century, Arab travellers were particularly attracted by new developments in the process of modernization of the Italian cities and its institutions (Avino 2014: 29). Also Italian colonial adventures and the policies adopted by the fascist regime would soon arouse big concerns, as is the case for the accounts of two Syrian intellectuals Ṣafīq Ḡabrī and Sāmī al-Kayyālī who visited the country in the thirties. Alternative depictions of Italy appear in the same decade in the travelogues of ‘Alī al-Dū‘āgī and Muḥammad Ṭābit<sup>2</sup>, whose narratives display a much more tourist outlook rather than intellectual. Nevertheless, what starts to emerge from these texts is the image of a complex and heterogeneous Mediterranean dimension that seems to fluctuate between East and West, a new space in which Italy is right in the middle.

Despite differences in views and tastes we should bear in mind that, with few exceptions, most of these narratives still remain attached to the interest for modernity. Thus, in their ‘Italian journey’, Arabs tend to focus more on the present state of the country – its achievements in science and the progress in the economic and social field – rather than giving prominence to the greatness of its historical past. Their transit through the country is not connoted with the same imaginal charge as that of the northern Europeans in the *Grand Tour*. Indeed, the significance of Italy as the cradle of the European and Western Renaissance was a concept that had yet to be assimilated by the Arab intelligentsia.

Many travellers, therefore, in order to deal with the Italian *other* in their writings, relied both on classical geographic literature, and on the literature of the European hegemonic nations. For instance, they often resorted to French-made stereotypes of the country<sup>3</sup>, but it was also not unusual for many of them to find, in Italian customs and behaviours, similarities with their own cultural background. So, for the Syrian Nasīm Ḥallāt, Florence appears as an oriental city for having kept intact his own architectural identity (Avino 2016: 14) against modernization; Ṭābit in Naples finds similarities with the temperament of its people which led him to conclude that “if it wasn’t for their western customs and dialects, we would not have been strangers to them”<sup>4</sup> (Ṭābit 2014: 16). But these sparse associations do not go beyond simple suggestions. If travellers had therefore

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<sup>1</sup> The foundation of the Maronite seminary (*Collegium Maronitarum*) in 1583 in Rome played a crucial role in enhancing the cultural exchange between the Roman church and the Eastern cults. Moreover, this factor stimulated the birth of the Arabic scholarship in Europe (Newman 2002a: 205).

<sup>2</sup> In *Ḡawla fī rubū‘ Urūbbā, bayna Miṣr wa-Islanda* (Journey around Europe, from Egypt to Iceland, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1936).

<sup>3</sup> Such is the case of Ṣafīq Ḡabrī (see Avino 2014: 43).

<sup>4</sup> Disclaimer: this translation is made by the author of this paper.

chosen Italy as a destination it actually does not mean that it was intended as their final aim. The country, for a long time, remained in the Arab mind a periphery of Europe and for this reason is quite difficult to reconstruct a unitary and coherent image of it from these texts<sup>5</sup>. Indeed, we must await the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in order to have a full account completely dedicated by an Arab intellectual to Italy. This paper examines, therefore, the image of Italy as it has been portrayed by 'Īsā Ibrāhīm al-Nā'ūrī (d. 1985) in his posthumous *Rihla ilā Īṭāliyā 1960-61* (Journey to Italy 1960-61)<sup>6</sup>. Here we shall speculate on the possible intent of the author in creating an alternative depiction of the country which tries to ideologically overcome the rigid barriers of the East-West dialectic. Composed at a time of significant changes in the frame of Arabic literature and specifically in Arabic travel writing (Tomiche 1994: 7), al-Nā'ūrī's text is an example of how the Arab perception of the West was entering into a new post-colonial phase, as it has been delineated by El-Enany (El-Enany 2008: 87), but also of how the text itself retains some traditional conventions in its composition.

## 2. A literary mission or a traditional *Grand Tour*?

'Īsā Ibrāhīm al-Nā'ūrī was a very renowned figure in the literary entourage of Jordan and Palestine between the sixties and the eighties of the last century. Intellectual, traveller, translator, he was born into a Christian family in the little village of al-Nā'ūr near Amman, but he spent most of his life and career in the capital. After a timid start in the early fifties with novels, short stories and with the brief but intense experience of creating his own magazine *al-Qalam al-ġadīd* (The New Pen), the greatest academic recognition came in 1959, with the publication of *Adab al-mahġar* (Emigration Literature)<sup>7</sup>. In the years to come, he would publish articles for several journals and magazines all over the Arab world, such as *al-Ādāb*, *al-Ādāb al-aġnabiyya* and in Italy too where, thanks to his contacts with the group of Italian orientalists, he collaborated in *Levante/Mašriq*. This special relationship he developed with Italian intellectual and literary circles offered him the chance to explore a literature which has never been studied enough by Arab scholars, being often overshadowed by French and English models, as he will later remark in *Dirāsāt fī l-adab al-īṭālī* (Essays on Italian literature) (al-Nā'ūrī 1981: 7). But the relationship and attachment with the Italian literary reality expresses itself fully in the translation activity. Translations of 20<sup>th</sup> century masterpieces of Italian literature such as "Uomini e No" (*Riġal wa-rafd*) by Elio Vittorini, "Il Gattopardo" (*al-Fahd*) of Giuseppe Tommasi di Lampedusa granted him many acknowledgements into the Italian academic entourage and an honorary Ph.D. assigned by the University of Palermo in 1976, being the third Arab to receive such a title after Ṭāhā Ḥusayn and Ḥasan 'Uṭmān (Baldissera 1985: 108-9).

The work of al-Nā'ūrī is, first of all the account of a mission, a literary one, funded by a UNESCO scholarship aimed at enhancing the cultural exchange between scholars and

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<sup>5</sup> We should also note that still little regard has been paid to study the contemporary expressions of this genre.

<sup>6</sup> Disclaimer: our analysis takes into account only the actual text written by al-Nā'ūrī excluding the editorial notes inserted at the end of the volume.

<sup>7</sup> It was the first study to exclusively deal with the literature of expatriate Arabs.

intellectuals from different parts of the world. As we learn from the editor's preface<sup>8</sup> (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 9), the mission of the traveller was to make contact with Italian writers and poets, acquiring first-hand experience of a literary reality different from his own and to participate at conferences and lectures in university classes. These two simple tasks acquire a pivotal role in the account. The traveller is almost totally engaged in a sort of search for the encounter with the literate man. His dedication is clearly expressed throughout the text, and the 'mission' represents a driving force that conditions his itinerary throughout the country, as well as the structure of the *riḥla* itself.

The trajectory of his journey is indeed cultural oriented. He starts in Rome where he spends almost a month consolidating relationships with many intellectual personalities. Then, moving north into the Peninsula, he visits the city of Bologna, Venice, Milan, Turin, Genoa and the Italian Riviera, Pisa and Florence. On his way back to Rome, between October and November 1960, he moves to Sardinia and Sicily. The travelling memories come to a close eventually as he reaches Pompeii.

The first impression that readers get in following the traveller's path on paper is the sense of something already tested. Al-Nā'ūrī, indeed, does not try to 'get off the beaten track' escaping the traditional tourist itineraries. Along with the narration of his personal events, he offers the reader a report of the mainstream tourist attractions of the visited cities: museums, churches, monuments, works of art. On the one hand, the text does not allow the reader to piece together the traveller's actual movements. The course of the narration is interrupted by some casual excursus on Italian mores and traditions or by extended 'ethnographic' sections dedicated to single aspects of Italian reality, in particular of literary and artistic interest. Here we can find chapters such as '*an al-aḡānī al-īṭāliyya* (On Italian songs) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 112) or *al-ḡawā'iz al-adabiyya al-īṭāliyya* (Italian literary prizes) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 149). These mentioned features along with the use of a plain and easy prosaic style, often devoid of rhymed prose, and with the tendency to allocate the ethnographic material into specialized chapter and sections – each one focused on different aspects of the foreign reality – reveal how al-Nā'ūrī's volume complies with the 'rules' and original didactic intents (Newman 2002b: 32) of the genre re-enacted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In doing so, what seemed essential to him is not to emphasise the figure of the traveller *per se*, but to construct a narrative of the country which, first of all, must be instructive for his reader. Further to this, the personal choice to focus almost exclusively on literary and artistic matters represents an alternative and unique way to describe a Western country for the genre. On the other hand, we should not overlook an author who does not obscure his subjectivity, a sign of the influence of the autobiographical western style, introduced by works such as Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's *al-Ayyām* and many others, as pointed out by Nada Tomiche (Tomiche 1994: 7).

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<sup>8</sup> The editor Tayssīr al-Naḡḡār notes that the manuscript on which he relied for the final publication shows several similarities with another one entitled: *Udabā' wa-mustaṣriqūn 'arifuhum fī Ḥāliyyā* (Men of letters and orientalists I knew in Italy). Moreover, in the seventies some parts of this Italian journey were published in episodes in the newspaper *al-Ra'ī al-urduniyya*.

### 3. Re-framing a periphery of Europe

So, how exactly does al-Nā'ūrī's vision of Italy articulate in his text and what is actually conveyed to his reader? If late 19<sup>th</sup> century travellers started identifying the country through its historical and architectonic heritage (Newman 2001a: 221), similarly al-Nā'ūrī adopts this pattern of representation. Castles, palaces, classical monuments and Rome with its churches represent a material past which cannot be ignored. The primary intention seems that to offer the reader a comprehensive account of the country both through its modern and historical appearance. From the very outset, the sections of *Rūmā al-ātār wa-l-siyāha* (Rome: monuments and tourism) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 26) and *Al-ātār al-fanniyya wa-l-tārīḥiyya wa-l-'arabiyya fī Ītāliyā* (Artistic, historical and Arab antiquities in Italy) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 32) show the country as a typical tourist destination, almost undistinguishable from conventional depictions made by Arab and European travellers. Descriptions, thus, intermingle with the memoirs and impressions of the traveller from which exudes an unfaltering personality that attempts to keep an objective and critical attitude in relating to the Italian reality. For example, despite his religious affiliation, he often ridicules superstitious rituals or the cults of the relics, such in the case of the presence of alleged ashes of St. John the Baptist in Genoa in "*Rimāda Yuḥanā...fī Ġinwa*" (Saint John's ashes in Genoa) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 34). But, the often monotonous tourist oriented exploration reveals also a different sensibility in approaching the western reality. Unlike many Arab travellers to Europe before him, al-Nā'ūrī is very attentive to the knowledge of the country's history as a means to obtain a wider image of a complex reality such as Italy, especially by filtering it through his literary and artistic outlook, as he remarks in this passage about Rome: "Whether religious, historical or modern, each one of these monuments, which have made the fame of Rome, deserves a place in these memoirs. For they have always been the source of inspiration for writers, poets, composers and artists"<sup>9</sup> (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 27).

In this context, also the Arab legacy of the Italian peninsula could not be left out from the bigger picture. Monuments and churches often bear the sign of the ancient Arab presence in their architecture. But his discourse on the Arab contribution to the West is not imbued with what Nazik Saba Yared has defined "a defence mechanism" (Saba Yared 1996: 180) aimed at reclaiming the essential role of the Arab past in the making of European civilization typical of most modern Arab travel writers. Although in al-Nā'ūrī's historic prospect of the country is remarked the essential role of the city of Florence in the development of the European Renaissance (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 91), it is the second *Nahḍa* 'Risorgimento'<sup>10</sup> to receive most of the attention. In his journey throughout central Italy, the revered description of the house-museum of the national poet Giosuè Carducci in Bologna as well as the remembrance of the patriot Silvio Pellico<sup>11</sup> (d. 1854) – during the visit to 'Piombi' prison in Venice – reveals again his will to present a thorough account of the

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<sup>9</sup> Disclaimer: all translations from al-Nā'ūrī's volume are made by the author of this paper.

<sup>10</sup> The choice of this word to define the Italian Risorgimento, with all its connotative potential, is quite interesting and revealing of the sympathy that Arab intellectuals felt toward this event (see also Avino 2002: 57-58).

<sup>11</sup> Patriot and literary figure, he was particularly known outside Italy for "Le mie prigioni" in which he recounts his prison's years.

country<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, these two elements are inserted so as to mark the beginning of Italy as a modern country.

Nevertheless, to reconstruct the narrative strategy employed by the author we must look at the Sicilian part of his journey. The island has always attracted over time the curiosity of several travellers in search of the relics of its Arab glorious past. But, again, the intention of al-Nā'ūrī seems quite different from that of his predecessors. In the overall image of the country Sicily serves as a sort of *trait d'union* between the Peninsula and the larger Mediterranean dimension. In the sea passage from Sardinia to Sicily<sup>13</sup> our traveller is engaged in a discussion with an Italian priest on the history of the various peoples who dominated the island. The scene acquires quite a humorous tone: the priest excluding the actual Arab contribution in the development of the civilization of the island, struck a nerve in the traveller's national pride, as emerges from this extract:

I noticed in his discourse that he totally left out the Arab dominion of the island, which left so many traces, so I asked "You didn't mention anything about the Arab influence and their impact!? Didn't they leave any sign of civilization in Sicily?" the priest replied almost annoyed: "Arabs were only desert people; they left no trace of civilization whatsoever. They destroyed the civilizations before them!" I smiled, staring at him without saying a word. The priest played again his monologue, but my staring seems to have had some effect on him, "Excuse me sir, what part of Italy are you from?" he asked. "I'm not Italian..." I answered smiling. Surprised he continued: "Are you European?" - "definitely not". His wonder increased: "then...where are you from?" I replied quiet simply; "I come from those people who destroyed the civilization in Sicily: I'm Arab". The colour of his face changed immediately. The priest dissimulating his embarrassment, started telling me everything about the history of the Arabs in Sicily, and he even provided me with useful information on the various historical sites (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 136).

The recounting of this particular memoir before the Sicilian arrival is not unintentional but reveals the peculiar didactic attitude of the author toward his text that aims at conveying a picture of Italy based on true historical facts rather than on biased orientalist fantasies. Here the traveller's stance is also to reject the rhetoric of the "clash of civilization", so common, for example, in the discourses of Arab travellers and writers of colonial times (see e.g. El-Enany 2006: 34-86), by replacing it with that of the reconciliation and mutual influence, as can be seen from the introduction of Palermo described as "an excellent point of encounter between Mediterranean peoples in his past history: a broad junction between Europe and North Africa. At that time the minarets of three hundred mosques dominated the skyline of the city" (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 139). Here, the Norman contribution seems the most attractive period in the island's history. It represents a golden age of tolerance, which saw the cooperation between Arabs and 'Europeans' in

<sup>12</sup> Both these authors are mentioned in the seventh chapter of the text on (Between two cities: Bologna, Marconi's place, and Venice city of dreams) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 57-64).

<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, al-Nā'ūrī reproduces in his *rihla al-bahriyya* the motif of the traveller's experience with the sea, describing the heavy seas and his seasickness. Traditionally this part was placed at the beginning of the journey as to emphasise the sense of alienation of the traveller approaching the European coast.

science and arts<sup>14</sup>. This factor is underscored by the references to King Roger II, al-Idrīsī and Ibn Ġubayr (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 139). But signs of Arab influence do not only emanate from the wooden carved ceilings of the royal Palatine chapel. Moreover, they are rooted and survive in the Sicilian people, whose habits and customs are easily associated with those of Arabs. This immaterial legacy appears in the - *'Ird* (family honour) of Sicilian men as well as in the habit of women to collect wild herbs, which is something that really reminds him of the women of rural Jordan. The traveller goes even beyond that, seeking a deeper connection with another land recently lost to the Arabs: Palestine. The landscape stirs up the memories of the traveller: the disposition of orange and lemon trees all along the Sicilian coastline becomes in his eyes that of Palestine, also the adventures of the Sicilian bandit Giuliano re di Montelepre are put side by side with the vicissitudes of the Palestinian bandit Abū Ġilda in the thirties (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 140-3).

#### 4. A modern western country

If the past of the country is presented to the Arab readership as one of a cultural isthmus in the Mediterranean – a place of exchanges, *melange* and encounter – the modern face of Italy is that of the traditional western country. Effigies of modernity constellate the architecture as well as the habits and lifestyle of its people. In this context, one of the most interesting motifs of this literature reprised by the traveller is “the stress on the *'aġā'ib*” which appeared quite anachronistic, since it seemed to have long disappeared from 20<sup>th</sup> century texts (see e.g. Landau 1970: 74). This is the case of the pages he devotes to the treatise of the Italian film industry in *madīnat al-sīnimā* (Cinecittà) and *20 alf mumattil* (20 thousand actors) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 29-31). Here, in a visit to Cinecittà studios, the special effects used to shoot the sea battle scenes of the film *Ben Hur* induces a sense of wonder and estrangement which may have come from the pen of a 19<sup>th</sup> century traveller. Indeed his attention mainly focuses on the technical aspects of the film making, while leaving out all the considerations about Italian Cinema, which certainly was at its peak at that time.

The noun *ġarb* and its related nisba *ġarbī*, are mostly associated with the modern habits of Italians often in opposition to Arab customs, but it is during the meetings with the Italian writers that the majority of these juxtapositions occur. Yet, the true Western character of Italy is revealed in these sections, where the phase of the encounter is presented not only as a way to know *the other*, but also as an essential moment to apprehend what the *other* knows about the *self*. What really emerges thereafter are often distorted images and clichés that Italian writers and intellectuals have towards Arab literature and society. Thus, for example, the traditional orientalist paradigm of the *Arabian Nights* as a mirror of the Arab reality recurs in an exchange with Alberto Moravia:

During the visit I also explained to Moravia that his works have strong explicit content, and that the Arab translator felt uneasy to translate his novels in the state they are. For this reason he feels free to rearrange some parts which can be embarrassing

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<sup>14</sup> It is important to note that in his narrative there is no space for the rhetoric of the land's reclaiming, so much celebrated by Arab visitors in Spain (e.g. Matar 2006).



for a reader whose sensibility does not traditionally match with such an explicit literature. Moravia replied astounded: "I am nothing but a pupil of your Arabic literature!", "what kind of Arab literature are you referring to?" I replied. "The *Arabian Nights* of course! Is that not Arabic?" he replied, and then added "I still have not written something as sexually explicit as that!" [...] It is really rare to find someone in the West who does not talk to you about the *Nights* without knowing the degradation and indecency in it. A stigma that fell down on the Arab community until it became in western eyes just a community of harems, young servants and prostitutes (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 41-2).

The unveiling of orientalist preconceptions is a constant process that recurs almost in every meeting, giving prominence to the role of the traveller as interpreter and transmitter of his own heritage. The meeting with Maria Bellonci (d. 1986), co-founder of the prestigious literary prize *Premio Strega*, epitomises this role. Here, the traveller not only is concerned with providing his reader with a detailed description of this high Italian institution, but is equally concerned with informing Mrs. Bellonci about purely Arab matters she seems totally unaware of, such as that of the tragedy of the Palestinian *Nakba*:

I noted, while I was talking with her [Mrs. Bellonci], that she ignored everything about us and our tragedy with it. All she knew was that Israel was founded on a desert soil totally uninhabited. When she knew the truth she cried and wept, and started wiping her tears with her hand. Then, she said: "You, Arab writers...where did you leave your pens? Why don't you write for us, so that we can know the truth and take your side?" I was embarrassed by her question and what's more for the fact that the person who asked me such a question was a Westerner. We write over and over, without addressing our message to other people, but just for ourselves. Then we blame the others because nobody knows us [our history], even though we have only ourselves to blame (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 123-4).

## 5. Conclusions

Although being incomplete and fragmented, *Riḥla ilā Ḥāliyā 1960-61* represents an interesting attempt to create a comprehensive account of a country which, in the Arab imagery, was still hanging on the outskirts of the modern western world; as a marginal reality, whose identity and positioning seemed yet to be determined.

What really emerges from this text is not only the picture of a traditional Western country with all its technological and scientific wonders. Rather, the impression left on the reader seems that of a reality in which two natures coexist. On the one hand we have the modern western character, embodied by the circles of writers and intellectuals, and inherently inscribed into an urban environment. On the other hand, a Mediterranean dimension which resounds in the relics of a lost Arab past that still survives in the landscape and in the customs of the Sicilian rurality. We cannot truly assess whether this ambiguity is intentionally constructed or grounded in the attitude of a traveller, whose curiosity and open attitude avoid any monolithic representation of the Italian *other*. Indeed, unlike most of his forebears, al-Nā'ūrī attempts to depict a multifaceted reality which cannot be entirely translated by using

the traditional categories of a spirit-matter duality between East and West in the way it has been elaborated in the colonial period (El-Enany 2006: 5).

The significance of his treatise lays therefore in the refusal of the existence of rigid barriers of incommunicability between the Arab world and Europe. And Italy, in his depiction is still perceived as a sort of blurred frontier between these two worlds, a privileged place for confrontation and sharing. To sum up the vision and conciliative attitude of this traveller we may conclude with a final remark that al-Nā'ūrī puts in the mouth of the Orientalist Francesco Gabrieli (d. 1996) who, arriving late as our protagonist at a conference in Rome, leaves us with an emblematic excuse: “*Kullunā min ḥawḍ al-Muṭawassiṭ*” (We are all Mediterraneans) (al-Nā'ūrī 2004: 109).

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**A JOURNEY OF ĠĀDA AS-SAMMĀN OR  
HOW THE BODY BECOMES A SUITCASE**  
غادة السمان في رحلاتها أو كيف يصبح الجسد حقيبة سفر

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**Abstract.** In a book entitled "The Body is a Suitcase" Ġāda as-Sammān publishes narratives from places visited by her in the years 1964-1976. In the form of essays and reportages, she describes European and Arab cities, including many capitals. These materials that resulted finally in the abovementioned 520-page book had been earlier published separately in two Lebanese journals and one of them also in a Kuwaiti journal. In her works Ġ. as-Sammān do not focus on descriptions of visited places but she shows noteworthy and often surprising phenomena or cases that should be interesting for the curious Arab reader. She picks untypical traditions and tidbits referring to the daily life of the European societies and correlates them with Arabian traditions. The aim of this paper is to analyse the concept of *journey* in terms of Ġāda as-Sammān works and destabilisation as a consequence of the journey. Ġ. as-Sammān herself declares that destabilisation instigates the people to think. Therefore, during her journey she contemplates many important issues relevant to the cultural and political life of Arabs. Language used by the author is very colourful so in this paper it also forms an area of investigation. It is worth noticing that sometimes Ġ. as-Sammān's works are full of metaphors and beautiful expressions adeptly and tastefully used by the author. On the other hand, some of her essays are written in simple language and can be understood directly – the conclusion is that Ġāda as-Sammān's main goal was to make her works get to the broadest audience possible.

**Keywords:** *Arabic prose, Syrian literature, travel literature, Ġāda as-Sammān.*

يعد كتاب "الجسد حقيبة سفر"، الذي صدر عام 1979، التجربة الأولى لغادة السمان في مجال أدب الرحلة. ويمكن التأكيد أنه أتى مختلفاً عن تقاليد هذا النوع من الأدب، فقد كتب بطريقة فريدة تجعله أقرب إلى التحقيق الصحفي الحافل بموضوعات فكرية وسياسية واجتماعية، وأحياناً فلسفية وأدبية واقتصادية. ولعل كتابها الثاني، "شهوة الأجنحة" (1995)، جاء أقرب إلى أدب الرحلة من حيث وصف المدن، والعادات والتقاليد، والمجتمعات التي قضت فيها الكاتبة أوقاتها قصيرة خلال زياراتها إلى بلدان كثيرة من الشرق إلى الغرب. وكيف لا؟ وهي تكتب في مقدمة ذلك العمل منوهة أنها "حفيدة الرحالة العرب كابن بطوطة والسندباد." (السمان: 41995)، وغيرهما من الرحالة الذين تهديهم كتابها. في مؤلفها الضخم، الذي يقع في 520 صفحة، والموسوم بـ "الجسد حقيبة سفر"، تقدم المؤلفة مقالات وتحقيقات صحفية من عواصم ومدن أوروبية وعربية كثيرة، زارتها في الفترة ما بين 1964-1976. نشرت هذه المقالات فرادى في مجلتيْن لبنانيتين: "الأسبوع العربي"، و"الحوادث"، ونشر مقال واحد منها عن الكويت في مجلة "البقطة" الكويتية. على غير المؤلف، تخط غادة السمان مقدمتين لكتابها، وكعادتها تفاجئ القارئ بأسلوب غريب طريف، فتراها تضع عنواناً مستقزاً يسم المقدمة هكذا: "بقلم سواي!". فتكون المقدمة نسجاً من مقتبسات أخذت من أقوال كتاب ومفكرين، أمثال: ألبير كامو، ولورانس دارويل، وألبرتو مورافيا، وسارتر، ويوسف إدريس، ودستوفسكي، وغيرهم ممن أدلوا بأرائهم عن السفر والترحال، وعدم الاستقرار، والذكريات المرافقة، والفراق، ووصف الأماكن. وتختتمها بقصيدة معبرة بتوقيع اليوناني كافافي:  
وتقول لنفسك: سوف أرحل

إلى بلاد أخرى. إلى بحار أخرى.  
إلى مدينة أجمل من مدينتي هذه  
من كل جمالٍ في الماضي عرفته..  
لا أرض جديدة، يا صديقي هناك  
ولا بحر جديد: فالمدينة ستنتبعك. (السمان 1996: 6).

تفاجئنا الكاتبة، أيضاً، في "المقدمة الثانية"، إذ تسمها بهذه العبارة: "بقلمي ولن أكتبها!". وما هي سوى عبارات كتبت على شكل شعري متضمنة إشارات أو، كما تسميها المؤلفة، "برقيات" تكون مسودات لعنوانات متنوعة، تسم بها جزءاً من مقالات هذا الكتاب وتحقيقاته. وكلها تبين حالات الحزن، والغربة، والتفجع، والشكوى، التي تغدو حالة جمعية للعرب بقضيمهم وقضيمهم، وكذلك لكل المظلومين المرغمين على الرحيل والتناهي عن الوطن الحبيب. وتحرص السمان على توظيف العنوان ليكون حاملاً بين طياته علامات ودلالات يطمح النص إلى إشهارها، وقد تحدث الناقد العربي القديم، أبو بكر الصولي، عن دلالية العنوان قائلاً: "والعنوان العلامة كأنك علمته حتى عُرف من كتبه ومن كُتب إليه" (الصولي 1341هـ: 143). وللعنوان حضور قوي في أعمال السمان أجمعها، وبذلك "يعني سطوته وتجبره على المبدع/المنتج والقارئ" (رحيم 2010: 35). والعنوانات التي تقترحها الكاتبة هنا مختلفة الأهداف والدوافع، فمنها ما يلفت الانتباه بغرابة، بل لنقل ببراعة، تركيبها السيميائية ودلالاتها، و"العنونة بما تشتمل عليه من اسمي النص ومنتجه، تكون ذلك التعويض العلامي أو السيميوطيقي للحضور الذي كان واختفى فجأة لحظة إنتاج النص" (حسين 2007: 29). وبهذا المعنى يمكن فهم العناوين التالية التي تأتي بها السمان: "نملة في مملكة الحزن"، "مواطنة في مملكة الترانزيت"، "دفتر الغربة"، "أرحل .. فيختلني وطني..". وثمة عبارات موحية تضيف عليها تعليقات الكاتبة الطرافة الرمزية، فعلى سبيل المثال، تضع هذا العنوان: "كلمات .. في ضباب المطارات"، وتتبعه بتعليق بين قوسين، كما يلي: (السجع رهيب في هذا العنوان ولكنني لم أتعمده!..). وتوّه أنها ستترك للقارئ قرار اختيار عنوان كتابها، زاعمة أنها ستباركه إن فعل، بيد أنها تختار عنوان "الجسد حقيبة سفر"، وتلحقه بالعبارة التالية: "نرحل إرغامياً من الولادة إلى الموت وبينهما رحلات أخرى استطلاعية؟" (السمان 1996: 8)، وتتساءل: "الجسد حقيبة سفر؟"، وتعلق بعد ذلك: "ما بين النهرين نهري الحياة والموت، ونهرنا الذي نبدع" (السمان 1996: 13).

لندن هي بداية الرحيل، وتحظى بحصة الأسد من مقالات الكتاب إذ تخصصها السمان بست وثلاثين مقالة من أصل أربع وثمانين (باريس سبع، روما ست، القاهرة ست، بغداد خمس، عمان أربع، ومقالتين لكل من الكويت وفيينا وزوريخ وبرلين، ومقالة واحدة لكل من: جنيف وفرانكفورت وتونس والإسماعيلية والسويس وعدن وفلورانس، وعدة تغريدات في المطارات وقاعات الترانزيت). وتأتي صورة لندن متناقضة، فالكاتبة تحب فيها أموراً كثيرة: النظام، حقوق الإنسان، التأمين الصحي، وأحياناً تمتعض من أمور أخرى، فترى لندن شاحبة وتائهة. في السطور الأولى من المقال الأول، الموسوم بـ "بداية زمن الرحيل"، نرى صورة لندن كما ترسمها عادة السمان: "واستقبلني الصقيع بلندن. وتذكرت أن الشمس غابت مع وجه من ودعني في مطار بيروت ولم تشرق منذ تلك اللحظة. ساعتى كانت تشير إلى السادسة (...). وجاءت السابعة. والثامنة. والتاسعة. والعاشره ولم تظلم السماء. تحولت إلى إنسان ألي: كبيرة ومفغورة ورمادية. بلا أهداب ولا دموع..". (السمان 1996: 13).

صورة لندن، بصقيعها وسمائها المخيفة وليلها الميت، تستدعي المقارنة بالصورة المناقضة – صورة الشرق بسحر ليله، ودفنه، وقمره الميتسم. وتكرر كلمتا "الشرق" و"الشرقيون" بكثرة في الكتاب، فيصبح الشرق معبراً عن وطن شاسع لشعوب وقوميات كثيرة، يجمعها نبضه وروحانيته، ويطبعها – على اختلافها – بطابعه الخاص. وتعبّر الكاتبة عن القلق الذي ينتاب القادم من الشرق عندما يعيش في مجتمع مختلف كلياً عن مجتمعه، و"لعل أفسى ما يعانيه الإنسان هو الانتقال من مكان لا ينتمي إليه، فتنتهبه مشاعر الخوف والقلق، ويستوطنه إحساس بعداء الآخر..". (حمود 2005: 111). والسمان لا تبت شعور العداة تجاه البريطانيين، لكنها تبدي توجسها من طبيعة حياتهم التي تتماشى مع الظروف الطبيعية المنفرة:

وأنا كاهنة من الشرق لليل لا يعرف الزيف... فيه ظلمة وحنين وتراتيل غامضة. والليل هنا لوحة مينة مدقوقة في الأعلى لا فرق بينها وبين ديكور السقف، والقمر، شاعر السماء الجوال لا يتسلق إطاراتها. وهنا (...). أدركت معنى سحر الشرق بالنسبة للفتيات الإنكليزيات. وليل الصحراء الذي لم يصبه عن هباب المداخن – بدفنه وقمره – يشكل عنصراً أساسياً من عناصر ذلك السحر. وقلت ما دام ليل بلادي كالقطع النادر في هذه البلاد، فألر ليلهم... ورأيت... (السمان 1996: 13).

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إن الجو عنصر مؤثر، وحاضر بقوة في حياة البريطانيين حتى في أحاديثهم وتحياتهم. فعبوس الأنواء، واكفهرار السماء، وضبابية الأمداء، تجعلهم متفوقين، منطوين على أنفسهم، صامتين في حالة عزلة مريبة يصعب على أهل الشرق استساغتها، وهذا ما لمستته الكاتبة الوافدة من بلاد العرب الحارة:

"طقس جميل" هي عبارة التحية التقليدية، التي يبدأ بها الإنكليزي شخصا آخر في لحظات الورد النادرة، لأنها وحدها تفك طلمس الصمت الذي يغلف كل فرد بحكم انعزاله التام عن أي فرد آخر، ويتبعها حديث طويل مجاني. لكن الغريب مهما طال إقامته لا يمكن له أن يألفها، خصوصا إذا كان قادما من بلاد شمسها الحادة وحدها تطهر طعامه! (السمان 1996: 40).

ورغم أن لندن تعرف بمدينة التقاليد والعراقة، فالكاتبة تفاجئنا بصفة جديدة من صفات عاصمة الضباب، أنها أيضا مدينة مجون، وأي مجون! وتجذبنا عادة السمان بأسلوبها الطريف، ومقارناتها الذكية، لتنتج أثر ذلك المجون الفريد خلف أبواب المدينة المغلقة:

ومجون لندن طريف ومن نوع خاص.. إنه مشوب بكثير من مظاهر المحافظة.. فأبواب الملاهي من الخشب البني العتيق، ولها وقار أستاذ جامعة، ويخيل لمن يراها قبل أن يدخل أنه سيد خلفها قاعة محاضرات أو قاعة محكمة، وحينما يصبح في الداخل لا بد له من أن يطلق شهقة دهشة قبل أن يبدي استنكاره أو استحسانه.. إن أي شيء لا يمكن أن يخطر بالبال يحدث هناك.. (السمان 1996: 15).

تلحح السمان في تيه عاصمة الضباب شبابا ضائعين، فتشرح بعض الظواهر المغلفة، التي تشكل سبب ضياعهم. وتلاحظ بعين المراقب النبهي معاناة هؤلاء، فتتناول بعض سلبيات الحضارة الغربية، التي عنيت بالمادة ولم تلتفت إلى الحياة الروحية الإنسانية. وتقترب الكاتبة في طرحها من مسالك التحليل النفسي واصفة حال ذلك الضياع:

إن الضياع الحقيقي الذي يعاني منه بحدته شبان تلك البلاد ومظاهره المتعددة من روكروز وبيتلز ومودرنز يدل على أن المدنية الغربية الحديثة رغم ما فيها من عظمة آلية قد أفلست في منح الإنسان السلام النفسي والطمأنينة الأخلاقية.. بل إنها تكاد تشوهه وتغير معالمه نهائيا، إن الحياة الروحية للإنسان هناك كقدم فتاة صينية موضوعة في حذاء حديدي كي لا تنمو.. وهذا الجيل، جيل مرحلة الانتقال إلى نموذج جديد من حياة الغاب لقرده ما زال يتعذب ريثما ينسى أنه إنسان!.. (السمان 1996: 15-16).

تلقت السمان إلى تفاصيل دقيقة من حياة البريطانيين واهتماماتهم محاولة دراستها بعمق، وتحليلها بعناية، فعلى سبيل المثال، تستعرض تعلق الإنكليز بأغاني البيتلز التي ترى فيها الكاتبة تعبيراً عن مرارة الإنكليز، وشعورهم بالخيبة والاستياء: "أغنية البيتلز مثلا التي تقول: (لقد كان يوما شاقا، وكانت ليلة شاقا، وأنا أعمل كالكلب) أليست روح المرارة والتذمر المستسلم التي تحملها، هي التي دعت الشعب الإنكليزي لاختيارها كأحب أغنية إلى نفسه؟..." (السمان 1996: 41). وتلتقط الكاتبة جوانب مهمة من شخصية البريطانيين وسلوكهم، ومن ذلك تعلقهم بقائدهم تشرشل وتنتج أخباره وتأثرهم بمرضه، وتدعي أن ذلك يكسر الفكرة الشائعة عن برود هذا الشعب. فذكر تشرشل يخرق حصون تقاليدهم في تبادل الحوار. فتكتب السمان معبرة عن إعجابها بسلوكهم هذا، إذ ترى فيه صفات إيجابية، لكنها لا تتركه دون أن تضعه تحت مشرطها على طاولة التحليل النفسي:

حزن بالغ، وتجمهر أمام باب داره [دار تشرشل] ساعات في الصقيع بانتظار كلمات طبيبه، وقرءاتهم للنشرات الطبية عن صحته حتى أثناء اجتيازهم للشارع أو قفزهم إلى (الباص)، ويخالط ذلك شيء من الهستيريا العاطفية التي لا تتفق مع الفكرة الشائعة عن برود الشعب الإنكليزي و(عقلانية) مشاعره.. (...) ربما كان حزن الشعب الإنكليزي على تشرشل وجزعهم على حياته أمرا صادقا ومباشرا ليس بصمام أمان ولا بانتحال لمبرر.. وهذا ما معناه أن الشعب حساس جدا، وعاطفيته سريعة الإثارة، وموت إنسان بالنسبة إليه كارثة، لمجرد أنه إنسان يموت بعد أن أعطى كل ما لديه لقومه ووطنه... (السمان 1996: 40-41).

تواصل عادة السمان في مقالاتها رسم صور سوداوية تمثل وجه لندن المليء بالندوب البشعة. ففي "لا حب في لندن" ترصد مسائل شتى من قضايا الحياة الاجتماعية، والعلاقات الإنسانية، والظواهر التي تراها غريبة ومغلقة،

ومنها الظاهرة التي تمثلها جماعة الهيبيز – "أبناء اللاحب غير المؤذي". تدرك السمان جيدا حالة الضياع التي يعيشها الهيبيز، وتعرف ما يمثلون من أفكار، بل من أوهاام واغتراب:

أطرف ما في جماعة الهيبيز أو "أبناء الزهور" كما يسمون أنفسهم أنهم أوجدوا أنفسهم باسم الحب، وأن حركاتهم كلها تقوم على فكرة "اصنعوا الحب لا الحرب"! .. ولكنهم، لو صدقوا، وابتعدوا عن ذاتهم ليقوموا بتجرد، لرؤوا أنهم أحفاد جيل (الحرب من أجل الإمبراطورية الاستعمارية) لا أحفاد (الحب والزهور). إنهم في بريطانيا يمثلون الجيل الضائع بلا حب.. الجيل الجديد الذي بزغ إلى الوجود بينما شمس إمبراطورية آبائه وأجداده تغرب.. وهم غرباء عن أهلهم... عن القيم التقليدية التي ما تزال تسود بريطانيا (...). ولذا فهم بلا هدف... إنهم يتعلمون الطاعة والنظام ولكنهم لا يعرفون من أجل ماذا، وماذا بعد... فيتمردون تمردا أعمى على كل شيء. (السمان 1996: 106).

لا تتوانى غادة السمان عن إطلاق أحكام سلبية صارمة على الهيبيز البريطانيين، وتصف حالهم بالمأساة مؤكدة انفصالهم عن الواقع، وهروبهم إلى عالم المخدرات. وتقدم معلومات وافية عما يقومون به محاولة دراسة أحوالهم من منطلق التحليل النفسي الاجتماعي:

ربما كانت مأساة الهيبيز الإنكليز بالذات انفصالهم عن واقع الحياة اليومية، ومحاولتهم البائسة لخلق عالم خاص بهم جديد وغريب.. فهم يعيشون في عزلة تامة عن وطنهم وعن بقية أفراد الشعب، ولهم مفاهيمهم وأغانيمهم ومخازنهم ومطربوهم وأساطيرهم. ولهم أيضا مجالاتهم الخاصة، وهي مكشوفة وتعتبر أن كل ما في الطبيعة خير (...). ولما كانوا يعيشون في عالم خيالي بعيد عن واقع حياة أي فرد ينتمي إلى أرض وتاريخ ومستقبل، كانت المخدرات ضرورية لتساعدهم على هذا الهرب المستمر... (السمان 1996: 111).

وتتجلى هذه المأساة في لجوء الشباب إلى استعمال أصناف جديدة من المخدرات مثل "حبوب الهلوسة" التي تسمى (إل. إس. دي): "وأكثرهم يتعاطى الحشيش والماريوانا، وصنع (المثقفون) منهم ال (إل. إس. دي) إذ أن هذا المخدر يركب في المخبر.. (السمان 1996: 111). وقد أدى هذا المخدر إلى موت الكثيرين ممن تناولوه بطريقة مفاجئة. وتروي المؤلفة قصصا عن هذه الحبوب التي تذهب بعقل من يتناولها، فلا يدرك ما يفعل معرضا نفسه للهلاك. وتتدرج مأساة الشباب لتصبح جزءا من تراجيديا كبرى تشمل جل مناحي الحياة في لندن، والغرب عموما، تلخصها السمان بحادثة صغيرة ترمز إلى المأساة العامة: "حادثة صغيرة تلخص ما يجري كله.. وهي ليست نكتة.. إنها مأساة الإنسان الحديث. أخي الذي استعار دراجتي النارية وسقط عنها، وروى لي أنه خلال إقامته في المستشفى كانت الممرضة توقفه أحيانا من النوم كي تعطيه (حبة) المنوم المعتادة!" (السمان 1996: 43).

لغادة السمان حديث طويل عن مفهوم الحرية في المجتمعات الغربية، التي تمثلها هنا لندن، فهي ترى أنها حرية زائفة لا تبرح شمسها الشاحبة غيوم الاستلاب. وفي قناعها أن الإنسان في كنف الحضارة الحديثة مستلب، يعيش اغترابا فظيعا، حيث تبدو حريته أشبه بكيان لا حضن له. وعلى الرغم من أحكام الكاتبة الحادة بعض الشيء، والمبالغة في التعميم أحيانا، في طرحها المتعلق بحرية الفرد في هذه المجتمعات، فلا بد من الإشارة إلى جمالية المقارنات التي تجربها، وفرادة الاستعارات التي تصنعها، فهي تجعل محاكماتها مقنعة، وشديدة الطرافة. هكذا تفهم الكاتبة معنى الحرية في العالم المادي المستشرس:

الحرية في مثل هذا العالم تلغي نفسها بنفسها لأنها حرية الذين استلبتهم المدنية أنفسهم.. إنها حرية أن تموت كما تشاء لأنه لا أحد يهيمه أمرك لينتقدك أو يأسف من أجلك.. إنها حرية لا مبالاة الجماعة بك (...). إنها حرية التأمل تمنح لأعمى.. حرية الأكل لمن استوصلت معدته.. حرية المركب في أن يبحر حيث يشاء في وجود بلا بحر.. (السمان 1996: 16).

لا ترى المؤلفة قيمة للحرية في الحضارة الحديثة ما دام الإنسان مستلبا يعتره القلق، ولا يستطيع أن يعيش بأحاسيسه في زحام العمل، وقلة الوقت والحيلة: "فالشعب البريطاني كالشعوب الغربية كلها.. لاهت دائما.. لاهت وراء القطار، لاهت وراء ساعة المكتب، يتناول وجباته الخفيفة أثناء ركضه في الزحام، ودماغه صار كمعدته، لا يهضم إلا المعليات، لم يعد لديه وقت يبحث فيه عن الحقيقة، أو يمارس أحاسيسه بأبعادها كلها.. (السمان 1996: 42). وفي رأي الكاتبة، تترك هذه الحالة المتأزمة شروخا في نفسية الناس ما يؤدي إلى خلق شخصية أوروبية منكفئة على ذاتها

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بفردانيتها، وعدم مبالاتها بالآخر. وتقدم السمان أمثلة على ذلك من تجاربها ومشاهداتها في لندن وباريس، ومنها قصة المرأة الحامل في شهرها الأخير إذ يأتيها المخاض وهي واقفة في عربة المترو، فلا يلتفت إلى ألمها أحد:

جارها الجالس على المقعد الذي تستند إليه لم يرفع عينيه عن جريدته. لم يلتفت إليها إنسان. ظلت عيون الرجال والنساء مترقبة ظهور أسماء المحطات كي لا يفوت أحدهم الهبوط فيتأخر (...). ظل الصاعدون والهابطون يصطدمون بها في غمرة تدافعهم. وظلت فتاة تقبل (شابهة) بنهم عند النافذة دون أن يلتفتا أو يلتفت إليهما أيضا أحد. تفكك عجيب في المجموعة، كل في قفصه الزجاجي العازل، غاب جديد من المدينة... كنت وحدي البدائية الغنية بالهتها وأوثانها.. وكنت وحدي التي بدت غبية ومضحكة حينما تقدمت من السيدة الحامل وسألته إن كانت بحاجة إلى المساعدة. فاستغربت، وفي غمرة أوجاعها لوت بوجهها عني قرفا لتدخلني فيما لا يعنيني!!! (السمان 1996: 37).

وإذا كان حضور الجو الشاحب كبيرا في رسم صورة عاصمة الضباب البشعة، فحضوره لم يكن قليلا أيضا في وصف لندن الزاهية، التي تسميها الكاتبة بلندن "الأخرى": "لا شيء أجمل من لندن حينما تصفو سماؤها، وتثبت فيها شمس، ويتلصص فوق فوق أبراجها قمر.. إنها رائعة، كابتناسمة مفاجئة في وجه إنسان متعب قلما تنفجر أساريره.. ككلمة حب مشبوبة على شفتي كاهن لا ميالة." (السمان 1996: 29). وفي موضع آخر تتكلم بصراحة عن لندن "الأخرى" إيجابية السمات، ولا يخلو الأمر من تناقض حتى في مفهوم الحرية الذي قدمته السمان سابقا:

عن لندن الأخرى أتحدث هذه المرة.. عن لندن الجميلة، لندن الإنسان والحرية، لندن الفن والفكر والمسرح، لندن الطريفة والبريئة.. لندن التي تشدني إليها أبدا أينما كنت... أرحل عنها إليها.. أغادرها، ولكن تجدني أبدا راجعة.. عن لندن المعتقة بالمثل والإنسانية أكتب هذه المرة.. عن عشرات الأشياء التي نحن بأمس الحاجة لاستيرادها قبل أفلام جيمس بوند وأغاني (البيتلز) وأخلاق (الجبرك).. (السمان 1996: 123)

والأمور الإيجابية التي تراها الكاتبة بعين الرضا كثيرة، منها: النظام الاجتماعي العادل، وانتفاء الجوع، والحفاظ على كرامة الإنسان، والتأمين الصحي والطبابة المجانية. وتعد ذلك كله ظاهرة اشتراكية حقيقية ينبغي الإشادة بها، ولكن ما يثير انتباه القارئ أن السمان تكتفتي أحيانا بالحديث عن الرجال دون النساء، ومن ذلك قولها: "ليس في بريطانيا رجل جائع إلا إذا اختار هو ذلك للريجيم" (السمان 1996: 123)، فلم تذكر النساء أيضا؟ فهل هن جائعات يا ترى! أم أن لهن وضعًا خاصًا لا نعرفه؟! وتركز في حديثها عن مزايا الحياة الاجتماعية، والوضع المريح للعاطلين من العمل:

نظام الضمان الاجتماعي مطبق بطريقة إنسانية (وعادلة) نسبيًا. يستطيع أي عاطل عن العمل أن يذهب إلى أقرب مركز بوليس، والدولة تدفع له راتبًا أسبوعيًا قدره 13 جنيهًا ريثما تتولى إيجاد عمل له.. وهذا بلا ريب أمر رائع ينقذ المواطنين جميعًا من القلق والرعب الدائم من الفقر (...). والصحف تروي باستمرار حكايا طريفة عن رجال يتهبون من العمل لأن الراتب الذي تدفعه الدولة (للبطالة) أكبر أحيانا من الرواتب التي يتلقونها. وأعظم ظاهرة اشتراكية في بريطانيا هي ظاهرة تأمين الطب والعلاج المجاني لكل فرد من أفراد الشعب وحتى للرعايا الجانب المقيمين في بريطانيا.. (السمان 1996: 123).

وبعض النظر عن عدم تقبل عادة السمان لتوقع الإنكليزي داخل فرديته، نجدها تمتدح تعامل الدولة مع خصوصية الفرد على أنها أمر مقدس: "الفرد محبوب من قبل الدولة، وفرديته مقدسة. ولا يمكن إلقاء القبض على أي إنسان دون إدانته مهما كانت التهمة وإلا استطاع مقاضاة المسؤولين. الفرد شيء مهم، سواء كان طبيبًا أو محاميا مثقفا أو عاملا بسيطًا أو خادما..." (السمان 1996: 124). تؤكد الكاتبة أن لا فرق بين فرد وآخر فهم سواسية أمام القانون، ويحترم العامل العادي مهما كانت طبيعة عمله، وهذا ما يشد انتباه الكاتبة التي تربت في مجتمع يميز بين إنسان وآخر حسب مهنته، أو مكانته الاجتماعية، فتقول: "العمل اليومي هناك ثمين جدا، ودخل مصلح الأحمية يعادل دخل موظف البنك لأنه يقدم للمجتمع عملا ضروريا كأي موظف أو مثقف." (السمان 1996: 124). تلتقط الكاتبة، كعادتها، تفاصيل صغيرة، وتقرنها بأمر مهمة كبيرة، بذكاء وطرافة، فمثلا تتحدث عن المطر، لتنتقل إلى التعبير عن إعجابها بنظام صرف المياه في شوارع لندن؛ وفي المحصلة نجدها تثبت آراءها عن القرى والمدن،



وعدالة القانون، وانعدام الفساد: "المطر مثلا لا يكف لحظة عن الهطول في لندن، ولم يحدث قط أن تجمعت بركة من الماء حتى في القرى، القرى كالمدينة من حيث التحضر، ولكنها أجمل وأكثر صفاء وهدوءا. القانون فوق الجميع، ولا يمكن تجاوزه في أية حال. المحسوبيات غير موجودة على الإطلاق." (السمان 1996: 124).

وتنتبه عادة السمان إلى كل شاردة وواردة في حياة البريطانيين وعاداتهم وتقاليدهم ولغتهم. وتأتي بالطريف من كل ناحية، فلا تتوانى عن الحديث عن شتائم الإنكليز المهذبة التي تختلف عن أساليب السباب عند العرب. فتزعم أن الشتائم في اللغة الإنكليزية "كلها موجهة نحو الفرد (المشتوم). في اللغة العربية الشتائم منصبة على الأخت أو الأم مثلا..." (السمان 1996: 200). وتتوسع الكاتبة في شرح ذلك مؤكدة:

إذا ترجمنا هذه الشتائم إلى الإنكليزية لا يشعر الإنكليزي أنك تشتمه أصلا، وإنما يشعر بأنك تبدي وجهة نظرك نحو أفراد أسرته وليس من شأنه أو من حقه أن يؤكد أو ينفي ذلك! .. وأقصى رد يمكن لك أن تسمعه في هذه الحالة هو أنه (في حدود علمه) لا يعتقد بأن ما تقول صحيح. As far as I am concerned وهو تعبير رائع آخر (حتى على صعيد الشتمية) عن احترام الفرد لفرديته، وبالتالي لحدوده الإنسانية، وحدود سواه.. (السمان 1996: 200).

تقدم عادة السمان في بعض مقالاتها صورة لباريس مختلفة عن تلك التي ترسم بها لندن، فيشد انتباهها شيء آخر يتعلق بالعمارة في عاصمة الأنوار. فنجدها تنتقد ما يفعله الباريسيون بأبنيتهم التي تطل على بطلاءات تطمس وجهها ووجه قصورها التاريخية: "أول ما طالعني في باريس صدمني. جعلني أتساءل: ماذا حدث للفرنسيين؟ ولماذا يشوهون عاصمتهم بهذه الصورة؟ فالأبنية في باريس كما في المدن العريقة الكبيرة جميعا تحمل أحجارها آثار الزمن هيابا أسود، فتبدو رمادية اللون معقنة الزوايا." (السمان 1996: 17). فالمدينة تشوه بهذه الطريقة، وتفقد بريقها التاريخي المميز: "ما زال العمال يطولون خدي باريس بالبودرة، يبيضونها، ترى هل تنقد المدينة الحلوة نفسها؟ (...). ترى هل تنقد المدينة نفسها قبل أن تتحول إلى ما يشبه المدن الكرتونية التي تبني داخل استديوهات هوليوود؟" (السمان 1996: 17). ويكون أسلوب الكاتبة طريفا إذ تعقد مقارنات، وتخلق استعارات، وتشبيهات "تونس" هذه المدينة:

وإذا استطاع الفرنسيون أن يبرروا عملية شد الوجه هذه لباريس بحجة النظافة، فلا أعتقد أن بوسعهم ذلك بالنسبة لقلاعهم وقصورهم الأثرية.. قصر شامبور مثلا رأيتُه وقد تم تنظيف نصفه، فصار ناصع البياض كعجين لم يخبز، وصار التناقض في هيئته مزعجا بعد أن فقد الانسجام بين طراز بنائه القديم ونظافته المستحدثة. (السمان 1996: 17).

ينبذ جمال فرنسا في ريفها، وتعدو باريس مثلا للجمال، رغم تشويه آثارها. وتنفن الكاتبة في وصف الريف بصفات تجمع بين النقيضين فهو: "صحراء خضراء شاسعة، إنه رائع وشاسع حتى الرتابة وحتى الإحساس بالصحراء..". (السمان 1996: 19). إن هذا الوصف الجامع لثنائيات متضادة، ككلمتي (صحراء - خضراء)، يعبر عن بلاغة العبارة وبراعتها عند السمان. وترتبط جمالية باريس أحيانا بأعمال الدعاية التي تحرص عليها المؤسسات المالية، ما يثير الريبة لدى الكاتبة: "باريس المدينة الجميلة كحديقة مثل يحتذى بالنسبة لبقية المدن.. ففي مونبازون وفي تور رأيت حوضا لأزهار جميلة ملونة على طول الرصيف، ولوحة أمام الحوض كتب عليها أن هذه الأزهار هي هدية البنك إلى الناس! هدية من العواطف في القرن العشرين..". (السمان 1996: 19).

والريف الفرنسي، بكل ما فيه من جمال، تراه الكاتبة مختلفا عن المدن الأوروبية، وتجد الحياة فيه قريبة من حياة العرب. فتؤكد أن المرأة الريفية تختلف تماما عن الصورة النمطية التي رسمت بها المرأة الفرنسية قياسا على ما نسمعه عن باريس أو نراه فيها، وبذلك يخيب أمل الرجال (وربما العرب، كما يفهم من تلميح الكاتبة) الذين يظنون أنهم غايات أشبه ما يكن ببنات الهوى:

لا أثر للتهتك في الريف الفرنسي. رابطة الأسرة قوية، وسطوة الدين ما تزال مهيمنة على الرؤوس الطيبة الساذجة. (...) رأيتها [المرأة الريفية] خادمة في المطعم. ورأيتها أما تدفع بعربة أطفالها في الشارع. وفتاة في أبيه حلة زاهية إلى الكنيسة، وزوجة تتأبط ذراع زوجها، وفلاح، وبائعة.. وكانت في الحالات جميعا امرأة عاملة، ولم تكن نحيلة القوام كمانيكان لأنها تعمل حقا كالرجل ولا وقت لديها لحساب الكالوريز (النقاط) الحرارية الموجودة في (قطعة البفتيك). ولم تكن متهتكة ومبتذلة، وإنما رأيتها بسيطة المظهر والفتات، وأعتقد أن حقيقتها الرائعة هذه تخيب دوما آمال الذين يسمعون (الكثير) عن المرأة الفرنسية، وبينون على هذه الأساطير كثيرا من الآمال. (السمان 1996: 18).

ترى السمان أن حياة المرأة الغربية كانت نتيجة لتطور تاريخي، واجتماعي، وصناعي، له جذور في حياة أمتها من حروب وتصنيع، لذلك فهي تتلاءم مع حياتها النفسية. وتزعم أن المرأة الفرنسية الحقيقية تختلف عن صورتها التي

تقدم في الدعاية السياحية لجذب السواح. ونعلم منها أيضا أن بعض المدن الفرنسية تشبه المدن السورية من حيث نمط الحياة المحافظ الذي يحكمها:

المرأة الفرنسية (الغانية) التي تجتذب الرجال من أنحاء العالم جميعا هي الطبق الذي يطهوه الفرنسيون لضيوفهم فقط ولا يتناولونه. إنها تختلف تماما عن طبقهم الشعبي الشائع: المرأة الجادة المحترمة ذات الضحكة الحلوة. والوجه النظيف والقامة الممتلئة. مدينة أورليان مثلا تنام بأكملها قبل العاشرة، ليس فيها ملهى واحد، ومكان التسلية الوحيد فيها هو السينما كما في حمص مثلا أو أية مدينة سورية محافظة. (السمان 1996: 18).

وبعكس ما يثار عن قمع المرأة العربية في مجتمعاتها، وتعاطف الأوربيين معها، ترصد السمان رأيا مختلفا بكليته، مفاده أن الأوروبيات يحسبن العربيات على حياتهن الزوجية: "قالت عاملة تجرب لي ثوبا في أحد المخازن: المرأة عندكم لا تعرف أية نعمة تعيش فيها..". (السمان 1996: 38). بيد أن الكاتبة تتناول هذه القضية من زوايا أخرى، متذكرة الأجنيبات اللواتي يتزوجن من رجال شرقيين، فيتركن بلادهن الجميلة من أجلهم: "منهن من تركل مناظر سويسرا ورقي حياتها وتتبع أسمرها إلى أتم زاوية في حماه وأكثرها تزمنا.. ماذا يأسرها سوى حلمها بأن تعامل كأنثى.. (وإن كانت في أغلب الأحيان تعود من جحيما فاشلة) .. فالرجل الشرقي يبالغ في (حرصه) على المرأة حتى ليسجنها." (السمان 1996: 38). ورغم ذلك فالمؤلفة لا تدعو إلى تقليد الأوروبيات وترى "في الدعوة إلى تقليد مظاهر حرية المرأة الغربية، أمرا غير منطقي..". (السمان 1996: 38). وتبدي نفورها وسخريتها من الطريقة الرخيصة التي تعامل بها المرأة الغربية: "إن ثمن حبة الدراق في لندن أو عنقود العنب في باريس يفوق ثمن امرأة!! ... يا للرخاء.. وذات أزل دفع آدم الأول لحواء الأولى خلوده ثمنا لحبها.. فإلى أين تسير حواء؟ .. أم أن أحفاد آدم هنا ينتقمون، والمرأة ترقص في وليمة ذبحها؟؟" (السمان 1996: 39).

الأناقة في فرنسا، والترتيب الجميل للأشياء، يشدان انتباه المؤلفة، فتأتي على ذكرهما في معرض حديثها عن المطاعم الفرنسية، التي تراها بعين الكمال حد المبالغة والتعميم: "آخر ما يثير اهتمام الغريب في المطعم الفرنسي هو الطعام (حتى ولو كان جائعا). إن المطعم الفرنسي قمة في الذوق والترتيب، ومتحف لعراقة الشعب وحضارته (...). نحس بأن الجمال الحقيقي لا يصنعه مهندس الديكور وإنما هو حصيلة أدواق متعاقبة وزيدة فنون أجيال..". (السمان 1996: 19-20). وتثير الطرق، وحسن تنظيمها، إعجاب الكاتبة، مع أن هذه الأمور تعد من بديهيات تنظيم المدن في أوروبا. فعلى ما يبدو أن ذلك التطور الحضاري كان شيئا مدهلا للسائح العربي في ستينيات القرن العشرين وقت زيارة السمان لفرنسا: "الطرق في أنحاء فرنسا كلها منظمة بشكل يدعو إلى الدهشة.. إن الغريب يستطيع أن يتجول فيها (...). دون أن يضطر لسؤال إنسان عن الدرب، إذ لا يقطع عشرة أمتار إلا ويجد لوحة تحمل رقم الطريق الذي هو عليه، ولا يصل مفترق طرق إلا ويقرأ إلى أين تقود كل درب..". (السمان 1996: 20). وتنتهي الكاتبة حديثها عن الطرق بأسلوب فكاهي يفاجئ القارئ بطرافته: إنها تحرم الإنسان من لذة أن يضيع! ويبدو أن الإنسان يجب أن يضيع أحيانا ليكتشف دربه بنفسه، لقد قدرت هذه الدقة وأعجبت بها ولكنني كنت أحببت الطرق أكثر لو تركت لي شيئا.. الدرب الوحيدة التي تمنيت أن أسير فيها ضيقة وعليها لافتة تقول: طريق لا توصل إلى أي مكان.. تجنبها!! (السمان 1996: 20).

أما وصف إيطاليا، فيبدأ بعاصمتها وآثارها وتماثيلها التي تشد السائح لكثرتها، وجمالها الرائع الذي يحفز الكاتبة على أن ترى فيها روحا بشرية لا أحجارا صماء: "مئات من الوجوه الحجرية، مئات من الأجساد الرخامية تطل من كل مكان... من أعلى الأبنية تصطف كالعساكر، أمام الأبواب تنتصب فوق النوافير، بين المياه المتدفقة غالبا من أفواهها، في الساحات...". (السمان 1996: 21). أنسنة التماثيل هذه تجعل منها النصف الجميل من سكان روما: "تماثيل في كل مكان، جميلة، دقيقة الصنع حتى لترهف السمع لتلتقط ما تتأهب لتقوله، أو تكاد تمد يدك مصافحا.. إنها روما، المدينة التي نصف سكانها (النصف الحلو) من التماثيل، لكن النصف الآخر لم يتحول إلى آلات بعد..". (السمان 1996: 21). وتصرح الكاتبة أن الإحساس بالغربة ينتفي منذ لحظة الوصول إلى روما، ولكنها تؤكد أن لهذه المدينة وجهين:

عندما يأتي المساء يكتشف أن روما مصابة بازواج خطير في الشخصية.. فالأبنية الأثرية المبتوثة في أنحائها كلها تخلق فيها جوا من الوفاق والقدم، والتماثيل الفنية الرائعة توحى بعالم من الجمال الإغريقي والقيم الصلبة.. ومع المساء تختفي روما الدكتور جيكل وتنتصب روما المستر هايد التي تنافس برقصها الوحشي قافلة المدن التي لا تنام.. وتبهت الأبنية الأثرية حتى لتكاد تختفي، ومع أصوات القيلات في زوايا الشوارع، والمهممات والملاحقات وشهقات التعب، أحسست فجأة أن التماثيل العارية بدأت تنبض بالشهوة وتتحرك في أماكنها لتعربد لاهثة.. (السمان 1996: 21-22).

لا يقتصر وصف الكاتبة على روما وروعة تماثيلها ونوافيرها، ولكنه يمتد ليصل إلى نفسية الإيطالي، ومقارنته بالبريطاني بطريقة بارعة لا تخلو من الفكاهة:

في لندن مثلا كنت إذا راقصت شابا أقرب بوجهي من وجهه لأتأكد من أنه يتنفس حقا... وإذا دست على قدم رجل ما في المترو فإني لا أعتذر لأنه لا يحس بي.. إنه آلة لم يدخل صانعها في حسابه حوادث تافهة من هذا النوع.. أما في روما فالجو النفسي يوحى منذ الوهلة الأولى بأن حادثة تافهة كهذه يمكن أن تؤدي إلى حرب داحس وغيره جديدة.. (السمان 1996: 21).

والإيطاليون، كما تراهم الكاتبة، يختلفون عن سائر الأوروبيين، فهم أكثر دفئا وأحر عاطفة، يشبهون العرب في أسلوب حياتهم. فهم "لا يركضون بجنون فئران في أنبوب اختبار مكهرب، ما زالوا يتلکأون أمام الواجهات" (السمان 1996: 21)، ويشاكسون النساء للفت انتباههن، ويقومون بأمور أخرى تجعلهم قريبين من الشرقيين:

ويصفرون – على الأقل – إذا مرت بهم فتاة جميلة، ويمضغون الطعام قبل ابتلاعه، وينامون دون جرعة من الدواء المنوم، ويفكرون بابتياح طوق ياسمين للحبيبة بدلا من سوالها: كم تريدین؟ وما زالوا أيضا يبتثرون في العربات التي تجرها الأحصنة في مدينتهم اعترافا منهم بأنه ما زال فيها بعض الناس الذين يفضلون أن لا يصلوا بسرعة.. إن مشهد هذه العربات ملأني طمأنينة، ذكرني بأنني لم ابتعد كثيرا عن بلادي! (السمان 1996: 21).

تحدث عادة السمان في مقالات عديدة عن تأثير الدعاية الصهيونية في أوروبا الغربية، ساردة ما ترى وتسمع من ناس عاديين، وإعلام متأثر بتلك الدعاية، أو له مصالح من ورائها. وتبدي ألمها من الاحتفاء بالظالم الغاصب، وحزنها من جراء غياب العرب عن كل ذلك. وما يسوغ استطرادات الكاتبة، في هذا الموضوع، تاريخ كتابة هذه المقالات الذي صادف حدوث نكسة 1967. وكانت السمان شاهدة على تزييف الحقائق، والكذب البين، وقلب الحقائق لصالح إسرائيل: "والواقع أن الدعاية الإسرائيلية كما لاحظت ترتكز على أسس علمية نفسية حديثة لمختلف الشعوب الأوروبية.. إنهم يقدمونها لكل شعب أوروبي بأسلوب معين يتفق مع نفسيته وظروفه وتاريخه معه.. يسكبونها له في طبقه الشعبي كي يتناولها بتقبل." (السمان 1996: 30). تروي السمان كيف يتأثر الشبان الألمان بالدعاية الإسرائيلية، فهي استطاعت أن تربي لدى الجيل الجديد عقدة الشعور بالذنب أمام اليهود، وتحويله إلى الشعور بالذنب نحو إسرائيل التي كسبت من وراء ذلك دعما ماديا غير محدود. لكن الكاتبة تشير إلى شيء مختلف يعتمل في نفسية الألماني، شيء ملتبس ومتناقض تصفه بطريقة تحاول الدخول في دهاليز التحليل النفسي لهذه الظاهرة: "الألماني في أعماقه ما زال يحقر الإسرائيلي كقرود له أسلوب (حقير) في الحياة، ولكنه تعلم أيضا أن يكره احتقاره للإسرائيلي ويحجل منه، بل ويدفع له ثمن احتقار أجداده له...". (السمان 1996: 30). وتزعم أن اليهودي مضطهد في أوروبا بصورة عامة، لكن كيهودي لا كإسرائيلي: "في لندن يمنع دخول اليهود إلى عدد كبير من النوادي، ولا يسمح بدخول أكثر من نسبة معينة منهم في مدرسة واحدة، كما أنهم مادة خصبة للنكات والاضطهاد الاجتماعي.. اليهودي مرفوض كيهودي، مقبول كإسرائيلي" (السمان 1996: 97). وترد سبب ذلك إلى عوامل استعمارية موضوعية: "ربما أنه كيهودي يشاركهم اللقمة، وكإسرائيلي يصبح عميلا لديهم لسرقة (لقمة) الشعوب العربية.. وهم يغطون ذلك الموقف بعقدة الإحساس بالذنب! ويعوضون على اليهود ولكن على حسابنا... (السمان 1996: 97). وتؤكد السمان أن اليهود هم ضحية اضطهاد أوروبا لهم، والعرب هم من يدفع الثمن:

فاليهود في بلادنا العربية، في دمشق، في بيروت، في القاهرة، في كل مدينة عربية عشت فيها، كانوا يلقون دوما أطيب معاملة، كانت لهم حقوق المواطنين وواجباتهم وكان ذلك وحده مقياس الحكم عليهم... كان الشعب العربي هو الشعب الوحيد الذي لم يضطهد اليهود، وهو اليوم يدفع ثمن اضطهاد أوروبا لهم وضيقها بهم واحتمائها من حقيقة موقفها بمظهر المكفر عن ذنبه! (السمان 1996: 97).

ترصد السمان أساليب اليهود المتنوعة في التقرب من المجتمعات الأوروبية، ومؤسساتها الفاعلة، لبيت دعايتهم الدينية، فتختلف أساليبهم المتبعة في إيطاليا، مثلا، عن مساعيهم الدعائية في بريطانيا. ففي إيطاليا يستغل اليهود وجود الكنيسة الكاثوليكية وتعاليمها الإنسانية، فيشرون قضيتهم من زاوية دينية بحت، حيث: "يرتدون على وجوههم أكثر أقتنعهم ذلا ومسكنة ليثيروا شفقة المتدينين والعالم. وهنا في بريطانيا يضربون على الوتر الحساس في ذات البريطاني المحافظة التي تؤمن بقيمة العمل والجد...". (السمان 1996: 30). وتنتقد السمان العرب معبرة عن عميق ألمها لعدم تحركهم لشرح قضاياهم، وتدعوهم لترك الخطاب الخشبي الذي لا يفيد شيئا، بل يضرهم ويسيء إلى قضية فلسطين العادلة. ويصيح كلامها من فرط العاطفة أشبه بالشعر:

A JOURNEY OF GĀDA AS-SAMMĀN OR  
HOW THE BODY BECOMES A SUITCASE

ونحن...  
ما زلنا نزره كلاما ولا نثمر...  
نطلق سحبنا ترعد ولا تمطر...  
ونحن بعد ستة عشر عاما من النكبة، استطعنا أخيرا أن نتفق على محاولة الاتفاق على اتفاق ليبحث أسلوب العمل!!  
.. ونحن ما زلنا نتشاجر ونتاجر ونسالم عليه حتى كدنا نحبه حب المتسول لعاهته!! (السمان 1996: 30).

يزداد شعور الكاتبة بالعجز أمام ما يحدث في فلسطين، وعدم قدرة العرب على فعل أي شيء، فتقدم أمنيات إلى بني جلدتها أن يكفوا عن العيش بأسلوب الماضي، ويشرعوا بالتطلع إلى مجازاة العصر لحل قضايا الإنسان العربي، الخاصة منها والعامية. ومن لندن تنظر الكاتبة بقلق إلى فلسطين التي ترمز إليها بـ"حقول البرتقال الحزين"، في إشارة إلى عنوان قصة صديقها القريب إلى روحها - غسان كنفاني: "ليتنا نتخلى عن أسلوب امرئ القيس والوقوف على الأطلال في قضايانا الشخصية والعامية... وسلام على حقول البرتقال الحزين... لا أملك لها الليلة إلا السلام، فأنا خرساء، ومتعبة، وعاجزة فقد وعيي." (السمان 1996: 32). وعلائم الحزن والشعور بالقهر والمرارة واضحة في حديث الكاتبة عن المدن العربية التي زارتها بعيد الحرب العربية الإسرائيلية عام 1967، وهذا وصف شجي للقاهرة حافل بمشاعر مختلطة: "متحفزة وغاضبة كحديقة عين محارب... غامضة ثرية بأسرارها المعتقة، كطقوس قبيلة وثنية تغتال الهتها.. دامية، وبريئة، كقطعة تأكل أولادها.. كريمة، كزف جرح مفتوح.. رتيبة ومخدرة، كدخان نارجيلية في حنجرة تكلست أجزانها.. متناقضة، كأسنان منشار.. غالبية.. كأنها دمشق، مدينتي." (السمان 1996: 218). ولعل الحديث عن الفروق الثقافية والاجتماعية، وغيرها، بين الشرق والغرب، هو ما يشد القارئ ليقبل على قراءة هذا العمل، بيد أن السمان تجذبه أيضا عند الحديث عن رحلاتها إلى المدن العربية، رغم انشغالها، وانشغال العرب عموما، بقضية النكسة التي وقعت زمن ترحالها في بلاد العرب. ومن الطبيعي أن يكون هذا الحدث/الصدمة موضع اهتمام مقالات المؤلف، فراها تصف عمان والقاهرة بعد النكسة، وتخصص حديثها لنتائج هذه الحرب، وحالة العرب النفسية بعدها. المدن العربية وأجواؤها تذكر عادة السمان بمدينتها دمشق، ولا غرابة في ذلك لكنها غالبا ما تجد من الطرائف والأحاديث الشائقة لتجذب المتلقي بأسلوبها الجميل الذكي. وسنأخذ مثلا على ذلك مقالها عن تونس عام 1964 التي تصفها بالـ"مرمية من كوب ما". وتلخص حال تونس، التي تنوس بين الانتماء إلى الشرق والتطلع إلى الغرب، بصراع "الأغاني" الدائر بين أم كلثوم وماريا كالاس اللتين ترمزان إلى الصراع الحضاري بين الشرق والغرب:

هبت هذه المرة أغنيتان: واحدة من الشرق وأخرى من الغرب. أم كلثوم وقد أطلقت صوتها وهي تنشد "أنت عمري" وماريا كالاس في مقطوعة من إحدى أوبرات "فردى". وكانت الأغنيتان تمتزجان، تتصارعان، لا تطغي واحدة على الأخرى. لعل هذه اللوحة الصوتية كانت ملخصا لكل ما سأشاهده. (...) وفي كثير من الأشياء كنت أجد أم كلثوم إلى جانب مارييا كالاس. حتى في أحاديث التونسيين أنفسهم: كانوا يتحدثون باللغة العربية وبالفرنسية (...). وبصورة عامة كان الطابع العربي هو (الغالب)، وحتى الجمل التي ينطقها الشاب بالفرنسية كانت تحمل عقلية عربية شرقية، والأخلاق العربية هي السائدة، وأسلوب التعامل العاطفي، والكرم، والنبيل، وحرارة القول والعمل.. (السمان 1996: 25-26).

ومن الأمور الطريفة التي تناقشها السمان مسألة اللهجات العربية، حيث تبدي رأيا يقر بعدم منطقية الداعين للكتابة بإحداها. وتسعى إلى إقناع القارئ به، بمحاكمة منطقية لا تخلو من الفكاهة، والسخرية من الذين يؤمنون بوجود الكتابة بالعامية: "وتخيلت أديبا تونسيا يكتب مسرحية أو ديوان شعر بالعامية التونسية ويسميه: "زعره" [باللهجة التونسية تعني "شقرء"، وبالشمامية "عرييدة"] بدلا من "شقرء". أية صدمة يصاب بها القارئ العربي لمجرد قراءة العنوان؟ وأية صدمات أخرى يصاب بها وهو يقلب الصفحات؟ أي تشويه؟ (السمان 1996: 26). ومن الأمور المثيرة للاهتمام وصف طباع التونسي، وغيرته على امرأته، ووصف الدار التونسية التي جعلها الكاتبة رجلا، وتتصف بطباع ساكنها، وهي بذلك لا تختلف عن أخواتها في المشرق:

والدار في تونس رجل شرقي، فيها مزايه وطباعه وعبويه. فيها غيرته على أشيائه من زوجة وحياة داخلية، وحرصه على إخفاها والاستئثار بها. ومن يطل من الباب لا يرى سوى فناء صغير تنفتح عليه مجموعة من الدهاليز والأبواب. إنه الشرقي لا يطرح أعماقه. وداخل الدار كريمة الجمال والذوق. (...) خيل إلي طيلة السهرة أنني في دمشق، في أحد أحيائها القديمة حيث الياسمين في الفناء، والنوافذ الخشبية المحفورة بإتقان تطل على فسحة تتوسطها بحرة مياه ثرية. شعرت بذلك الخيط الذي يربط الأندلس بتونس بدمشق. (السمان 1996: 27)

في الختام، يمكن التأكيد أن عادة السمان، عادة، لا تستعرض في نصوصها أوصاف المدن وأشكالها، وإن فعلت كان فعلها منطلقا لتبيين أحوال البلدان التي زارتها، ساعية إلى إيجاد ظاهرات مثيرة للاهتمام، أو وقائع من شأنها أن

تجذب اهتمام القارئ العربي. تلتقط عادات غير مألوفة من وجهة النظر العربية، وتبحث عن أمور طريفة مذهشة في عتبات الحياة اليومية، وتقارنها بتقاليد المجتمع العربي. وتجدر الإشارة هنا أن مفهوم السفر عند غادة السمان طريف، ومعبّر عن حالة عدم الاستقرار التي تتأصل كنتيجة له. إن غياب الاستقرار يحرض أفكار الإنسان، لذلك تجده في ترحاله يتأمل عديدا من القضايا المهمة، المتعلقة بحياته، وحياة شعبه الثقافية والسياسية. إن اللغة المستخدمة في نصوص الكتاب مثيرة للاهتمام إلى حد كبير، وفي أحيان كثيرة تأتي النصوص حافلة بالاستعارات والعبارات الملهمة، التي تتقن السمان كتابتها أفضل إتقان، وهي الشاعرة المرهفة. ويحدث أيضا أن تأتي مقالات الكتاب بأسلوب بسيط ومباشر، ما يعطي الانطباع أن المؤلفة تريد أن تكون قريبة من شريحة واسعة من الجماهير. وإذا أصبح السفر ميسرا في القرن العشرين، وأضحى للطيارة فيه، "فصول في الرواية، رواية الكشف عن العالم ومجاهله وغدا كأنه كتاب مقروء، فلا طلسم ولا لغز، بل تحل كل طلاسمه وألغازه" (ضيف 1987: 10)، فمن الطبيعي أن يصبح الجسد حقيبة للسفر، كما أرادت غادة السمان. ويمكن بجدارة عد كتابها هذا تجربة فريدة في أدب الرحلة، نظرا لشموليتها، وثرائه بموضوعات فكرية، وسياسية، واجتماعية، وفلسفية، وأدبية شتى.

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## FAMILIARITY AND OTHERNESS IN LATE-OTTOMAN TRAVEL ACCOUNTS IN PALESTINE

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**Abstract.** Apart from the more common pilgrimage reports, or *rihla hiġāziyya*, the *rihla maqdisiyya* (journey to the Palestinian territories) definitely forms a distinct typology of account, both from a historical and a literary point of view. The territories of Palestine, which are traditionally considered as a part of the wider unit of *Bilād al-Šām* in the perspective of Arab historians and geographers, represent a peculiar pole of attraction for Arab travellers throughout the centuries, due to the significant presence of Holy places and the special regard accorded to the city of Jerusalem as early as the Islamic conquest of the area. In the late-Ottoman period (mid-19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century), Palestine experiences considerable social changes which most Arab travellers, more or less consciously, tend to highlight in their accounts, showing evidence of their familiarity and extraneity and/or otherness at a time, along with a more or less explicit search for both an individual and collective identity, which our contribution aims at bringing out through the analysis of representative cases

**Keywords:** *Palestine, Jerusalem, rihla maqdisiyya, Ottoman, identity.*

### Introduction

The *rihla maqdisiyya*, which corresponds to the journey to the Palestinian territories, or to the Holy Land (*al-arāḍ al-muqaddasa*), differs from more widespread and better-known reports – such as the record of the Islamic pilgrimage (or *rihla hiġāziyya*) – from different points of view. Although it can be part of a broader travel, the *rihla maqdisiyya*, in fact, generally puts forward some specific issues in such a way that these records form a distinct typology of account which might be taken into account not only from a literary perspective, but also from a historical one, that is to say, as a crucial source leading to the comprehension of historical, social as well as cultural aspects within a local and/or regional framework.

Since the Islamic conquest of the region, occurred in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Palestine has been traditionally considered part of the wider geographical area of *Bilād al-Šām*, sharing with it through the history a complex system of political, commercial, social and cultural relations which, whilst emphasizing a certain nature of border land, have unquestionably stressed its central position in the context of the Mediterranean (Giardina, Liverani, Scarcia 1987: 9-11). This peculiar character of centrality depending less on its geographical situation than on the extraordinary concentration of holy places for the three major religions – Jewish, Christian and Islamic – in a very small area.

As far as the Islamic belief is concerned, Palestine has always enjoyed a special consideration, due to the presence of much important religious poles, such as the *masġid*

*al-Aqṣā* in Jerusalem and the several mausoleums (*maqāmāt* and/or *mazārāt*, i.e. the *maqāmāt al-anbiyā'*, the tombs of the Prophets) which were, and still are the subject of holy visits (*ziyārāt*). Thus Palestine, and particularly the city of Jerusalem (*al-Quds*), has represented a unique place for pilgrimage along the centuries.

At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Palestinian territories were embedded into the Ottoman empire (*iyālat al-Šām*), but their fortunes did not differ substantially from those of the rest of *Bilād al-Šām*. However, since mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, important changes occurred in the region, mostly depending on the policy of general reform carried out by the Ottoman sultans (Schölch 1990), the impact of European penetration on Palestinian economy, society and local culture, as well as the rising of more specific concerns related to the increase of the Jewish community in the area, which would gradually lead to a more concrete project of colonisation (*istīṭān*).

The *raḥalāt maqdisiyya* composed between mid-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century partially reflect these important changes, unlike the former, which basically focus upon the description of the itineraries and the visits to the sacred places. These late-Ottoman *raḥalāt* are therefore representative of a kind of compromise swinging between tradition and modernity and, nonetheless, they represent an important as well as evocative part of the Palestinian historical and cultural heritage.

Indeed, the particular content of a *riḥla*, regardless of the destination, depends on number of elements: the geographical origins of the traveller, which decisively affect the coordinates of the route to take, often involving his/her different linguistic and/or cultural background; the aim and/or the reasons for the *riḥla*, which among our representative cases are mostly religious (as in the case of the *ṣayḥ* Ğamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī), but could also be political (as in the case of the Egyptian *ṣayḥ* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Ġawād al-Qāyātī), cultural, and even occupational (as in the case of the Syrian historian Nūmān al-Qasāṭilī); his social position (by the occupation of political, religious or even juridical charges, among others), which guarantees the traveller the encounter with other important local personalities; his religious affiliation, which sometimes affects the choice about the visits to carry out, and even his personal behaviour and way of thinking.

Thus, although the *raḥalāt maqdisiyya* suggest a certain character of spiritual as well as cultural continuity, since all their authors come from, and live in different parts of the *dār al-islām*, their accounts invariably pose a matter concerning the relation between a certain degree of familiarity, on the one hand, and extraneity and/or otherness, on the other. As a matter of fact, all these travellers are perfectly aware that they just shift to a different side of the *dār al-islām*, nonetheless they express their amazement at the grandiosity of some particular monuments, or simply at the beauty of nature and at the Palestinian landscapes. What is more remarkable, however, is the record, whether or not fully conscious, of some specific social as well as cultural data having to do with the important transformation that the Palestinian region started to experience since mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, after the period of the Egyptian occupation (1832-1840) and the re-establishment of the Ottoman authority. Most of these changes, as one can find in later travel accounts, will result in more problematic issues concerning the need of retrieval and rehabilitation of the Palestinian identity ahead of the Zionist project of colonisation of the region.

## 1. Between familiarity and otherness: the *riḥla maqdisiyya* as a route repository

Before getting to the heart of the matter, some important considerations have to be made with regard to the terminological field, in order to better define this kind of *raḥalāt*. The adjective *maqdisiyya*, in fact, which holds the same “root” as *muqaddasa* (*q d s*, such as *al-arāḍ al-muqaddasa*), is not merely connected with the Palestinian region as a whole, but it goes back more specifically to Jerusalem, given that most Arabic sources refer to the city, besides the name of *al-Quds*, by the expression *bayt al-maqdis* (Ibn Mandūr 1993: vi, 169; al-Maqdisī 1991: 160). By which we can affirm that it represents the main target of the *riḥla*, such importance deriving from the fact that Jerusalem, according to the Quran, is *madīnat al-anbiyā*<sup>1</sup>. Hence a large body of religious and *faḍā'il* literature urging to visit the holy city.<sup>2</sup>

In a certain way, late-Ottoman *raḥalāt maqdisiyya* offer a relevant contribution to our knowledge about the routes that an Arab traveller might take – according to his provenance – in order to get to the Palestinian territories between mid-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The importance of *ṣayḥ* Ḥamūd b. Aḥmad b. Sayf al-Būsāidī's *riḥla* (d. 1881) primarily depends on the fact of being the first travel account of an Arab-Omanite living in Zanzibar who visited the Palestinian territories in the late-Ottoman period (Ḥalaf 2010: 359). His biography reveals that he was a very prominent and respected *ālim* at his time and that he had founded several *awqāf* both in Mecca and Zanzibar (al-Muḡīrī 1994: 362-365).

The *riḥla*, published under the title *al-Durr al-manḍūm fī ḍikr maḥāsīn al-amṣār wa-l-rusūm*, contains the description of the journey that the *ṣayḥ* al-Būsāidī made in the regions of Ḥiḡāz, Egypt and *Bilād al-Šām* in 1872 on the occasion of the Islamic pilgrimage, following the sultan of Zanzibar Barḡāš b. Sāid.

The *ṣayḥ* al-Būsāidī reached the Palestinian territories travelling from Egypt by sea, and he stayed in the region for slightly more than two months.

He arrived at the port of Jaffa on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> *ḡumādā al-ūlā* 1288 (11<sup>th</sup> August 1872), from where he moved to Jerusalem after a few days. He leaves a precise description of the conditions of the port of Jaffa at his time. By way of example, we find that all commercial and passenger ships heading to Jaffa had to land at least half a mile from the harbor, and that both passengers and wares had to be boarded on smaller crafts (in the text, *māšwa*) in order to get to the city (al-Būsāidī 2006: 69), the reason for using such small crafts being that the port of Jaffa was surrounded by rocky ledges (Schölch 1990: 163-164).

Both the Egyptian *ṣayḥ* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Ġawād al-Qāyātī and the Syrian *ṣayḥ* Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī describe these same conditions, although they use a different terminology. The first one, who visited the Palestinian territories in 1885, in fact, uses the term of *falūka* to mean these smaller boats (al-Qāyātī 1981: 84) – highlighting in the meanwhile that before Jaffa the sea was usually storming – whereas the *ṣayḥ* al-Qāsimī,

<sup>1</sup> The prophet Muḥammad was the first to visit the city: Quran, xvi, 1.

<sup>2</sup> I report by way of example: “*Fa-ṣallū fīhi (al-bayt al-maqdis) fa-inna al-ṣalāt fīhi ka-alf ṣalātīn fī ḡayrihi*” (al-Maḡlatay 1999, iv: 1267, al-Salāma 1999: 578-579). Another interesting example: “*Lā tušaddu al-raḥāl illā ilā ṭalāt: masḡid al-ḥarām wa masḡidī ḥādā wa masḡid İlyā’ (al-masḡid al-Aqṣā)*” (al-Ġazālī 1997, vii: 277).



who arrived in the city almost thirty years later, employs the term of *zawraq* (al-Qāsimī 1965: 124).

We can also remark another interesting use of the terminology with regard to the means of transport. The *šayḥ* al-Qāyātī, by way of example, uses the term *wābūr* (*wābūr ḥadīwiyya*) to mean the steamboat which led him from Beirut to Jaffa, and which was called “*al-Raḥmāniyya*” (al-Qāyātī 1981: 84). The same term (*wābūr*) is also employed by the *šayḥ* Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī to mean indifferently both the steamboat and the train (al-Qāsimī 1965: 103, 124), whereas the *šayḥ* al-Būsāidī uses the term of *markab* (al-Būsāidī 2006: 69).<sup>3</sup>

The *šayḥ* al-Qāyātī almost followed the same route as the *šayḥ* al-Būsāidī – travelling through Alexandria (*al-Iskandariyya*) and Port Sāid (*nabaṭ Sāid*) before landing Jaffa shores – given that they both, despite their different provenance, came from Egypt. The *šayḥ* Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Gawād al-Qāyātī (1838-1902), was a prominent *faqīh* and a historian. He had the occasion to visit the Palestinian territories during his exile in 1885, after he was banished from Egypt on account of his nationalistic positions towards the British occupation, which made him stand with the ‘Urābī revolt in 1882 (al-Qāyātī 1981: 7-11, Kaḥāla 1993: iii, 385). As a matter of fact, he entered the Palestinian territories twice. The first time, after a brief stopover in Jaffa on tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> *rabī‘ al-awwal* 1300 (24<sup>th</sup> January 1883), he continued on to Beirut *via* Haifa; the second time, in *ḡumādā al-tāniya* 1302 (April 1885), he properly started his *riḥla maqdisiyya*: Jerusalem first, then some other important centers of the region, such as Bayt Laḥm, al-Ḥalīl and al-Nāšira (al-Qāyātī 1981: 11, 84). The *riḥla*, which was first published in the Egyptian newspaper *al-Islām* in 1901, provides a clear overview of the social and cultural conditions of the Palestinian region at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The carriageway connecting Jaffa to Jerusalem was one of the most important in the late-Ottoman period, especially in consideration of the significant flow of Christian pilgrims moving to Jerusalem from the coast. This particular carriageway, which is often mentioned in late-Ottoman *raḥalāt*, was known in Arabic as *ṭarīq al-aḡal*, due to the wheels of the carriages (al-Madanī 2004: 194-195). In this respect, al-Qāyātī’s use of the term *karūsa* to mean the carriage is quite remarkable (al-Qāyātī 1981: 85). A railway line connecting Jaffa and Jerusalem would be inaugurated only in 1892 (al-Madanī 2004: 196-197; al-Qāsimī 1965: 121).

It is noteworthy that the *šayḥ* al-Būsāidī does not breathe a word about the dangers along the routes connecting important cities such as Jaffa and Jerusalem, mostly depending on the instability of some local nomad groups living in rural areas that the Ottoman government run into submission right after the period of the Egyptian occupation, which points out the re-establishment of the Ottoman authority and of a certain degree of security in the region (Ḥalaf 2010: 361, al-‘Asalī 1992: 36). As a matter of fact, the unsafe conditions of the routes had provoked a fall in the number of travellers heading to the Palestinian territories between the 16<sup>th</sup> and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (al-‘Asalī 1992: 20). The re-establishment of the Ottoman authority, and the recovery of a good level of security, are clearly reflected

<sup>3</sup> In some respects, the use of the term “*wābūr*” underlines the peculiar European contribution to the process of modernisation of the region, not only at the level of the transformations of the facilities and the means of transport, but also at the one of their reception and revision through the common language.

in the important presence of *hānāt*, coffee houses (*qahwa*) and hostelryes (*lūkanda*) serving the carriageway connecting Jaffa and Jerusalem, and dating to the construction of the road (al-Būsāidī 2006: 72, al-Qasātilī 2010: 181-182).

Travellers coming from Damascus, which together with Cairo maintained its traditional role as gathering center for pilgrims heading to Mecca, traditionally had at their disposal three ways to reach the Palestinian regions and notably Jerusalem (Hartmann 1910).

The Syrian historian Nūmān al-Qasātilī (born in Damascus in 1854), entered Palestine in 1874, just two years after the *šayh* al-Būsāidī, as a member of an expedition promoted by the Palestine Exploration Fund (*Šundūk istikšāf Filasṭīn*), a scientific organization which had been founded in Great Britain in 1804 and which principal aim seemingly was to explore the Palestinian soil through archaeological digs, topographical surveyings as well as historical and geographical researches.<sup>4</sup> Nūmān al-Qasātilī made a stopover in Beirut, then travelled southward along the coast. He visited important Palestinian cities, such as Gaza, al-Halīl and Bayt Laḥm, and many other smaller villages before heading to Jerusalem. This means that the expedition followed a path from the south to the north of the region. Al-Qasātilī described his journey in his important *riḥlat al-Rawḍa al-nūmāniyya fī siyāhat Filasṭīn wa baḍ al-buldān al-šāmiyya*, which remained a manuscript until 2010, when it was first published in Damascus. What is important to point out, besides the fact that he was not Muslim but Orthodox Christian, is that he did not decide autonomously on the route to take, since he had to acknowledge his achievements to the group to which he was affiliated.

The *šayh* Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī (1866-1914), who had the opportunity to visit the Palestinian region in 1903, also came from Damascus. Instead of following a more traditional route, he crossed the Jordanian heights, from where he reached the city of Jericho. We do not find this particular route in any other *riḥla* of the period, but this itinerary must not be totally unknown at that time. As a matter of fact, the well-known Palestinian geographer al-Maqdisī left us a description of this route in the 10<sup>th</sup> century (al-Maqdisī 1991: 192-194). From Jericho, the *šayh* al-Qāsimī continued on to Jerusalem, and hence to the *ḥaram al-šarīf* of al-Aqṣā mosque which, according to his own words, was the main goal of the *riḥla* (*allaḍī huwa al-buḡiya min al-riḥla*) (al-Qāsimī 1965: 112).

The *šayh* Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī was a skilful *ālim* of his time. Aside from being *muḥaddit*, *mufassir* and *faqīh*, he is also generally considered a pioneer of the important reform movement (in Arabic, *iṣlāḥ*) which arose in Syria in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Abāza 1997).<sup>5</sup>

Apart from the singularity of the route, what is most noteworthy is that he was the first, among other travellers of his time, to take the train from Damascus to Amman. As a

<sup>4</sup> The Palestine Exploration Fund became concretely active only since 1865. Actually, its main purpose was the collecting of useful informations which would guarantee Great Britain to extend its control in the region, and the achievement of a topographical overlay which would be later used for the setting up of a national home for the Jewish community (Giardina, Liverani, Scarcia 1987: 163-164, al-Qasātilī 2010: 13).

<sup>5</sup> With regard to the *ālim*'s biography, see Dāfir al-Qāsimī, *Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī wa aṣruhu*, and Maḥmūd Maḥdī al-Istānbūlī, *Šayh al-Šām Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī*, al-Maktab al-Islāmī, Beirut-Damascus, 1985.

matter of fact, this particular link of the *hiḡāzī* railway (*sikkat ḡadīd al-Ḥiḡāz*) was inaugurated that same year, 1903.<sup>6</sup>

Al-Qāsimī's *riḡla* first appeared in the pages of the biography that the *ṣayḡ* Dāfir al-Qāsimī devoted to his father in 1965, then it appeared again posthumous in the Jordanian newspaper *al-Dustūr*, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1981, under the title *al-'Allāma al-Qāsimī yaṣīfu riḡlatahu ilā bayt al-maqdis qabla tamānīn āman*.

## 2. The *riḡla maqdisiyya* as a historical source: the case of Jerusalem

Although the late-Ottoman *raḡalāt* composed between the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century make room to the description of the itineraries and naturally give priority to the visit of the sacred places, or *maqāmāt*, notably those which are within the walls of Jerusalem and in its surroundings, nonetheless they partly reflect an age of transition. This clearly emerges from the description of the social, economic as well as cultural conditions of the main Palestinian cities, together with those of their inhabitants. To stay within the limits of the space at our disposal, we shall focus on some relevant aspects that the late-Ottoman *raḡalāt maqdisiyya* put forward pertaining, in a specific way, to the visit of Jerusalem – *al-Quds*.

Although, on the one hand, most travellers were to some extent already acquainted with the places that they intended to visit, by means of the informations that they had collected from historical and geographical sources, or even earlier travel accounts, as well as from what they had the opportunity of hearing from local people, on the other, they leave us first-hand details not only about their conditions at that time, but also about the degree of civilisation that the Palestinian region had reached by then at both social and cultural level.

After the promulgation of the new Regulation of the Ottoman provinces (*Qānūn al-wilāyāt*) of 1864, Jerusalem became an independent *mutaṣarrifīyya* directly tied to the Ottoman Ministry of Interior in Istanbul (Kayyali 1985: 5), and it started to experience a new season of development both from an administrative and a political point of view (Mannā 2003: 197-198).

The *ṣayḡ* al-Būsāidī is the only one who, among other late-Ottoman travellers, provides a surprising outline of the Christian community of Palestine, together with an accurate description of their churches as well as their habits, as we can find in that part of the *riḡla* which he devoted to Jaffa: “Christian Arabs of the *Ṣām* (*naṣārā al-Ṣām min al-ārab*) are not (considered) foreigners (*laysa baynahum ifrānḡ*), but (together with Muslims) they form a single community (*bal innahum milla wāḡida*)” (al-Būsāidī 2006: 70). Another feature which makes Christians similar to Muslims is that they dress in a similar way. The *ṣayḡ* al-Būsāidī also remarks the important presence of Christians coming from Europe by way of the foreign flags waving at the harbor of Jaffa, which is “port of

<sup>6</sup> Actually, *ṣayḡ* al-Qāsimī's train journey came a few days before the official opening of the whole section. The laying of the tracks between Damascus and Daṛā started on September 1900, and this particular section was inaugurated on September 1903. The section Daṛā – 'Amman, instead, was inaugurated the following month (al-Māḡī 1988: 13).

Jerusalem” (*wa-fihā ġumla bayāriq lil-naṣārā li-annahā bandar al-Quds*) (al-Būsāidī 2006: 69).

The *ṣayḥ* al-Būsāidī arrived in Jerusalem on 9<sup>th</sup> *jumādā al-ūlā* 1288 (14<sup>th</sup> August 1872). The city was surrounded by orchards and recent well-ordered buildings, whereas “the houses located inside the walls are old, and the streets are not in good conditions” (al-Būsāidī 2006: 72). According to the informations that he collected from some local people, most inhabitants were then Jewish and Christians, whereas the Muslim community was smaller. The *ṣayḥ* al-Būsāidī also provides a detailed estimate of the respective communities (2000 Muslims, 24.000 Christians and a higher number of Jewish) (al-Būsāidī 2006: 72).

These data, anyway, do not seem to be accurate. The Ottoman *sālnāma* relating to the year 1288 (1872) shows that the Muslim community was the largest one. Nonetheless, ‘Abd al-Karīm Rāfiq explains a likely decrease of the Muslim community of Jerusalem by the cholera outbreak of 1865 and, in that same period, an increase of the Jewish community by the influx of Jewish immigrants (Rāfiq 1990: 907-909). We may suppose that the estimates provided by the historian Nūmān al-Qasāṭilī, who was in Palestine only three years later, are more precise, since he had to submit the data concerning the population of the Palestinian cities and villages to the Palestine Exploration Fund. Thus, with regard to the estimate that he made in 1875, we find that the Muslim community was slightly bigger, whereas the Jewish one had increased exponentially. As a matter of fact, the population of Jerusalem was composed of almost 40.000 people, among which the *ashkenazi* Jewish (*al-yahūd al-saknāğ al-mutağarribīn*) formed the largest community, followed by Christians (12.000) and Muslims (6000). Al-Qasāṭilī also considered that the number of the inhabitants of Jerusalem was expected to grow in a short time, due to the influx of Jewish immigrants coming to the city from the different regions of the world (al-Qasāṭilī 2010: 183).

The section of the *riḥla* that Nūmān al-Qasāṭilī devoted to the city of Jerusalem was originally part of a series of scattered historical, geographical as well as topographical notations, often matched by diagrams and sketches revealing, on the one hand, the aim to provide the necessary surveys of the Palestinian region and, on the other, the quickness due to the frequent shifts of the group which he belonged to.

Overall, al-Qasāṭilī provides important and detailed informations concerning the city of Jerusalem as well as the conditions of its people around 1875. He remarks a certain degree of corruption without making any difference between Muslims, Christians or Jews:

Except for the foreigners and some Protestants, the inhabitants of this city love to live comfortably on the money for charity, even though they are not in need. You can even see wealthy people living in private houses, monasteries and *awqāf* for free. Many people take from the convents what is intended for the poor, as the Muslims do from the *ḥaram al-šarīf*, by which they find a way to binge drinking and abuse of alcohol (al-Qasāṭilī 2010: 184).

According to al-Qasāṭilī, another indication of the level of corruption spreading across the city is given by the large number of harlots (al-Qasāṭilī 2010: 186).

Some other important considerations concern the state of the industry and the commerce. By way of example, the production activities in Jerusalem are very few, and

they are limited to housebuilding, which is mainly carried out by Christians and is mostly concentrated outside the walls, shoe industries, carpentry, “which is not considered important, given that wood is not used in construction and that it is limited to the foreign manufacturing of olive-wood sacred items for pilgrims” (al-Qasāṭilī 2010: 185) and soap manufacturing, which is mostly carried out by peasants (al-Qasāṭilī 2010: 185).

With regard to the commerce, “it is weak and mostly in the hands of foreign people (*al-faranġ*) and Jews” (al-Qasāṭilī 2010: 185), which partly conflicts with other data provided at that time (Schölch 1990: 184).

The visits payed to the *masġid al-Aqṣā* and the *maqāmāt* of the Prophets represent the most consistent part of the late-Ottoman *raḥalāt*, where we can find some interesting details with regard to their conditions at that period.

The *ṣayḥ* al-Būsāidī, for instance, provides some important informations with regard to the conditions of *al-Aqṣā* mosque and its *ḥaram al-šarīf* in 1872: “The *ḥaram* is in ruins (*ġayr annahu ḥarāb*), whereas the *masġid* is abandoned (*mahġūr*), soiled with faeces (*kulluhu wasiḥ min rawṭ al-ḥammām*)” (al-Būsāidī 2006: 74). On the occasion of the Friday’s prayer, the mosque was almost empty, “as if it was not destined to the Friday’s prayer, owing to the small number of Muslims in that place” (al-Būsāidī 2006: 79).

In 1885, according to al-Qāyātī, the *ḥaram* appears to be partially restored, and some people are still working on its flooring. In particular, the sultan ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd ii had already spent 16.000 piastres for the paving of the *ḥaram*, although “that amount is not enough to cover even half of its extension. Indeed, the remaining part is empty, and the grass grows on it” (al-Qāyātī 1981: 91-92).

Between the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Palestinian region started to experience a series of significant changes, not only in terms of communications and transport connections, as we have already seen, but also in terms of new institutions, such as schools, libraries and printing houses. If, on the one hand, they prove to be an instrument in the hands of foreign powers, as in the case of the several missionary schools founded in that period, on the other, they show a peculiar interest, on the part of local people more than the Ottoman government, to preserve their historical and cultural heritage.

Most of these changes are reflected in the principal Palestinian cities, and notably in Jerusalem. The *ṣayḥ* Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī leaves us a description of the visit that he payed to two important institutions playing a fundamental role in the cultural development concerning the city of Jerusalem in the late-Ottoman period. The first one was the *maktaba al-Hālidīyya*, which was founded in 1900 by the *ṣayḥ* Rāġib al-Hālidī (1866-1952) near *al-Aqṣā* mosque, and which in 1903 was administered by *ulamā’* belonging to al-Hālidī familiar branch (al-Qāsimī 1965: 112, al-Asalī 2009); the second one was the *dār al-maṭbāa lil-lātīn*, which was founded by the Franciscan priests in 1848 in the Christian quarter, and which was the first printing house ever established in Jerusalem (Yāġī 1968: 77-78, al-Madanī 2004: 267): “It is very important. It includes a forge (*dār ḥidāda*) and a grindstone for its instruments (*ṭaḥn bi-adawātihā*), and it is surrounded by a steam cloud” (al-Qāsimī 1965: 116).

## Conclusions

The main purpose of our contribution, within the limits that were permitted, was to show through some example cases the importance of late-Ottoman *raḥalāt maqdisiyya* as historical sources besides their value in a mere literary perspective. The peculiar “look” of Arab travellers coming to Palestine from different parts of the *dār al-islām* allows us to better understand social and cultural characteristics of this region in a period (late 19<sup>th</sup> – beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century) corresponding to a significant age of transition, just before the Ottoman sultans handed over to the British army. In this way, late-Ottoman *raḥalāt maqdisiyya*, by forming a distinctive typology of *riḥla*, represent a relevant part of the Palestinian cultural heritage, and an useful source to deepen sensitive issues of the recent history of this region.

Although they maintain traditional features – such as the description of the itineraries and of the visits to the holy places – late-Ottoman *raḥalāt maqdisiyya* put forward the first clear signs of a radical change. As a matter of fact, from 1910 on, modern *raḥalāt maqdisiyya* will take into account new aspects, such as the Western economic interests in the region and the Zionist occupation of Jerusalem.

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## LE VOYAGEUR MUSULMAN MEDIEVAL ET LA FRONTIERE

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**Abstract.** The medieval Muslim lives with a very vivid consciousness of the border that separates the world not only from a geographic point of view. The Muslim traveler crosses multiple frontiers within the Islamic world, discovering different spaces whose features create climates with varying degrees of alterity. The journey, as part of the average medieval Muslim's education, gives today's reader a measure of the identity fragmentation that the Islamic world experiences in the medieval period. Travelers like Ibn Ġubayr and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa are engaged in a creative dynamic of identity through the relation between peripheries and center, inevitably marked by borders. The border appears to us in the travel stories as an insurmountable point, but also a window to other spaces. The frontier is also an opportunity for a *homo islamicus*, untiringly in search and move, such as Ibn Baṭṭūṭa.

**Keywords:** *Ibn Ġubayr, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, riḥla, religious frontier, gender frontier, opportunity, fragmentation.*

### Sur l'écrivain voyageur musulman au Moyen Âge

Les géographes arabes et musulmans au Moyen Âge ne sont pas nécessairement, selon l'expression d'André Miquel, « de grands écrivains, de grands esprits », mais plutôt des musulmans « honnêtement cultivés » qui ont dans leur esprit bien cultivé l'idée de l'unité islamique matérialisée par l'expression *mamlakat al-islām* (Bencheikh; Miquel, 1992 : 130). Les voyageurs musulmans du Moyen Âge constituent une catégorie intellectuelle bien particulière, semble-t-il, ils sont loin d'être « les lumières culturelles » de leur époque, ils sont plutôt des étudiants itinérants qui cherchent, suivant le conseil du Prophète, *al-'ilm* (la science) jusqu'à la Chine (Bencheikh; Miquel, 1992 : 141).

Le voyage est mentionné aussi dans le texte coranique, en tant que partie de la formation et l'éducation de l'*homme musulman*<sup>1</sup>. Ian Richard Netton affirme même l'existence d'un *pattern* dans l'écriture de voyage construit autour du concept islamique de *ṭalab al-'ilm* assumé tel quel dans les *riḥlas* des Maghrébins (Netton, 2005 : 46). Ainsi, l'expérience de voyage ayant pour but final le pèlerinage à la Mecque est-elle à la fois religieuse, mais aussi une aventure cognitive : voir et connaître le monde musulman à

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<sup>1</sup> “*Muslim networks* are particularly evident in the mobility of those, such as Ibn Battuta whose travel proceeds along well-established routes of trade, study, and pilgrimage: his voyage was punctuated by the many brotherhoods (*ṭuruq*, plural of *tariqa*), associations, and hospices (*manazil*) dedicated to extending travelers hospitality, and his emergence as a *qadi* (Muslim judge) initiated him into a shared and longstanding language of discourse and meaning, of shared ideas about what constituted valuable knowledge and how such knowledge was articulated, preserved” (Euben, 2006: 37).



travers l'expérience directe. Le Machreq attire le voyageur maghrébin qui y voit le centre spirituel du monde musulman :

[*Fa man šā'a l-falāḥa min naša'ati Mağribi-nā, falyarḥal haḍihi l-bilāda wa yatağarrab fī ṭalabi l-'ilmi, fa yağidl-'umūra l-ma'īnāti kaṭīrat<sup>m</sup> fa 'awwalu-hā farāğū l-bāli min 'amri l-ma'īšati wa huwa 'akbaru l-'a'wāni wa 'ahammu-hā* (Ibn Ğubayr : 95).]

« Celui qui, originaire du Maghreb, recherche la réussite matérielle et morale n'a qu'à émigrer vers ce pays (Damas) et à s'expatrier pour se consacrer à l'étude. Il trouvera là maintes circonstances favorables et en premier lieu il sera débarrassé du souci de gagner sa vie, ce qui est l'aide la plus grande et la plus importante » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 308).

Il y avait sans doute une hiérarchie culturelle drastique dans l'islam médiéval qui met d'un côté les intellectuels de formation religieuse – '*ulamā*', *fuqahā*', *muḥaddittūna*, *mutakallimūna* et, de l'autre côté, ce qu'on appelle *az-zurafā*' ou les raffinés – '*udabā*', *šu'arā*', *falāsifa* – ceux qui s'appuient sur l'*aql* – la raison – durant la démarche intellectuelle. Jamel Eddine Bencheikh postule même l'existence d'un conflit entre les '*ulamā*' et les *zurafā*', entre l'islam ouvert et l'intransigeance religieuse (Bencheikh, Miquel, 1992 : 47-49), fait qui, d'ailleurs, devient transparent dans la production intellectuelle de l'époque (les thèmes majeurs de la littérature d'expression arabe, par exemple, sont *al-ḥamriyya* et *al-ğazal* qui se développent en opposition avec le discours religieux. Bencheikh, Miquel, 1992 : 164-165).

### **La frontière dans la *riḥla* des voyageurs maghrébins.**

Notre démarche a pris en analyse des auteurs de *riḥla* qui ont en commun leur origine maghrébine ou bien andalouse et qui couvrent généreusement dans leurs écritures les siècles de l'islam médiéval. Ils partagent aussi la direction du voyage et le but de celui-ci, tout en respectant les coordonnées classiques de la *riḥla*. Il s'agit de Ibn Ğubayr (1145-1217), Ibn Baṭṭūta (1304-1368) et Al-'Ayyāšī (1628-1679). Ce qui nous a préoccupé en principal a été la perception que les auteurs mentionnés construisent sur la frontière du monde musulman. Le concept de frontière en soi pour l'islam médiéval pose assez de problèmes au niveau de la définition et de la terminologie employée, étant plutôt un concept mobile, difficile à enfermer conceptuellement. Ralph Brauer, après avoir étudié les cartes et les textes des géographes musulmans médiévaux, n'a pas trouvé un équivalent qui corresponde à la notion de frontière telle qu'elle est conceptualisée de nos jours (Brauer, 1995 : 1). L'absence des frontières à l'intérieur du monde musulman correspond à la vision unitaire et universelle de l'islam lui-même et sur lui-même. Les géographes arabes dans leurs traités se réfèrent au plus à des territoires qui marquent le passage entre deux zones distinctes de souveraineté, sujet de grand intérêt pour le système islamique de taxation (Brauer, 1995 : 5). Ainsi, les cartes médiévales marquent-elles seulement les centres politiques importants, sans établir des frontières qui les délimitent. La situation est tout à fait différente en ce qui concerne les frontières externes du monde musulman ou pour

mieux dire les frontières politiques. La terminologie utilisée, constate Brauer, contient une *sémantique hostile* qui traduit une perspective culturelle egocentrique : ainsi, *ḥadd*, par exemple, peut définir une limite géographique entre deux entités politiques même à l'intérieur de l'islam ; en tant que *tağr* (*tuğūr*), il signifie la limite avec un territoire ennemi, ligne fortifiée de démarcation entre deux royaumes ennemis (Brauer, 1995 : 13-14). Ibn Ğubayr, arrivé au Mont Liban, dans la région qui délimite les territoires musulmans et les terres des croisés, décrit des vraies villes forteresses dont la population est mixte, Arabes, mais aussi Arméniens, Syriens et Chrétiens déserteurs qu'il appelle *ğarāğīm*.

[*Wa ġabalu Lubnāna al-maḍkūru huwa ḥadd<sup>mn</sup> bayna bilādi l-muslimīna wa l-ifranġi, li anna warā'hu Anṭākiya wa l-Lādiqiyya wa siwā-humā min bilād-him, 'a'āda-hā Allāhu li-l muslimīna, wa fī ṣafḥi l-ğabali l-maḍkūri ḥiṣn<sup>mn</sup> yu'rafu bi ḥiṣni l-'akrādi* (Ibn Ğubayr : 85).]

« Le Mont Liban est la frontière entre le pays des musulmans et celui des Francs ; au-delà se trouvent Antioche, Lattaquié et d'autres villes qui appartiennent aux Francs. Dieu veuille les restituer aux musulmans ! Sur le versant de ce mont, on trouve la forteresse de Ḥiṣn al-Akrād (des Kurdes) » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 279)

Il semble que ce type de territoire-frontière est très bien marqué en Andalousie à la limite avec les royaumes chrétiens et trouve le correspondant dans l'expression latine *marca paganorum* – *région-frontière* ethnique et religieuse dans l'Espagne de la Reconquista et plus tard dans l'Empire Ottoman (Brauer, 1995 : 23-26).

Les frontières sont fluides à l'intérieur du monde musulman, mais surtout les frontières extérieures toujours envisagées comme provisoires, vu le mandat universel du message coranique (Brauer, 1995 : 28). Tout en voyageant à l'intérieur du monde musulman, les voyageurs maghrébins ne cessent pas de dresser frontières identitaires qui, de temps en temps, s'identifient avec les frontières géographiques. L'andalou Ibn Ğubayr ne retient pas ses propos acides sur la frontière de l'Est du monde islamique dont les caractéristiques le place plutôt dans une altérité immédiate :

[*Madīnatu Dunayṣira. (...) wa ḥaḍīhi l-baldatu li salāḥīna ṣattā ka mulūki ṭawā'ifi l-'Andahusi, kullu-hum qad taḥallā muğalliyat<sup>mn</sup> tansubu d-dīna fa lā tasma'u 'illā 'alqāb<sup>mn</sup> hā'ilat<sup>mn</sup> wa ṣifāt<sup>mn</sup> li dī t-taḥṣīli ġayra ṭā'ilat<sup>mn</sup> qad tasāwā fihā s-sūqatu wa l-mulūku. Laysa fihim man ittasma bi simat<sup>mn</sup> bihi talīqu 'aw ittaṣafa bi ṣifāt<sup>mn</sup> huwa bihā ḥalīqun, 'illā Ṣalāḥu d-dīni ṣāhibu ṣ-Ṣāmi wa diyāri Miṣra wa l-Ḥiğāzi wa l-Yamani, al-muṣṭahiru l-faḍli wa l-'adli. Wa mā siwā ḍalika fī siwāhu fa za'āzi'u rīḥ<sup>mn</sup> wa ṣahādāt<sup>mn</sup> yariduhā t-tağriḥu* (Ibn Ğubayr : 80).] « Dunayṣir. Toute cette région est en effet sous l'autorité de plusieurs souverains qui ressembleraient aux mulūk aṭ-ṭawā'if andalous. Chacun s'arrogé un surnom composé de *ad-dīn*. On n'entend que titres ronflants et désignations honorifiques jugés vains par l'homme averti, car gens du peuple et rois les portent également. Aucun parmi eux, n'est affublé d'un titre qui lui convient ou ne porte un surnom dont il est digne. Exceptons toutefois, Saladin, maître de la Syrie, de l'Égypte, du Hedjāz et du Yemen, qui est célèbre pour son mérite et son équité. Pour tous les autres c'est du vent et des témoignages mensongers » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 265).

### Frontières à l'intérieur de l'islam.

Les voyageurs, souvent malgré leur volonté peut-être, dressent des frontières identitaires à l'intérieur de l'islam : cité – pays – région, mais le plus souvent Maghreb versus Mashreq. La comparaison avec le *monde étalon* qui est l'Andalousie pour Ibn Ġugayr ou Tanger pour Ibn Baṭṭūta est une constante des textes<sup>2</sup>.

[*Kāna sulṭānu Miṣra 'alā 'ahdi duḥūli 'ilayhā al-malika n-nāṣira 'abā l-faṭḥi Muḥammada bin al-Manṣūri sayfa d-dīni Qalāwūn (...). Wa banā zāwiyat<sup>m</sup> 'azīmat<sup>m</sup> bi Siriyāquṣa ḥārīġa l-Qāhirati, wa lakinna z-zāwiyata l-latī banāhā mawlānā 'amīru l-mu'minīna wa nāṣiru d-dīni wa kahfu l-fuqarā'i wa l-masākīni, ḥalīfatu Allāhi fī 'arḍihi, al-qā'imū min al-ġihādi bi naflīhi wa farḍihi 'Abū 'Inān 'ayyada Allāhu 'amrahu (...). bi ḥārīġi l-madīnati l-baydā'i ḥarasa-hā Allāhu lā nazīra lahā fī l-ma'mūri fī 'itqāni l-waḍ'i wa ḥusni l-binā'i wa n-naqṣi fī l-ġiṣṣi bi-ḥaytu lā yaqdurū 'ahlu l-Maṣriqi 'alā miṭlihi (Ibn Baṭṭūta, 1992 : 43).]*

« Lorsque j'arrivai au Caire, le souverain égyptien était al-Malik an-Nāṣir Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad ben al-Malik al-Manṣūr Sayf ad-dīn Qalawūn (...). Il a fait construire une zāwīya à Siriyāquṣ, à l'extérieur du Caire. Mais que représente-elle à côté de la zāwīya qu'a édifiée notre seigneur l'Emir des Croyants, défenseur de la religion ; refuge des pauvres et des malheureux, lieutenant d'Allah sur terre, assumant la guerre sainte comme œuvre surrogatoire et obligatoire, Abū 'Inān – que Dieu l'assiste - zāwīya bâtie à l'extérieur de sa capitale – que Dieu la garde ! – et qui n'a pas sa pareille sur terre grâce à sa situation parfaite, à sa splendide architecture, ses sculptures sur plâtre car les Orientaux ne sont pas capables d'en construire une aussi belle ! (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 405-406).

Il semble que les frontières religieuses à l'intérieur de l'islam constituent pour les voyageurs qui partent du Maghreb vers le Mashreq l'une des différences identitaires les plus proéminentes. Tout en parlant de l'existence de plusieurs islams, cela implique presque automatiquement le concept de frontière qui doit délimiter un islam de l'autre (Euben, 2006 : 5), instituant une frontière religieuse ou même sociale à l'intérieur du monde musulman. Arrivé à Manbij, Ibn Ġubayr constate avec une visible satisfaction que *'ahluhā 'ahlu faḍl<sup>m</sup> wa ḥayr<sup>m</sup>, sunniyyūna ṣāfi'iyūna wa hiya muṭahharat<sup>m</sup> bihim min 'ahli l-maḍāhibi l-munḥarifati wa-l 'aqā'idi l-fāsidati kamā taġiduhu fī l-'aktari min ḥaḍīhi l-bilādi* (Ibn Ġubayr : 83). (« Les habitants sont gens de bien et de mérite, ils sont sunnites appartenant au rite chaféite. La ville n'abrite pas de gens professant des doctrines perverses et des croyances impures comme c'est courant dans la plupart du pays » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 273). La région de la Syrie offre à Ibn Ġubayr un tableau complexe de

<sup>2</sup> *Ibn Battuta's powerful ties to Tangier reflect, in part, the ways in which cities rather than larger political units, such as states, served as first source of identification and allegiance (...). Thus as Ibn Battuta travels beyond North Africa, he comes to identify himself not only as from Tangier but as Maghribi (from Northwest Africa), and Ibn Battuta was often known by others as al-Maghribi (...). Much as a local newspaper would, Ibn Battuta converts local exchange values into Maghribi money; identifies the presence of Maghribis in stories he hears; duly notes any connections the locals have to the Maghrib; translates unfamiliar terms into language specific to Morocco; and measures all rulers against the virtues of Abu 'Inan, the Moroccan sultan who commissioned the Rihla (Euben, 2006: 67-68).*

la vie spirituelle de l'islam et l'opportunité d'exprimer ses doutes et sa réprobation sur l'une ou l'autre de ces orientations.

[*Fī safḥati-hi ḥuṣūn<sup>um</sup> li-l mulāḥadati l- 'ismā 'iliyyati, firqat<sup>um</sup> maraqat min al- 'islāmi wa-dda 'at al- 'ilahiyata fī 'aḥadi l- 'anāmi, qīda la-hum ṣayṭān<sup>um</sup> min al- 'insi yu 'rafu bi Sināna ḥada 'a-hum bi 'abā'ila wa ḥayālāt<sup>um</sup> mawwaha 'alay-him bi-sti 'māli-hā wa saḥara-hum bi maḥāli-hā. Fa-ttaḥadū-hu 'ilah<sup>an</sup> ya 'budūna-hu wa yabḍulūna l- 'anfusa dūna-hu wa ḥaṣalū min ṭā 'ati-hi wa-mtītāli 'amri-hi bi ḥayṭu ya 'muru 'aḥada-hum bi t-taraddī min ṣāḥiqati ḡabal<sup>in</sup> fa yataraddā wa yasta 'ḡilu fī marḍāti-hi ar-raddā* (Ibn Ḡubayr : 85). ]

« Sur ses versants (du Mont Liban) sont construites des forteresses appartenant à des hérétiques ismaéliens, secte schismatique qui prétend qu'un homme est Dieu. En effet le sort leur a réservé un démon à forme humaine du nom de Sinan qui les égare par des tromperies et des mensonges, les a séduits par ses procédés et les ensorcelés par leur absurdité même (...) Leur obéissance et leur soumission à ses ordres sont telles que s'il ordonne à l'un d'entre eux de se jeter du haut d'une montagne, il le fait en s'empressant de satisfaire son désir malin » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 279).

Bien qu'il vienne d'une région assez cosmopolite, Ibn Ḡubayr a plutôt une attitude ambivalente sur les chrétiens, au-delà du contexte historique des croisades : de retour vers l'Andalousie, il est obligé de s'embarquer sur un navire à côté d'une « foule innombrable de chrétiens », tout en priant Dieu qu'il soit délivré de leur compagnie (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 333) :

*wa ṣa 'idahu mina n-naṣārā l-ma 'rūfīna bi-l balaḡiyyīna - wa hum ḥuḡḡāḡu bayti l-muqaddasi - 'ālam<sup>um</sup> lā yuḥṣā yantahī 'azyada min 'alfay 'insān<sup>in</sup>, 'arāḥa Allāhu min ṣuḥbatihim !* (Ibn Ḡubayr : 104).

« Embarquèrent des chrétiens dits *balaghriyūn* (*peregrini*), c'est-à-dire des pèlerins de Jérusalem, une foule innombrable de plus de deux mille. Que Dieu nous délivre de leur compagnie. » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 333)

De la même manière, la rencontre des villes chrétiennes de l'Orient est précédée dans le texte d'Ibn Ḡubayr par l'expression : « que Dieu la détruise et la restitue aux musulmans ! » *dammara-hā Allāhu wa 'a 'āda-hā !*, pendant que le roi chrétien de 'Akka est nommé par l'appellatif « porc » : *ḥada l-ḥinzīru ṣāḥibu 'Akkata al-musammā 'indahum bi-l maliki, 'aḡala Allāhu sū 'a l- 'intiḡāmi !* (Ibn Ḡubayr : 108). La cité de Akka, elle-même, « c'est une cité puante et sale qui regorge d'immondices et d'excréments. Dans cette ville, partout sévissent l'incroyance et l'iniquité, partout on voit des porcs et des croix » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 326) : [(...) *wa ḥiya tasta 'iru kufr<sup>an</sup> wa ṭafayān<sup>an</sup> wa tafūru ḥanāzīra wa ṣulbān<sup>an</sup>, zafrat<sup>um</sup> qadīrat<sup>um</sup> mamlū 'at<sup>um</sup> kulluhā riḡs<sup>an</sup>* (Ibn Ḡubayr : 102)].

Mais, les chrétiens des régions situées aux alentours du Mont Liban sont présentés, quant à eux, dans des couleurs très favorables :

[*wa min al- 'aḡabi 'anna n-naṣārā l-muḡāwirīna li ḡabali Lubnāna 'ida ra 'aw bi-hi ba 'da l-muqaṭi 'īna min al-muslimīna ḡalabū la-hum al-qūta wa 'aḡsanū 'ilay-him* (Ibn Ḡubayr : 96).]

« Les chrétiens voisins du Mont Liban, curieusement, lorsqu'ils voient un musulman se livrer au culte de Dieu dans ces lieux, lui apportent de la nourriture et le traitent bien » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 309).

L'explication pour cette ambivalence envers les chrétiens réside – selon Ian Richard Netton – dans la réalité politique du monde musulman lui-même qui doit faire face à un émiettement identitaire. Tout au long du voyage d'Ibn Ġubayr, le lecteur ressent le malaise et l'amertume de l'écrivain envers la division constatée et expérimentée des territoires d'islam (Netton, 2005 : 52) : [*wa 'ida k̄ānat mu'āmalatu n-naṣārā li-ḍiddi millati-him hāḍiḥi l-mu'āmalata fa-mā ḡannu-ka bi-l-muslimīna ba'ḍu-hum ma'a ba'ḍin* ?] « Si les chrétiens se comportent de la sorte envers ce qui n'appartiennent pas à leur communauté, comment les musulmans ne le feraient-ils pas entre eux ? » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 309)

Pour Ibn Battuta, à son tour, les différences entre les formes du culte musulman sont plus importantes que les raciales au point qu'il témoigne de la même considération pour un *ḥāḡḡ* noir de l'Afrique de l'Est que pour les imams très éduqués de la Mecque. Mais il semble très mal à l'aise dans le voisinage des chiites qu'il désigne en employant le terme *rāfiḍa* (t), *rawāfiḍu* qui veut dire déserteur ou hérétique :

(...) *madīnatu 'Aṣfahāna min kibāri l-muduni wa ḥisāni-hā 'illā 'anna-hā l-āna qad ḥariba 'akṭaru-hā bi sababi l-fitnati bayna 'ahli s-sunnati wa r-rawāfiḍi wa ḥiya muttaṣilatun bayna-hum ḥattā l-āna fa lā yazālūna fī l-qitāli* (Ibn Baṭṭūta, 1992 : 426).  
 [...] Ispahan, c'est une ville des plus grandes et des plus belles ; mais sa partie la plus considérable est maintenant en ruine, à cause des discordes qui existent entre les sunnites et les *rāfiḍhites*. Ces discordes ont continué jusqu'à présent ; les deux sectes ne cessent pas de se combattre [...] (Defremery & Sanguinetti, 1982 : 330).

Le voyageur Al-'Ayyāṣī, de son côté, note plus d'une fois dans son voyage les éléments religieusement différents, par exemple *al-ḥawāriḡ*, qu'il trouve dans l'oasis de Wargla, au Sud algérien, et qui se font coupables, dans la lecture de al-'Ayyāṣī, pour avoir provoqué la *fitna* entre les croyants (Mūlāy Balḥamīsī, 1981 : 28).

Ce même voyageur, Al-'Ayyāṣī, trace une autre frontière au cours de son voyage au Nord de l'Afrique, celle entre *ḥaḍar* et *badw*, les citadins et les bédouins, une frontière assez classique dans la culture islamique. Dans son ouvrage, *Mā'u l-mawā'idi*, le voyageur maghrébin remarque la vie toujours différente des bédouins qu'il nomme utilisant le terme traditionnel *al-'a'rāb* et dont il décrit leur existence suivant une image stéréotypée : *yaḡrūna warā'a l-mā'i wa l-uṣba wa ya 'iṣūna bi tarbiyati l-mawāṣī wa ṣ-ṣaydi wa n-nahbi* - « ils courent toujours pour trouver de l'eau et de l'herbe et vivent en élevant des bêtes et en volant » - (Mūlāy Balḥamīsī, 1981 : 27). L'éducation des élites situées dans la proximité de la frontière reste très limitée pour al-'Ayyāṣī, qui note que la seule préoccupation des ulémas est le *fiqh*, ne s'intéressant pas du tout au reste des sciences du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. En plus, les gens de la frontière ont toujours des mœurs bizarres : ainsi, les habitants de Wargla *tijābu mawtā-hum turmā ḥāriḡa l-madīnati, wa law k̄ānat ḡadīdat<sup>an</sup>* (Mūlāy Balḥamīsī, 1981 : 31) ; [les habitants de Warqala, ils jettent les vêtements de leurs morts à l'extérieur de la ville, même si ceux-ci étaient nouveaux].

### La frontière de genre (gender frontier<sup>3</sup>)

L'islam, en tant que société, a une longue et vraiment riche littérature sur la femme et, surtout, le statut de celle-ci tel que l'homme musulman l'a envisagé pour elle. Toute une littérature sur la femme est écrite par les hommes musulmans parmi lesquels les théologiens qui « contrairement à d'autres religions, n'ont jamais laissé aux profanes le monopole du discours sur le sexe, l'érotisme et l'amour (Aït Sabbah, 2010 : 11) ». L'attitude ambivalente ou bien duelle sur la femme traverse la littérature normative d'expression arabe qui cherche toujours à la voiler, la cacher pour finalement la maîtriser et, en même temps, se réjouir de sa sexualité et de son érotisme, mais dans les limites que l'homme musulman projette. Nos voyageurs, théologiens de formation, ont intégré cette vision traditionnelle sur la femme musulmane en se faisant par voie de conséquence des porte-parole.

Les femmes et surtout leur comportement vis-à-vis des hommes de la communauté place celle-ci sur l'axe de l'altérité identitaire :

*Lā yalbisna 'aktaru-hunna 'illā fūṭar<sup>mn</sup> wāḥidar<sup>mn</sup> tasturu-hā mina s-surrati 'ilā 'asfala wa sā'iru 'aḡsādi-hinna makšūfar<sup>mn</sup> wa kaḏālika yamšīna fī l-'aswāqi wa gayri-hā.* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 1992 : 577).

[Les femmes de ces îles ne se vêtent que d'un pagne qui les couvre du nombril aux pieds, le reste du corps étant à nu. C'est ainsi qu'elles circulaient dans les marchés et ailleurs. Lorsque je fus nommé *cadi* dans ces îles, je fis tout ce que je pus pour faire cesser cette coutume et ordonner aux femmes de se vêtir, mais en vain. (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 925).]

Mais pas toujours, il semble que la liberté sexuelle des femmes et de leur comportement sexuel ne dérange pas Ibn Baṭṭūṭa dans le cas des femmes des Maldives dont il apprécie la douceur et les compétences dans le domaine :

*...fa kānat min ḥiyāri n-nisā'i wa balaḡa ḥusnu mu'āšarati-hā 'anna-hā kānat 'ida tazawwaḡtu 'alay-hā tuṭayyibu-nī wa tubaḥḥīru 'atwābī wa ḥiya dāḥikat<sup>mn</sup> lā yazḥaru 'alay-hā taḡayyur<sup>mn</sup>* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 1992 : 588).

[« (...) mon épouse était une excellente femme qui était si agréable que, après que je fus devenu son mari, elle me parfumait et parfumait mes vêtements en riant et sans laisser apparaître aucune mauvaise humeur (...) » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 936).]

Ou bien :

*(...) wa 'idā qadamati l-marākibu tazawwaḡa 'ahlu-hā n-nisā'a, fa 'idā 'arādū s-safara ṭallaqū-hunna wa ḏalika naw'un min nikāḥi l-mut'ati. Wa hunna lā yaḥruḡna min bilādi-hinna 'abad<sup>mn</sup> wa lam 'ara fī d-dunyā 'aḥsana mu'āšarat<sup>mn</sup> min-hunna* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa : 578).

[« Quand les navires abordent aux îles, les membres de l'équipage se marient et quand ils veulent repartir en voyage, ils répudient leur épouses, c'est là un genre de mariage

<sup>3</sup> L'expression appartient à Roxanne Euben.

à terme. En effet les Maldiviennes ne quittent jamais leur pays. Je n'ai jamais connu de commerce plus agréable qu'avec ces femmes » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 926).]

La vision d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa s'inscrit parfaitement dans la tradition de la littérature théologique de l'islam sur la femme et sa sexualité destinée à satisfaire l'homme et à lui produire du bonheur sur la terre. C'est, peut-être, l'une des frontières intra-sociétales les plus évidentes que l'islam a dressée et qui, inévitablement, est intégrée dans les textes de voyage en tant qu'expression vivante de la pulsion sociale. Suivant l'expression de Malek Chebel « toute une typologie inégalitaire pourrait être déduite » à une lecture *objectiviste* des textes religieux et, avant tout, du texte coranique (Chebel, 1993 : 44-45). Au niveau du discours religieux, cette typologie inégalitaire est visible dans le schéma linguistique où un Dieu masculin s'adresse – à travers son prophète qui est toujours un homme – à une audience masculine appelée à appliquer les lois divines. Ou, selon l'expression de Fatna Aït Sabbah, on assiste à un « schéma du pouvoir vertical : Dieu parle directement ou indirectement à travers son Prophète au croyant qui applique à la croyante les lois qu'il a reçues de l'être divin (Aït Sabbah, 2010 : 148).

### **La frontière – opportunité. L'intellectuel de frontière**

La frontière reste, au moins dans le cas du voyage d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, une opportunité pour l'intellectuel musulman dont l'insertion dans la hiérarchie culturelle de ses milieux a échoué ou bien ne s'est pas produite encore. Ross Dunn identifie une autre utilité ou fonctionnalité pour le voyageur musulman médiéval qui correspond plutôt à une fonction sociale concrète (*literate frontiersman*, Dunn, 2005 : 63). Il semble que dans le monde musulman du XIII<sup>ème</sup> et XIV<sup>ème</sup> siècles, la migration des hommes lettrés de culture arabe ou persane vers les frontières africaines et euro-asiatiques du monde musulman représentait déjà un phénomène social et culturel. De plus, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, bien qu'il ne le reconnaisse pas ouvertement dans son écriture, être à la recherche de telles positions. Du moins, c'est l'idée postulée par le chercheur Ross Dunn qui y trouve une possible explication pour la durée inédite du voyage d'Ibn Baṭṭūṭa qui semble être entraîné dans un processus plus ample de *migration*. « Ibn Baṭṭūṭa seems to have been aware of sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq's policy of hiring foreign Muslims to staff his ministries and institutions at least three years before he arrived in Delhi. He also mentions a number of scholars and divines from Persia, Afghanistan, central Asia and the Arab lands who came to India as he did to work for the regime » (Dunn, 2005: 66-67).

*Laqītu bi ḥaḍā l-masğidi faqīhan ṣālihan min 'ahli Muqadiṣū yusammā Sa'īdan ḥasana l-liqā'i wa l-ḥulqi (...) wa ḍakara lī 'anna-hu ḡāwara bi Makkata 'arba'a 'aṣarata sanatan wa miṭla-hā bi l-Madīnati (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa: 561).*

[« J'ai rencontré dans cette mosquée un *faqih* qui venait de Mogadiscio, de bon caractère et qui me rappela qu'il avait habité à la Mecque pendant quatorze ans et encore quatorze à Médine » (n. trad.).]

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa occupe des positions publiques importantes surtout dans les régions lointaines, disons même marginales, du monde musulman médiéval, en profitant du manque du savoir-faire dans l'art de gouverner des sultans de ces régions et, surtout, de leur besoin de se légitimer par un entourage prestigieux. Les fonctions de *qadi* qu'on lui offre au Delhi et plus tard aux Maldives viennent à cote des privilèges dont Ibn Baṭṭūṭa est conscient :

“Ibn Battuta’s reputation as a learned *qadi* grows in the *Rihla*, he becomes progressively conscious of his reputation, protective of the prerogatives it confers, and insistent that the size and quality of the gifts he receives adequately reflect his worldly standing. (...) He not only comes close to political power, on several occasions he ascends or aspires to significant rank himself: he is appointed *qadi* of Delhi, sent by the sultan as an ambassador to the Mongol rulers of China, and is made *qadi* in the Maldives, where he intrigues against the local *wazir*, stirring up a revolt against him (Euben, 2006: 72)”.

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa s'avère être conscient de l'importance de son rôle auprès de ceux qui détiennent le pouvoir politique, à l'exemple de la situation suivante : (...) *al-wazīru yaqūlu la-ka : 'aqim 'inda-nā! (...)* *fa 'anā 'aštariṭu 'alay-kum šurūṭ<sup>am</sup>*, *fa qāla : naqbulu-hā fa-štariṭ! fa qultu la-hu : 'anā lā 'astaṭī'u l-mašya 'alā qadamayya. Wa min 'ādati-him 'an lā yarkabu 'aḥadun hunālika 'illā l-wazīru* (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 1992: 585-586). [“Le vizir te demande de rester chez nous et tu obtiendras tout ce que désires (...). Je lui dis alors : Si vous voulez que je séjourne ici, c'est à certaines conditions ! (...). Je ne peux marcher à pieds ! Or il est d'usage que personne ne circule à cheval sinon le vizir » (Charles-Dominique, 1995 : 934).]

D'ailleurs, la circulation des hommes lettrés dans l'islam médiéval entre les différents centres culturels et politiques, qu'il s'agisse de Bagdad, du Caire, de Cordoue, de Kairouan, de Delhi et de bien d'autres, représente une caractéristique attestée de la période historique en question. Les motivations en sont diverses, mais ce pullulement de voyages a créé la sensation d'un espace culturel unitaire régi par les mêmes valeurs et connaissances, traversé quand-même des frontières intérieures d'un monde plus vaste pour le croire parfaitement homogène.

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# THE WESTERN CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES OF XIX CENTURY IN THE EYES OF ARAB SCHOLAR AND TRAVELER, RIFA‘A RAFI‘ AL-ṬAḤṬĀWĪ, BASED ON “TAḤLIṢ AL-IBRĪZ FĪ TALḤIṢ BĀRĪZ AW AL-DĪWĀN AL-NAFĪS BI-ĪWĀN BĀRĪS”

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**Abstract.** The present paper is dedicated to the lexico-semantic examination of the corpus of the Arabic political and legal terms coined by the eminent Egyptian scholar, translator and the Renaissance (*al-nahḍa*) intellectual Rifā‘a Rāfi‘ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1801-1873) in his treatise “Taḥliṣ al-ibrīz fī talḥiṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-nafīs bi-īwān Bārīs” (The extraction of Pure Gold in the Abridgement of Paris, or the precious *dīwān* in the *īwān* of Paris) to render the sociopolitical and legal realities of France of 1820-1830s. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was among the first Egyptian scholars to write about Western cultures in an attempt to reconcile Islamic and Christian civilizations and bring them to mutual understanding. Being al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s observation of the sociopolitical life in France of the period of his sojourn in France, “Taḥliṣ” may be considered the true reflection of contemporary France in the eyes the great Egyptian scholar who opened the West to his fellow Egyptians explaining the state of affairs in France in his works and translations from the French sources. The importance of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s “Taḥliṣ” and other works lays in the fact that they introduce contemporary Western sociopolitical concepts to Moslem audience unaccustomed to such notions as *constitutional government*, *limited monarchy*, *elections* etc. He is credited to be one of the first scholars who tried in his works, e.g. “Taḥliṣ” to develop and modernize the Arabic political and legal glossary by making an endeavor to propose Arabic equivalents to French political and legal terms denoting contemporary social and political concepts alien to Islamic political tradition.

**Keywords:** *lexicon, technical term, terminological unit, terminological expression, notion, political, legal.*

## Introduction

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s “Taḥliṣ” belongs to the traditional mediaeval literary genre of *riḥla* (travelogue). It is detailed description of his journey to France based on his personal observations as traveler. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī says that he had kept the account of his journey free from faults of indulgence and prejudice (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 4; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 17; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 105).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was not first to write an account of his European journey. The first complete travelogues (*riḥla*) were composed by Moroccan ambassadors of 17/18 century, who were sent to Spain, but one of them, Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Ḥaḡarī (d. 1645), travelled to the Low Countries. But they remained mostly unknown to outside world (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 87). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was the first who wrote a comprehensive account of European society and culture (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 87). In “Taḥliṣ” he says that, as far as he knows, nothing was written about the history of Paris, and there was no information about its condition or of the condition of its people (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 4; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 17; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 105). He also

mentions many countries of the contemporary world and “expands his compatriots’ vision of the physical world” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 14-23; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 35-44; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 87, 119-131). The importance of “Ṭaḥṭāwī” also lies in the invaluable insight it offers into the preconceptions and prior knowledge of Europe by Muslims (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 87).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s mentor (*ustād*) Ḥasan al-‘Aṭṭār (1766 – 1835), who proposed him to the governor (*wālī*) of Egypt Muḥammad ‘Alī (1805-1848) to accompany as *imām* the first Egyptian educational mission sent by Muḥammad ‘Alī to Paris to study different sciences, told al-Ṭaḥṭāwī to write down everything strange and wondrous seen and encountered during the trip to Paris to be a guide for would-be travelers wishing to go there (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 4; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 16-17; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 104-105]. That’s why “Ṭaḥṭāwī” has didactic importance because it was to educate his compatriots about the West.

He calls Muḥammad ‘Alī by his official honorific titles – *al-wazīr al-a‘zam wa-l-dustūr al-mukarram al-mufahḥam ḥaḍrat afandīnā walī l-ni‘am* “the most exalted minister – the honoured and magnificent lordship, his Excellency, the Benefactor” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 2; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 15-16; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 102). *Dustūr* was used as title of Ottoman provincial governors (*wālī*, plural *wulāt*) (Barakāt 2000: 329). *Wazīr* was used as title of Muḥammad ‘Alī and some of his successors in epigraphic and official correspondence (Barakāt 2000: 318).

It was written by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī during his study in Paris in 1826-1831 and, as D. Newman proposes, the last additions to it were made in 1832 (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 89). It was printed firstly in 1834 in the state printing house of Būlāq (*Maṭba‘at Būlāq*).

It is worth mentioning that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī in his “Ṭaḥṭāwī” clearly shows the Franco-centrist [Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 92] vision of Europe. He demonstrates his approach to France as unambiguous center of Europe and reduces all France to Paris conceived as only manifestation of the French nation. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī praises spectacular scientific and technological progress in Europe. He acknowledges civilizational superiority of Europe but speaks proudly about his Arab/Islamic society, especially its moral and social values as compares with Frankish (as he brands all European) ones, assuming that “the Franks...do acknowledge that we were their teachers in all sciences and that we had an advance on them” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 8; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 23; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 111). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī lauds political freedom, social justice and abundance by law that he observed during his stay in Paris.

The title of “Ṭaḥṭāwī” has different variations. In the “Ṭaḥṭāwī” itself is given as “Ṭaḥṭāwī al-ibrīz fī talḥīṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-nafīs bi-īwān Bārīs” (The extraction of Pure Gold in the Abridgement of Paris, or the precious *dīwān* in the *īwān* of Paris) (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 5; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 18; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 89-90, 106) but the title of the book on the cover of the edition of 1323/1905 appears as “Kitāb taḥṭāwī al-ibrīz ilā talḥīṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-nafīs bi-īwān Bārīs” ((The book of) The extraction of pure gold [on the road] towards the abridgement of Paris, or the precious *dīwān* in the *īwān* of Paris) (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 89-90, 106).

In the present research I used two editions of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s “Ṭaḥṭāwī”:

1. The third, Cairo edition of 1323/1905, prepared by Muṣṭafā Fahmī, who had sold the books near to al-Azhar with the title of the book on the cover appears as “Kitāb taḥṭāwī al-ibrīz ilā talḥīṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-nafīs bi-īwān Bārīs” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905).

2. The complete works of Rifā‘ Rāfi‘ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, edited by Muḥammad ‘Imāra (Vol. II) with the title of the book on the cover appears as “Kitāb taḥṭāwī al-ibrīz fī talḥīṣ Bārīz aw

al-dīwān al-nafīs bi-īwān Bārīs" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010), and the following annotated translations of the work:

1. D. Newman's English translation and second edition, titled as "An Imam in Paris: account of a stay in France by an Egyptian cleric (1826-1831) (*Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talkhīṣ Bārīz aw al-Dīwān al-Nafīs bi-Īwān Bārīs*)" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011).

2. V.N. Kirpichenko's Russian translation and edition, titled as "Iz vlecheniye chistogo zolota iz kratkogo opisaniya Parizha, ili Dragotsennyi divan svedeniy o Parizhe (*Ṭaḥlīṣ al-ibrīz fī talhīṣ Bārīz aw al-dīwān al-nafīs bi-īwān Bārīs*)" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2009).

### 1. The stylistic and lexical features of "Ṭaḥlīṣ"

As far as literary style of "Ṭaḥlīṣ" is concerned, Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī says that he uses simple expressions to make it accessible for all readers (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 5; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 18). He departs from rhymed prose (*sağ'*) and traditional lexical ornaments (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 94). It is thought that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī attempted to combine the strikingly distinct literary styles of his translations from French textbooks and reference books and his traditional Arabic sources (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2009: 210; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 96). The literary style of "Ṭaḥlīṣ" was defined as florid mix of high classical and low colloquial styles in some passages of text (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2009: 210).

The utmost importance of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's "Ṭaḥlīṣ" lies on the linguistic level because he greatly contributed to creation of the New Arabic vocabulary by his coining of the multitude of Arabic technical terms of all sciences in the process of his translation of French scientific and literary works. "Ṭaḥlīṣ" is the first modern Arabic literary work is to extensively utilize the loanwords (*ta'rib*). It is said that some seventy examples of French and some Turkish borrowings are attested in "Ṭaḥlīṣ" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 96).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī deservedly may be called the architect of the new Arabic sociopolitical and legal lexicon by his choosing of Arabic equivalents to a lot of French political and legal terms denoting contemporary social and political concepts alien to Islamic political tradition. He did a great endeavor to convey to his compatriots in Arabic the new sociopolitical ideas of West being the first who described in details the political system of the Kingdom of the French (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79-82; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114-117; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 192-198) and discussed as an unbiased witness the July revolution of 1830 against absolute rule of the king Charles X (1824-1830) (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 196-221; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 233-257; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 305-334). He also was the first Arab author who made translation although abridged and simplified of the Charter (Constitution) of 1814 to Arabic and inserted it in "Ṭaḥlīṣ" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 82-90; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 117-125; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 198-208).

To create the New Arabic sociopolitical and legal lexicon to render the contemporary Western political and legal concepts from French to Arabic, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses such models of lexicon modernizing as:

1. Semantic extension. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī tried to find appropriate semantic equivalents to a plenty of terms denoting new political and legal notions of contemporary Europe. The corpus of traditional Arabic/Islamic legal and administrative terms was only

available lexical material for him to search for notional equivalents corresponding to French technical terms of law and politics. To that end he proposed semantical extending of traditional Arabic/Islamic legal and administrative terminology to encompass new meanings in his “*Ṭaḥlīs*” and other works. Some of his lexical experiments endured being eventually fixed in the New Arabic, some failed and became obsolete (e. g. *ṣarī‘a* “the Divine Law” < “law (secular, man-made)”).

2. Calque/loan translation (from French) (e.g. *dār al-madīna* “the residence of the mayor of the city of Paris” < *Hôtel de Ville* (“the House of the city”)).
3. Lexical borrowing (predominantly from French) (e.g. *al-būrū* “bureau”).
4. Individual lexical invention. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī himself coined some of technical terms that he uses in “*Ṭaḥlīs*” (e.g. *ḡumhūriyya* “republic”).

## 2. The semantic fields of the political and legal lexicon of “*Ṭaḥlīs*”

The following semantic strata may be sorted out in the corpus of the sociopolitical and legal technical terms, widely used by Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī in his “*Ṭaḥlīs*”:

### 2.1. Types of government:

*al-ḡumhūriyya* “republic” (< Ottoman Turkish *ḡümhūriyyet* (modern Turkish *cumhuriyet*) < Arabic *ḡumhūr* “group of people”). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī the first time ever uses this word to denote “republic”: *wa-ba‘du-hum yurīdu l-ḡumhūriyya* “others want republic” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 233; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 306-307, 307, n. 3).

*al-mamlaka*. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses this term in several meanings: “regime”: *zawāl mamlakati-hi* “the collapse of his regime” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 206; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 243; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 318); “reign”: *zawāl mamlakat al-malik* “the end of the reign of the king” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 212; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 249; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 325) and “kingdom”: *mamlaka al-Faransāwiyya mutawāriṭa* “France is a hereditary kingdom” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 193).

*al-malakiyya*. This term is used by Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī with two meanings: “monarchy”: *al-malakiyya al-muṭlaqa* “an absolute monarchy” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 197; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 233; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 307); *al-malakiyya al-muqayyada bi-l-‘amal bi-mā fī l-qawānīn* “a monarchy limited by the provisions embedded in the laws” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 197; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 233; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 307) and “the Royalists”: *hādīhi l-ṭā’ifa fī l-ra’y firqatayn ašliyatayn wa-humā l-malakiyya wa-l-ḥurriyya* “this people is divided in terms of their opinion into two major parts: the Royalists and the Liberals” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 196; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 233; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 306).

## 2.2. The governmental and legal bodies:

**al-būrū** "bureau". Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the French loanword *al-būrū* "bureaux" (< *bureau*) and explains it in Arabic by the following expression *al-būrū ya 'nī makātib (dawāwīn saġīra)* "small councils called *bureaux*" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 87; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 204).

**ġūriyyat al-ġināyāt**. The author of "Ṭaḥlīs" uses compound expression *ġūriyyat al-ġināyāt* "criminal jury" (< *ġūriyyat* "jury" < French *juré*, *al-ġināyāt* "criminal" < calque of French *criminelle*) and explains it by Arabic *al-ġamā'a li-l-muḥakkamīna l-musammāt ġūriyyat al-ġināyāt* "the group of arbitrators, called "criminal jury"" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 89; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 124; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 206).

**ḥukm**. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the term *ḥukm* to denote different forms of government: *ḥukm al- ġumhūriyya* "republican government (literally "government by the masses")" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 197; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 233; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 306, 306, n. 4); *ḥukm waqtī wa dīwān mu'aqqat li-naẓm al-bilād* "provisional government and a provisional council to govern the country" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 204; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 240; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 316); *ra'īs al-ḥukm al-mu'aqqat* "the head of provisional government" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 204; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 240; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 316).

**dār al-madīna** "the Hôtel de Ville (the residence of the mayor of the city of Paris)". It is evidently al-Ṭaḥṭāwī's loan translation (calque) of the French "the Hôtel de Ville" ("the House of the city"). He calls Hôtel de Ville (the residence of the Préfet de la Seine (the mayor of the city of Paris)) *dār al-madīna: dār al-madīna allaḍī huwa maḥall ṣayḥ madīnat Bārīs* "the Hôtel de Ville is the residence of the mayor of the city of Paris" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 203; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 239; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 314).

**dīwān** (plural *dawāwīn*). This word was used with the meaning of "administrative office/bureau" under the Umayyads, Abbasids, Buwayhids, Seljuks, Fatimids, Ayyubids, Mamluks and Ottomans (Ayalon 1987: 111). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses this term in compound terminological units to denote different governmental bodies of France, both elected and appointed: (*al-dīwān al-awwal* "the First Council, i.e. the Chamber of Peers" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 193); *al-dīwān al-tānī* "the Second Council" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *al-dīwān al-ḥuṣūṣī* "the Privy Council (< French *Conseil Privé*)" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *dīwān al-dawla* "Council of State" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 81; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 116; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 196); *dīwān al-dawla li-l-mašwara* "Council of State (< French *Conseil d'Etat*)" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *dīwān rusul al-'imālāt* "the Chamber of Deputies of the Provinces (calque of French *Chambre des Députés des départements*)" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 193); *dīwān rusul al-'imālāt allaḍīna hum wukalā' al-ra'iyya* "the Chamber of Deputies who are the representatives of the people" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 199; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 310); *ra'īs dīwān rusul al-'imālāt* "The President of the Chamber of Deputies" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 86; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 204); *dīwān sirr al-malik* "Council of the King's secret (< French *Conseil de Cabinet*)" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *dīwān al-mašwara* "the consultative council" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 207; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 244; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 319); *dīwān mašwarat al-'imālāt* "the Chamber of Deputies" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 207; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 244; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 319); *dīwān mašwarat*

*wukalā' al-ra'iyya* “the Chamber of Deputies” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 209; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 246; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 321); *dīwān al-wuzarā' wa-l-wukalā'* “the Council of Ministers (< French *Conseil des Ministres*)” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *dīwān wukalā' al-ra'iyya* “the Chamber of Deputies” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 197; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 234; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 308).

*maḡlis* (noun of place from *ḡalasa* “to sit”). Ṭaḥṭāwī employs *maḡlis* in two meanings: 1. “meeting (of the Chamber)”: *maḡlis al-dīwān* “the meetings of the Chamber” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 87; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 204); *maḡlis sirrī* “secret meeting” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 84; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 119; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 201); 2. “Chamber (as governing body)”: *maḡlis rusul al-'imālāt* “the Chamber of Deputies” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 87; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 204); *maḡlis al-mašwara* “the consultative council” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 210; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 247; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 323); *maḡlis al-muntaḥibīna* “the electoral college” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 86; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 121; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 203).

### 2.3. The heads of government bodies:

*al-bayr* “peer” (< French *pair* “peer”). This borrowed term is widely used by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī in the compound names denoting the government institutions and its members: *dīwān al-bayr* “the Council of Peers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 193); *dīwān al-bayr ya'nī dīwān al-mašwara l-ūlā'* “the Chamber of Peers, i.e. the First Consultative Council” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 85; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 119; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 201); *dīwān al-mašwarat al-bayr* “the Chamber of the Peers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 207; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 244; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 319); *ra'īs dīwān al-bayr* “the president of the Chamber of Peers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 85; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 120; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 202); *maḡlis al-bayr* “the Chamber of Peers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 85; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 120; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 202). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī coined the term *al-bayriyya* “peerage” (abstract noun from *al-bayr* “peer”) to denote the status and rank of peer and uses it in the following compound expressions: *wazīfat al-bayriyya* “peerage” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 80; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 115; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 195); *martabat al-bayriyya* “the ranks of the peerage” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 85; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 120; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 202).

*sulṭān*. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the term *sulṭān* to denote both king: *Waṣala l-sulṭān wa-atbā'u-hu fī Ranbūliyā awwal šahr aḡuṣṭus* “The king and his entourage arrived in Rambouillet on the first of the month of August” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 207; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 243; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 319) and emperor: *al-sulṭān Nābulyūn* “Emperor Napoleon” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 219; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 256; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 332). He also uses verb II *tasalṭana* “to become ruler”: *Tasalṭana Būnābārta l-musammā Nābulyūn wa-talaqqaba bi-sulṭan salātīn* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 197)/*sulṭan al-salātīn* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 234) “Bonaparte, who was known as Napoleon, became ruler and took the title of emperor” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 307-308) and verbal noun I *salṭana* “absolute power”: *Malik Farānsā ma'nā-hu šāḥib al-arḍ wa-l-salṭana 'alay-hā* “‘King of France’ means that the king is the owner of the land and has absolute power over it” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 210; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 246-247; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 323). To denote the notion “royal” al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the word *sulṭānī* (relational adjective from *sulṭān*): *al-'asākir al-sulṭāniyya* “the king’s soldiers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 201; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 238; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 312); *ḥafar sulṭānī* “royal guard” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 210; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 247; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 323).

*sulṭan al-salāṭīn* "emperor" (see above *sulṭān*). Al-Taḥṭāwī rendered the French *empereur* in the form of *sulṭan al-salāṭīn* (literally "ruler of rulers") (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 308, n.1) by analogy with *amīr al-umarā'* and *qāḍī l-quḍāt* "Chief judge".

*šayḥ* "the mayor of the city of Paris" (see above *dār al-madīna*). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī calls *Préfet de la Seine* *šayḥ madīnat Bārīs* literally "the *šayḥ* (mayor) of the city of Paris", using the traditional Arabic/Islamic term "someone whose age appears advanced and whose hair gone white (used for a man over fifty years old)" > "the chief of any human group (a family, a tribe, a trade guild, etc.), "the head of a religious establishment", "any Moslem scholar of a certain level of attainment" (Geoffroy 1997: 397-398).

*malik* "king": *Malik Farānsā šāḥib quwwa tamma fī mamlakati-hi bi-šarṭ riḍā' tilka l-dawāwīn al-maḍkūra* "The king has full authority in his kingdom provided the aforementioned councils give their approval" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *Malik Farānsā laysa muṭlaq al-tašarruf* "The king of France does not have absolute power" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 197; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 116; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 196).

#### 2. 4. The members of government bodies:

*arbāb* (singular *rabb*). This term is well-known in the Classical Arabic with its semantics "a lord, a possessor, an owner, or a proprietor", "a lord, master, or chief, to whom obedience is paid", "a lord, ruler, governor, regulator, or disposer" (*al-rabb* "God", "the Lord") (Lane, III: 1003). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the term *rabb* in its plural form *arbāb* in compound names with specifying complements denoting the members of political parties, followers of political currents and members of government institutions: *arbāb dīwān al-mašwara* "the members of the consultative council" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 198; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 310); *arbāb al-ḥurriyya* "the Liberals" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 198; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 309); *arbāb al-mašwara* "Conseillers d'Etat" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 81; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 116; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 196).

*a'dā'* (singular *uḍw*) is well known in its Classical Arabic meaning "a limb, a member, and an organ of the body", "a distinct portion of the body" (Lane, V: 2076). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the term *a'dā'* only one time in "Ṭaḥlīs" in compound name *a'dā' al-dīwān* with its metaphorical meaning "the members of the Chamber" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 87; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 205).

*ahl* (plural *ahāl*). This word is well-known in the Classical Arabic in the set of its meanings "the people of a house or dwelling, and of a town or village, and of a country", "a man's cohabitants of one dwelling or place of abode, and of one town or country" > "the family of a man, a man's kinsfolk, his relations"; "a man's fellow-members of one family or race, and of one religion, and of one craft or art or the like" (Lane, I: 121). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the term *ahl* in the Classical meaning of "people": *idḥāl ahl Bārīs fī ṭā'at al-sulṭān* "Making people of Paris obey their king again" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 240; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 316); *Al-malik huwa a'zam ahl al-dawla* "The king is the highest authority of the people of the state" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 84; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 119; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 200). Also he uses it as a synonym to *arbāb* and in the same way as *arbāb* (see above) to denote the members of government institutions: *ahl al-būrū* "members of *bureaux*, i.e. offices" (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 87; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 204); *ahl al-dawla* "the members of



the government” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 252; Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 216; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 329); *ahl al-dīwān* “the members of the Chamber” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 206; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 242; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 318); *min ahl al-dīwān* “a member of the Chamber” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 213; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 250; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 326); *al-qawānīn allatī yardā bi-hā ahl al-dawāwīn* “The laws approved by the members of the councils” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 81; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 116; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 196); *ahl dīwān al-bayr* “the Chamber of Peers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 115; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 194); *ahl šambir dūbayr ya ‘nī dīwān al-bayr ay ahl al-mašwara l-ūlā* “the members of the Chamber of the Peers, i.e. the council of Peers, who are the people of primary consultation” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 79; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 114; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 193); *ahl al-‘askariyya* “soldier” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 89; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 124; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 207); *ahl al-maḥkama* “the court” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 89; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 124; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 206); *ahl al-mašwara* “the members of the consultative Chamber” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 209; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 246; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 322); *ahl al-mağlis* “the members of the council” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 212; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 248; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 325); *ahl mağlis al-bayr* “the members of the Chamber of Peers” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 85; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 120; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 202); *ahl mağlis rusul al-‘imālāt* “Member of the Chamber of Deputies” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 87; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 122; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 204); *ahl mağlis al-muntaḥibīna* “the members of the electoral college” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 206; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 121; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 203); *ahl mašwarat rusul al-‘imālāt* “the members of the Chamber of Deputies” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 206; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 242; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 318).

*rasūl* (plural *rusul*). As it was previously said, this classical Islamic technical term is used by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī in the meaning of “ambassador”. Also, the author of “Ṭaḥṭāwī” employs the basic idea of this word “delegation” to use it as a title of people’s political deputies (Ayalon 1987: 70). He calls the lower House of French parliament, *Chambre des Députés des départements dīwān rusul al-‘imālāt*, designating *député* as *rasūl*: *Wa-‘adaduhum arba ‘mi’a wa-ṭamāniya wa-‘iṣrūna rasūl<sup>m</sup>* “This council has 428 members” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 80; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 115; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011, 195).

## 2.5. Legislative process, legislative acts:

*amr* (plural *awāmir*) “a command, an order, a bidding, an injunction, a decree, an ordinance, a prescript”: *al-awāmir al-sulṭāniyya* “the royal ordinances” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 212; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 249; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 325); *al-awāmir al-malakiyya* “royal decrees” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 199; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 310); *al-awāmir al-muḥālifa li-qawānīn al-mamlaka* “the ordinances that ran counter to the laws of the kingdom” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 215; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 251; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 328); *amr al-malik* “an executive order of the king” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 84; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 118; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 200). One may observe the semantic resemblance of the Arabic compound terms *al-awāmir al-sulṭāniyya* and *amr al-malik* “order, ordinance of the king” and the French *ordonnance royale* and assume that the mentioned Arabic terminological expressions were coined by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī as loan-translations of *ordonnance royale*; *Kāna al-amr wa-l-nahy la-hu* “all the power lay in his hands” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 207; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 244; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 319).

*tašrī‘* (verbal noun II from *šarī‘a* “the Holy Law”) “legislation (in secular sense: creating laws, not just interpreting the Holy Law)”: *tašrī‘ al-qawānīn al-tadbīriyya* “the

creation of the laws of governance" (Ṭahtāwī 1905: 85; Ṭahtāwī 2010: 120; Ṭahtāwī 2011: 201).

**al-šarṭa.** Al-Ṭahtāwī borrowed French *la charte* "Charter" in the form of *al-šarṭa* to denote the French Charter of 4 June 1814 (*La Charte constitutionnelle*) (see below *qānūn*). He retains the French name of Constitution of 1814 due to its phonetical consonance with Arabic *šarṭ* "condition", "stipulation" (Ṭahtāwī 2009: 249, n. 74): *Al-šarṭa allatī hiya kitāb qawānīn al-mamlaka* "the Charter, i.e. the book containing the laws of the kingdom" (Ṭahtāwī 1905: 209; Ṭahtāwī 2010: 246; Ṭahtāwī 2011: 321); *Wa-l-qānūn alladī yamšī 'alayhi al-faransāwiyya al-āna wa-yattaḥidūna-hu asās<sup>am</sup> li-siyāsati-him huwa l-qānūn alladī allafa-hu la-hum maliku-hum al-musammā Luwīz al-tāmin 'ašara wa-lā zāla muttaba<sup>am</sup> 'inda-hum wa-marḍiyy<sup>am</sup> la-hum ... Wa-l-kitāb al-maḍkūr alladī fī-hi hādā l-qānūn yusammā l-šarṭa wa-ma 'nā-hā fī-l-luḡa al-lāṭiniyya waraqa tumma tusūmiha fī-hā fa-uṭliqat 'alā l-siḡill al-maktūb fī-hi l-aḥkām al-muqayyida* "The codex followed by the French at present and the one they take as a basis for their politics is the law drawn up by their king, Louis XVIII, which has not ceased to be followed and approved by them... The book in which this codex has been enshrined is called the Charter, which in Latin means "paper" and, by extension, a document in which restricted laws are recorded (Ṭahtāwī 1905: 81; Ṭahtāwī 2010: 116; Ṭahtāwī 2011: 197); *Šana'a qānūn<sup>am</sup> bayna-hu wa-bayna l-faransāwiyya bi-mašwarati-him wa-riḍā 'i-him wa-alzama nafsa-hu an yatba'a-hu wa-lā yahruḡ<sup>a</sup> 'an-hu wa-huwa al-šarṭa* "He created a law that governed both him and all French people, after consulting the latter and obtaining their approval. He forced himself to follow it and not to depart from it. This law was the Charter" (Ṭahtāwī 1905: 197; Ṭahtāwī 2010: 234; Ṭahtāwī 2011: 308).

**šarī'a** (plural **šarā'i'**) "a watering-place", "a resort of drinkers", "a place to which men come to drink therefrom and to draw water", "place of descend to water", "a way to water" > "The religious law of God", "a law, an ordinance, or a statute", "a religion, or way of belief and practice in respect of religion", "a way of belief or conduct that is manifest" (metaphorically) (Lane, IV: 1535) < *šara'a* "to drink water with one's hands", "to enter into the water (to drink)", "to come to the water to drink" > "to institute, establish, prescribe for them, or to them, a religious ordinance, a law, etc." (metaphorically) (Lane, IV: 1534). *Šarī'a* is used by al-Ṭahtāwī to denote a collection of secular, rational laws (Ṭahtāwī 2011: 194, n. 5): *Wa-yusammā l-qānūn 'inda l-Faransāwiyya šarī'a fa-li-dālika yaqūlūna: šarī'at al-malik al-fulānī* "The French refer to secular law as a Code, and so they talk about the Code of such and such a king" (Ṭahtāwī 1905: 79; Ṭahtāwī 2010: 115; Ṭahtāwī 2011: 194); *Sā'ir al-faransāwiyya mustawūna quddāma l-šarī'a* "All Frenchmen are equal before the law" (Ṭahtāwī 1905: 83; Ṭahtāwī 2010: 117; Ṭahtāwī 2011: 198).

**qānūn** (plural **qawānīn**). In the Ottoman Empire the *qānūns* issued by the *sultāns* were used as codifications or legitimate extensions of the Holy Law, but not as acts of legislation (Ayalon 1987: 86). *Qānūn* as legal term is interchangeably used by al-Ṭahtāwī along with *šarī'a* to signify secular, man-made laws (see *al-šarṭa*, *šarī'a*): *Bal fariḥat sā'ir al-ra'iyya bi-tadbīri-hi wa-mašyi-hi 'alā l-qawānīn tumma ntahā amru-hu ilā an ḥataka l-qawānīn allatī hiya šarā'i' al-faransāwiyya wa-ḥalāfa-hā wa-qabla ḥatki-hi li-l-šarī'a bātāt min-hu amāratu-hā bi-muḡarrad taqlīdi-hi al-wizāra li-l-wazīr Būlinyāq* "What is more, the entire population rejoiced at his government and the way in n rights of the French people were enshrined. An indication of this even

before the law was broken was the fact that he entrusted the prime ministership to the Minister Polignac” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 198; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 234; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 309).

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī employs both *šarī‘a* and *qānūn* to construct legal phraseological terms: *hatk li-l-šarī‘a/hataka l-qawānīn* “to shame the laws” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 198; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 234; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 309); *hataka ḥurmat al-qawānīn* “to violate the sanctity of the laws” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 215; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 251; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 328); *ḥarama l-qānūn* “to break the law (the Charter)” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 199; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 310); *qānūn muqayyid* “a restrictive body of laws” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 81; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 116; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 196); *ya’dīn bi-l-qānūn wa-yuzhiru-hu li-l-ra’iyya* “to approve and promulgate laws to the people” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 84; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 119; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 201); *musatṭar fī l-qawānīn al-maḥṣūša* “in accordance with the provisions set forth in the laws” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 88; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 123; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 205).

## 2.6. Electoral process:

*illiktūr* (< French *électeur* “elector”). To denote the voters (electors), who elect the French Chamber of Deputies, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses the French loanword *illiktūr* and explains it by its Arabic equivalent *al-muntaḥibūna* (active participle plural from verb VIII *intaḥaba* “to elect”): *dīwān rusul al-‘imālāt mu’allaḥ min ġumlat rusul yantaḥibu-hum al-muntaḥibūna allaḍīna yuqāl la-hum illiktūr* “The Chamber of Deputies is composed of all envoys elected by the voters, whom they call *électeurs*” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 86; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 121; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 203).

*illiktūrāy* (< French *électoral*) “electoral”: *šuraṭ illiktūrāy* < French *collèges électoraux* “electoral college”: *šuraṭ illiktūrāy al-muntaḥib li-l-rusul* “The electoral college that elects the envoys”. Created by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī the Arabic equivalent of French *collèges électoraux* *šuraṭ illiktūrāy* literally means “electoral guard/troop” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 86; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 121; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 203).

## 2.7. General politics:

*al-būlūtīqa* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 204)/*al-būlūtīqiyya* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 240) “politics”. In “Taḥlīs” the French loanword *al-būlūtīqa* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 204)/*al-būlūtīqiyya* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 240) “politics” (< *politique*) is used once as the synonym of the traditional Arabic *siyāsa* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 316).

## 2.8. Political groups and movements:

*al-ḥurriyya* “the Liberals” (abstract noun from *ḥurr* “free”, loan translation (calque) of French *liberal*) (see *al-malakiyya*): *maḍhab al-ḥurriyya* “the liberal movement” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 202; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 238; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 306). One can see that to denote political movement al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses utterly religious term *maḍhab* “a belief, a creed, an opinion, a tenet, a body of tenets, or articles of belief” (Lane, III: 983) > “school of (Islamic) law”.

*al-ḥurriyyūna* “the Liberals” (relational adjective from *ḥurr* “free”, loan translation (calque) of French *libéral*) (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 208; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 245; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 320).

*firqā* “part (political group)” < “division”, “unit” (Ayalon 1987: 125) (see above *al-malakiyya*).

## 2.8. Diplomacy:

*ilḡī* (< Turkish *elçi*) “messenger (ambassador, envoy)”: *ilḡī* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235)/*ilcī* (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 198) *bi-bilād al-Inklīz min ṭaraf al-Faransāwiyya ya 'nī rasūl<sup>an</sup> li-l-maṣāliḥ bayna l-dawlatayn* “He had been sent to the land of the English, i.e. as a messenger acting in the interests of both countries” (Ṭaḥṭāwī 1905: 198; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2010: 235; Ṭaḥṭāwī 2011: 309). To identify Count of Polignac, the French ambassador to Britain, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī parallelly uses the Ottoman Turkish loanword *ilḡī/ilcī* and its Arabic equivalent *rasūl*. The technical term *rasūl* (plural *rusul*) in its well-known Islamic traditional usage denotes exclusively God’s messengers and prophets. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses *rasūl* in secular meaning to describe any person send on a mission of whatever nature (Ayalon 1987: 70), namely to render the *envoy/ambassador* to Arabic.

So, my research permits me to draw the following conclusions:

1. The absolute majority of the technical terms, introduced by al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and dealt with in my article gradually went out of usage after the publishing of “Ṭaḥlīṣ” in 1834 and became regarded as obsolete archaic ones excluding *ḡumhūriyya* “republic”. This terminological lexeme was fixed in its usage and later became the sole equivalent of the French *république*.
2. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī makes an endeavour to find adequate equivalents to some legal concepts, using traditional Islamic legal technical terms (e.g. *rasūl* “the Messenger of God” > “the people’s political deputy”).
3. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī simultaneously uses more than one term to finally find the most appropriate lexical variant to render the semantics of the French terms conveying the Western sociopolitical and legal concepts, alien to his Egyptian contemporaries (e.g. *ṣarī'a/qānūn* “(secular) law”). From them the first did not find solid ground in the Arabic political discourse and fell from usage contrary to the second that became the only variant of rendering of the concept “secular law”.

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**MOROFILIA AND EPIC REPRESENTATIONS OF “THE NOBLE MOOR” IN  
GUERRAS CIVILES DE GRANADA (1595) BY GINÉS PÉREZ DE HITA,  
“TRANSLATOR” OF ABEN HAMÍN**

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**Abstract.** *Historia de los bandos de los Zegríes y Abencerrajes, caballeros moros de Granada*, mainly known as the First Part of *Guerras civiles de Granada*, was published in 1595 by Ginés Pérez de Hita, recounting the Mudejar and Moorish ambience of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century Andalusia. At a time when literature and history were harmoniously connatural, this *morisco* novel was built as a tense construct balancing fiction and history. While it fulfils the social and cultural function of the epic poetry, it simultaneously elevates the political and cultural mission of history. It so happens that *Guerras civiles* relies extensively on the immense popularity that the *romancero morisco* had during the XVI<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, beyond its obvious literary qualities, it is an accurate history of the rivalries between Muslim nobles of the Nasrid dynasty and the dissensions arisen within the very family governing the Muslim state. As it inevitably ponders and speculates upon the contrast between self-representation and representation of others in the Early Modern Spanish Andalusia, we aim at studying the way in which the stereotype of the new literary hero of “the noble moor” emerges and gets to be firmly established in what is considered to be a historical account of the Moorish *res gestae* in Granada.

**Keywords:** *Early Modern Andalusia, morofilia, history writing, self-representation and representation of others, epic stereotype.*

At a time when the Spanish authorities developed and sustained a long process of assimilation and acculturation of the *moriscos*, the Muslim population living in the Southern Spain Andalusia beginning with the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, we can also witness a high trend which promoted an alternative narrative, meant to balance and simultaneously even counterattack the mainstream story. We will try to evince in what follows the historical background nurturing the *morisco* literature and the strategies employed in those times and meant to put forward an ideal of esteem for the human value of the Moorish society in Andalusia, with special emphasis on the epic model of “the noble Moor”.

It so happens that towards 1600 there were around 300.000 Moors in the peninsula, exerting an enormous influence in the cultural field and also taking part both in the internal and external political debates. The process of Muslims’ religious and cultural assimilation had begun with the conquest of Granada by the Catholics Monarchs on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1492 and culminated during the reign of Philip II on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1567, when the Holy Office Court in Granada enacted the *Pragmática morisca* and immediately enforced it. This document consisted of several interdictions imposed on the Muslim population. As Bennassar (2004: 82-90) extensively explains, the most significant bans were the

following: Arab clothing and garments were not allowed; circumcisions became interdicted; traditional Muslim dances and musical instruments were prohibited; and last but not least, *algarabía*, a mixture of Arabic and Castilian languages, was banned, which on one hand rendered any contract written in Arab null and void, and on the other enforced the obligation to deliver any Arab book to the Chancellery of Granada. As a result, the rebellion of approximately 150.000 *moriscos* arose in the dry region of Granada, La Alpujara, around the Christmas of 1568. The event soon turned the place into the neuralgic point, which was to ignite in January-March 1569 the Wars of Granada. In April, Philip II subordinates all his warriors to his step-brother, Don Juan de Austria, and, in order to be as close as possible to Granada, in December he convenes the Courts in Cordoba. The war ends on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1570 with the Decree issued by Don Juan de Austria enacting the expulsion of Muslims to other parts of Spain, an expulsion that was to be massively conducted, as it is widely known, by Philip III during 1609 – 1614.

The expulsion of Moors represented the consequence of what was regarded as an irreconcilable and radical antagonism of Christians and Muslims, as a religious and political failure of the latter to integrate in and be assimilated by the Spanish society. During the XVI<sup>th</sup> and XVII<sup>th</sup> centuries, ever since the rebellion in La Alpujara, Moors began to be viewed and depicted by many Spaniards as enemies, as anti-Christians and as anti-Spanish. Consequently, we witness various antithetic perspectives on the role of the Moors in the culture and the history of the peninsula.

Echoing this state of affairs, recent studies have given up the linear simplistic view that presents Arabs as completely antagonistic to Christians and have begun to question it. We are thus witnessing a new historiographical tendency meant to recreate the great polyphonic cultural, social and intellectual processes that affected Spain in its period known as the Golden Age. Such studies of the “orientalism” in the peninsula were published by García-Arenal and Rodríguez Mediano (2013), Dadson (2014), or Olds (2015), to mention just a couple of the most impressive contributions that describe the process of intentionally creating of stereotypes and false images of the Spanish Orient, in order to exert dominion on its inhabitants.

In support of the Muslims’ assimilation politics, the central narrative in historical writings concerning the origins of Hispania and Spanish people during the XVI century stated a series of strong convictions, as follows: there had always been a Spanish community, a Spanish people with common biological features, as they were all descending from one of the Biblical lineages, the one generated by Tubal, nephew of Noah; despite the presence of various other people in its territory, such as Iberians, Jews and Arabs, the original inhabitants in the peninsula had always tended to keep themselves pure and clean and not to mix their blood; Spain was one of the first countries to be Christened and one of the first to prove the signs of civilization; Spaniards generally had resisted the Arabs invasion ever since its beginning, they had kept their faith in the Christian church and, with very few exceptions, they had always kept themselves free of any biological mixture with the invaders (García-Arenal & Rodríguez Mediano 2013: 195-224).

In the meanwhile, totally different from this central narrative, the alternative narrative writings were mere desperate intents meant to avoid the expulsion. As a result, beginning with 1570, *moriscos* tried to re-write their history as part of Spain’s history, which by no means could ignore references to its Arab origin population. According to

them, Moors were equally Spanish, as the rest of the inhabitants in the peninsula, as they had the same natural complexion and ingenuity and there were at least 900 years since they had been born and raised in Spain, the Spaniards themselves were just a biological mixture, without any significant differences with regards to the blood's cleanness, *la pureza del sangre*, which was only a myth, an invention and many of the "clean" ones were actually descendants of Moors and of Jews, too, not just Christians.

There were a number of important pillars mainly backing an alternative historical narrative which rendered the Moorish conquest of Spain from the Arab point of view. Several material history discoveries took place during 1588 – 1595 in Granada. On 18<sup>th</sup> March 1588, day of Saint Gabriel, an important angel for the Islam, under the Turpian Tower, a minaret of the old mosque, that was being demolished in order to make room for the new cathedral, there appeared a little lead box which enclosed a parchment written in various languages that included a prophecy of Saint John the Evangelist about the end of the world, written in Castilian, a comment by Cecil, patron saint Granada, written in Arab, an inventory of relics written by Saint Patrick in Latin, and a fragment of the Evangel by Saint John also written in Latin, that used to be read daily at that time during almost any church service (Mimura 2006: 174). On 25<sup>th</sup> February 1595, another document on the martyrdom of Saint Mesiton during the reign of Emperor Nero was discovered on the Mountain of Valparaiso, which was filled with caves and ruins of ancient buildings. During the same year 1595 several other discoveries added up: a book on the fundamentals of the church, written in Solomonic letters and in Arab language by Tesifon Aben Athar, a disciple of Saint Jacob, patron saint of Spain. In 1596, 1597 and 1599 other similar documents, relics, textile objects, coins and lead-covered books were discovered. They altogether formed a rich library that began to be translated by two physicians from Granada who were the Kings' interpreters from Arab: Alonso del Castillo and Miguel de Luna. All such events turned the Mountain of Valparaiso into a pilgrimage site. In 1600 the archbishop of Granada signs the sentence in favour of the authenticity of the relics under the Turpian Tower and Valparaiso, the latter being further on named *Sacromonte*, following the construction of an Abbey on the mountain (Mimura 2006: 175).

One of the King's physicians, Miguel de Luna, also published his *La verdadera historia del rey Don Rodrigo* in two parts, the first published in 1592 and the second in 1602, and then both in one volume in 1606. The main purpose of Luna's history book was to assign the Muslim invaders and their descendants an important role in the political and demographic regeneration of Spain, as the previous Visigoths were depicted as degenerated from the cultural, religious and political point of view. Luna pretends that regeneration of Spain had only been possible through the invasion of Arabs, seen as wise, educated, enterprising and the only ones able to unify all the various and disparate communities in the peninsula. He aimed at situating the Moors as huge protagonists in the biological creation of the Spanish community and he insists on the existence of the widespread custom of the mixed matrimonies between Christians and Muslims, all of which is flagrantly contradicting the mainstream narrative that pretended there never had been any mixture or interference between the Muslims and the Christians. Alternatively, Luna's *Historia Verdadera* was reassuring that many of the peninsula inhabitants had been mixed with the invaders and their descendants must have been the grandfathers of most of the Spanish people by the 1600.



Thus, a whole new trend of *morofilia* was born, and many books appeared about the world of the Arabs in the north of Africa, amongst which one must count etymological studies of the Castilian language meant to understand the Arab influence, such as the first monolingual dictionary of Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, published in 1611. And, obviously, as it happened with many vernacular languages in the Western European Renaissance, the Arabic itself become subject of the language defences and debates on the dignity and utility of the spoken language as a tool of knowledge, equal to the Classical Latin.

All of the material history discoveries in Sacromonte and the books written afterwards meant to prove the origin of the Hispanic community since the year 65 and the origin of Granada as cradle of Christianity, due to the joint efforts of Christians and Christian Arabs in the peninsula, as an intent of proving the syncretism and coexistence of the two churches of Christianity and Islam. As it was expected, they gave place to acute religious debates. In 1682, Pope Innocent XI declares both the discoveries in Sacromonte and the book of Luna as gross forgeries, convicting them as pure human fictions meant to ruin the Catholic Faith, and thus strengthening the central official history, that was fully installed by the end of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century.

Within this context, besides the material history discoveries in Sacromonte and the historical writings in Luna's work, another important pillar of the alternative narrative, meant to turn the Muslims more likeable to the so called *cristianos viejos*, was the literary one. Ginés Pérez de Hita published his *Guerras Civiles de Granada* as follows: the First Part, *Historia de los bandos de Zegríes y Abencerrajes, caballeros moros de Granada* in 1595, and the Second Part in 1619. He pretended it to be an accurate history of the Moorish city of Granada and at the same time a curious and fabulous entertainment book, aiming at fulfilling its socio-cultural high function just the same as the epic poetry builds up a national identity starting from its heroic past. As Pérez de Hita was born in 1544, he could not have witnessed the events he describes in the First Part of his book, which had finished by 1501.

Nevertheless, in order to make sure he invested his work with verisimilitude, just like Miguel de Luna, Ginés Pérez de Hita used the widely spread *topos* of the encountered manuscript, and therefore he declares on the very cover of his book that he is simply the translator of a text written by an Arab in the old times and says his "edition" has been recently published out of an Arab book, whose real author was named Aben Hamin, from Granada:

Ahora nuevamente sacado de un libro arábigo, cuyo autor de vista fue un moro llamado Aben Hamín, natural de Granada, tratando desde su fundación. Traducido en castellano por Ginés Pérez de Hita, vecino de la ciudad de Murcia (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 7).

Pérez de Hita's account of the cruel wars in Granada feeds upon the growing enthusiasm for the *romancero* in the decade of 1580, when the habit of collecting *romances* was at its peak. Both the old ones, *romances viejos*, written on loose sheets, *pliegos sueltos*, as main mean of circulating and spreading this type of epic poems during the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the new ones, *romances nuevos*, composed by numerous poets who were

compelled by this fashion, were enjoying wide appreciation. Among the latter, a high point in popularity and style was attributed to *romances moriscos nuevos*, which were preceded during the Middle Ages by *romances fronterizos*, frontier poems meant to elevate the prestige and likeability of the defeated Muslim enemy in order to praise the Castilian heroism (Carrasco Urgoiti 1956: 14). The new social fashion of the *morisco* epic poems during the XVI century were popularising an image of Nasrid Granada, perceived as the quintessence of a different and yet very close culture (Carrasco Urgoiti 1998: 6). And the incident most frequently introduced in various romances was the individual combat between a Moor and a Christian, celebrated under the eyes of Moorish ladies:

Con la contemplación complaciente de la vida y hábitos de los moros que reflejan los romances fronterizos, nace una forma española de exotismo que no conduce a regiones remotas, sino al propio pasado, un pasado que, al iniciarse esta tendencia artística, era un presente a punto de desaparecer. Así el moro de Granada entra en la temática literaria española como el representante de una civilización brillante y refinada, pero decadente, que los cristianos admiran en sus aspectos externos sin dejar por eso de combatirla ni de creer firmemente en la superioridad de la propia fe (Carrasco Urgoiti 1956: 11).

The fashion of the *romancero morisco* promotes the exotic image of the Moorish Knight, sharing the ideals of heroism and *amour courtois* along with the image of the Spanish Christian Knight. The courtly style of the Moorish fashion gives birth to the novel topic of the *Abencerraje* as lyrical subject of love poems and figure endowed with courtly sentiments and habits. Indeed, it was not until the publication of the First Part of Pérez de Hita's *novela morisca* that the character of the noble Moor embodied by the Abencerraje would gain full popularity and recognition.

The first part of *Guerras Civiles de Granada*, published in 1595, entitled *Historia de los bandos de Zegríes y Abencerrajes, caballeros moros de Granada*, narrates the history of Granada ever since its foundation until the first rebellions of the Moors in the beginning of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century and, different from the Second Part, it enjoyed wide popularity right after its publication.

It gave a panoramic view over the Nasrid society in Granada with its aristocrats' reunions of Christians and Muslims preceding the rendition of the Moor capital to the Catholic Monarchs. As its title suggests, the main topic consists of the tensions between the two most important Nasrid lineages: the Abencerrajes and the Zegríes. At the same time it recreates the Court environment in Alhambra and its proximities. The most substantial parts of the book are the chivalry love stories and rivalries, following the line of the *romances fronterizos* and *romancero morisco* types of epic poetry. The first book ends with the fight over the Nasrid throne and the leaving of the last Moorish king of Granada. It is therefore an important database of the frontier and *morisco* literary matter and at the same time a stylized version of the Nasrid reign.

The second part differs quite consistently from the first, as it focuses on the process of repression against the Moors in Granada between 1568 – 1570, a period the narrator himself claims to have witnessed. It is also an analysis of the reasons that triggered the war, depicting the cruelties on both sides, Christians and Muslims, and it ends with the *moriscos'*

deportation out of the kingdom of Granada, complaining that this was a great loss for the whole of Spain.

Having in mind the social, cultural and especially the political context that surrounded the publication of Pérez de Hita's *Historia de los bandos de Zegríes y Abencerrajes*, as well as the acute debates such context generated, one could not avoid taking into account the question of the historicity of such text. As Parrack (2007: 368) bluntly puts it: is it a history document or a work of fiction? Once he has acknowledged the interpretative instability of such writing and has discarded its representation as historical novel, a genre rather typical of the XIX century, when it is true that Pérez de Hita's text gave inspiration to the genre of the romantic historical novel, Parrack suggests a new reading of Pérez de Hita's *Historia* and concludes together with Elisabeth Davis (2000: 1), that it is simply a new literary genre, combining the already existing ones, equally to *La Dorotea* or *La Celestina*, and resulting in *una épica en prosa*, as it can be viewed in the light of the epic tradition:

Es obvio que se trata de un género nuevo que combina diferentes discursos que ya existían. En este sentido, puede leerse como una obra híbrida. Así que las *Guerras civiles* constituye una anomalía cultural como tantas obras literarias del Siglo de Oro español. (...) Propongo que las *Guerras civiles* es una épica en prosa. En su estudio de la épica áurea, Elizabeth Davis sugiere que muchos otros géneros literarios podrían leerse y entenderse mejor a la luz de la tradición épica (Parrack 2007: 368).

What is of great interest is not the story of the confrontation between history and fiction, nor the authenticity of the history elements, but the epic effects they create. Thus, history is constructed on the basis of epic motifs such as the battle, the siege of a city and in this case the ideal of the "noble Moor". The Moorish courtier, a perfect warrior and a perfect lover, whose virtues could guarantee the harmony of an era of coexistence between Christians, Jews and Muslims, emerged out of the great popularity that the *romancero morisco* had gained by the end of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century in Spain.

Besides the wide spread tradition of the *romancero morisco*, an anonymous writing was inserted around 1565 in the *Inventory* of compiler Antonio de Villegas, bearing the title *El Abencerraje*. It is considered as well one important source of the sentimental and gallant character of the Moorish courtier in the *morisco* genre literature, and, particularly in Pérez de Hita's *Guerras civiles de Granada*. Thus, during the last decades of the *Reconquista*, the literary *morofilia* of the Spanish Golden Age gave birth within the exotic world of Granada to the epic motif of the gallant Moor, an idealized poetic being embodying Spanish Islam's last representatives. Indeed, the Muslims who came to Granada are described by Pérez de Hita as the noblest Moorish knights, of the best lineages:

De todas las naciones moras que vinieron a España, los caballeros mejores y principales, y los más señalados de aquellos que siguieron al general Muza se quedaron en Granada, y la causa fue su hermosura y fertilidad, pareciéndoles bien su gran riqueza, asiento y fundación; aunque el capitán Tarif estuvo muy bien con la ciudad de Córdoba, y su hijo Balagis con Sevilla, de donde fue rey, como dice la crónica del rey don Rodrigo. Mas yo no he hallado que en la ocupación de Córdoba, de Toledo, Sevilla, Valencia, Murcia, ni otras ciudades poblasen tan nobles ni tan

principales caballeros, ni tan buenos linajes de moros como en Granada (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 9).

Amongst all the Moorish Lineages, Pérez de Hita declares that the one of the Abencerrajes was the best, and very highly esteemed, as they were descendants of that particularly valiant Abencerraje who had come with Muza when the Visigoths had been defeated, and who was mentioned even in the Chronicles of Castille's Kings:

Los caballeros Abencerrajes eran muy estimados, por ser de esclarecido linaje, descendientes de aquel valeroso capitán Abencerraje que vino con Muza en tiempo de la gran derrota de España: éste y de dos hermanos suyos descendieron estos caballeros Abencerrajes de sangre real. Hallaranse los hechos destos insignes caballeros en las crónicas de los reyes de Castilla, a las cuales me remito (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 20).

Equally, the ladies of the Abencerrajes were the best one could think of: "En otro balcón estaban todas las damas del linaje Abencerraje, que no había más que ver en el mundo" (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 54). The Abencerraje Knights were running with the bulls with great gallantry, which rendered them great praise. And they were especially admired by all Ladies, given that whichever lady who did not love and admire an Abencerraje could not consider herself a proper lady! And wherever there was such a knight, everybody esteemed and loved them. And this was so, due to their high generosity and gallantry, and discretion, and exquisite education and show of respect. Nobody could have asked them for a favour without hoping for the remedy. They were peacemakers, fathers to orphans, friend of their kings and friends of the Christians, they were visiting prisoners and they were giving charity. Never had they seen fear, even if plenty of occasions had arisen. They were giving such solace and gentler treatment, that the ladies and everybody else could never let them out of their sight (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 53).

The literary prototype of the idealised gallant Moor appearing in the *morisco* novels acquired his precise features once it fused with the perfect knight in the chivalric romance, an exemplary warrior and lover. The sentimental Moor paradigmatically embodied the values of courtship that could be signalled through minute descriptions of arms and ornaments, textures and colours. The noble appearance of the Moorish Abencerrajes was not only that of valiant knights, but also of civilized courtiers. They highly appreciated the war code, agreeing to fight the Christians in a just and proper way, only one to one. So, even if they were, as any good soldiers, eager to fight, they always decided to wait until the first one to one round was over, as it happens in the following passage of *Guerras Civiles*:

El Rey, como los vio así andar, mandó que se sosegasen, y preguntó si era justo salir a la escaramuza que el maestre pedía, y todos respondieron que era cosa muy justa salir, porque, haciendo lo contrario, serían reputados por caballeros de poco valor y muy cobardes, y sobre ello hubo muchos pareceres, sobre quién saldría a la escaramuza, o cuántos; y fue acordado que no fuese aquel día más que uno a uno a la escaramuza, que después saldrían más (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 21).

The myth of the Abencerraje as literary type implied a positive vision of the Christian-Muslim duality, advocating for a possible harmony between the two communities at the level of the high moral values they shared. Therefore, the Moors were depicted so noble in Pérez de Hita's view, that, in a total display of generosity, they even praised their Christian enemies.

As perfect men of arms, the Moors were also depicted as perfect courtiers, and, as previously mentioned, the books plot wraps around love stories also meant to prove the nobility and complex nature of the Moorish knights. To do so, the author employs one of the widespread commonplaces of the sentimental novels: the lovers' chain. If Fatima loves Muza, Muza loves Daraja. Daraja in her turn does not love Muza, she loves Abenjaminar, who, being an Abencerraje, loves her back:

La hermosa y discreta Fátima, del linaje Zegrí, que amaba de secreto mucho a Muza; pero él adoraba a la hermosa Daraja, hija de Mahomet Alabez, y hacía en su servicio señaladas cosas; mas Daraja no amaba a Muza, porque tenía todo su amor puesto en Abenjaminar, caballero Abencerraje de mucho valor: el Abencerraje amaba a la hermosa Daraja, y la servía (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 23).

As a result, the noble manners of the Abencerrajes courtiers also becomes sublimated in the merging of the War Code and the Love Code, as any early modern Renaissance novel. The noble lover goes to war once he's received his lover's gift. It will function as a protective omen, if born as a flag on his weapon. Muza accepts Fatima's gift, even if he does not love her, as his nobility and generosity could not let him do otherwise. He promises to wear it in the battle and to make sure it will win him the victory:

—Amigo, di a la hermosa Fátima que tengo en muy grande merced y favor el pendoncillo que me envía, aunque en mí no haya méritos para prenda de tan Hermosa dama, y que Alá me dé gracia para que la pueda servir, y que la prometo de ponerle en mi lanza, y de entrar con él en la batalla, porque sé que con tal prenda, y enviada de tal mano, será muy cierta la victoria de mi parte (*Guerras civiles* 1975: 24).

Among the Abencerrajes, Muza is described as the most combative knight, applying in practice the chivalric virtues which eventually lead him towards Christianity and awake his wish to serve the Catholic Monarchs, in whom he sees the highest example of honour and virtue. And so, he eventually converts to Christianity. Pérez de Hita manages therefore to reconcile the Moor's idealization whilst affirming the superiority of the Christian faith.

All in all, the legendary topic of the Abencerrajes and the myth it subsequently gave birth to was to live for a long time after the end of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century when it was created and it was read inside and outside of Spain during many centuries. It might also be the case that attributes such as heroism and refinement were associated with the mythical figure of the victim's destiny. Nevertheless, the idealized image of the Moors, and particularly the Abencerrajes, that Pérez de Hita offered, managed to create a harmonious vision of the joint Christians and Muslims communities, by capitalizing their fundamental human virtues, as pillars of a fine and discrete critique of his contemporary society, shattered by civil wars. At the same time, *Guerras Civiles de Granada* fulfilled the social and cultural

function of epic poetry, giving a very special impetus to the Spanish patriotism and advancing the literary construction of the empire, by creating idealised glimpses into the peninsula's heroic national past, and thus bringing to existence a national identity and eventually legitimizing the Spanish Catholic Monarchy.

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**THE *OTHER* AND THE *SELF* IN THE TRAVEL ACCOUNTS OF SOUTHERN  
HUNGARY AND SERBIA IN THE WORKS OF  
AL-IDRĪSĪ AND ABŪ ḤĀMĪD AL-ĠARNĀṬĪ**

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**Abstract.** The authors aim to present the way in which two Arabic sources, each other's contemporaries, depict Southern Hungary and Serbia. Those are Andalusian traveler Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī and famous Arabic geographer Al-Idrīsī. Both of them paid their visits to Southern Hungary and Serbia during their travels in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century. The key aim of the paper is to present two completely different accounts written by two Muslim scholars. The first one, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī, being a devoted Muslim, almost completely dedicates his account on the Muslims of Hungary, whilst Al-Idrīsī is more interested in different aspects of the economy, nature and inhabitants of the country itself. Both of these sources are valuable in numerous ways. They present the view of the two Islamic scholars, but also they are very important as sources that fulfill the other contemporary works of the Byzantine and the Western provenance. They are also unique sources, especially Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī, since he is the only one who writes about the everyday life of the Hungarian Muslim population from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Al-Idrīsī, on the other side, is a very interesting source for the Orthodox Greek population in Southern Hungary and represents, in view of this topic, one of the most important written sources. Concentrating on *other* in the *Geography* of Al-Idrīsī, and showing the interest in *self* in the *Mu'rib* of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī make these two sources complementary and give a different picture of the Southern Hungary and Serbia in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

**Keywords:** *Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī, Al-Idrīsī, Medieval Hungary, Medieval Serbia, 12th century.*

The area of Southern Hungary and Serbia was, during the 12<sup>th</sup> century, on a crossroads between the still strong Byzantine Empire under the Komneni dynasty on the one hand and the medieval Kingdom of Hungary on the other, which, from the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards, had become a very important factor in the international affairs in the Balkans. Therefore, it is not strange that this area left a trace in contemporary sources, of the Byzantine, Hungarian, Western (Latin) provenance, but also in the works of Arab writers.

In the text that follows, a view of two Muslim Arabic travelers of the aforementioned region will be discussed. Even though they are each other's contemporaries, that they visited Southern Hungary and Serbia in the same period (1150-1154) they provide very different accounts. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī, the first one discussed, was a devoted Muslim, and the center of his attention was occupied by the life of the Muslim population in Hungary. In this aspect, he represents a key source. Whilst Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī concentrated on the *self*, i.e. on the population that belonged to the same religion he did, Al-Idrīsī was much different. This geographer was much more interested in the *other*,



presenting to the readers of his *Geography* (mainly King Roger II) economy, nature, climate but also the population of the countries and the cities he had visited. Because of that, Idrīsī's work is valuable for the history of the Orthodox population in Southern Hungary. In the following passages, the authors will try to present how these two sources, even if they are *confronted*, are actually complementary.

These two Arabic authors have not been compared yet in the historiography. There are some important historiographical works, which partially treat data of both Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī and Al-Idrīsī on Hungary and Serbia. Some of them provide partial translations followed by the original Arabic and with extensive preface, such is a legendary study by Tadeuzs Lewicki (1945), whilst some provide only translations with very scarce comments (Elter 1985: 53-63), whilst yet others in parts provide commentaries alongside the translation, but lack comparison with other sources (Стојковски 2009: 59-69). There are also works that give extensive reports concerning this topic (Lewicki 1938: 106-122; Hrbek 1955: 206-230) and some are merely only overviews (Stojkovski 2011: 107-115) and finally there have been works that mostly discuss situation in Hungary in the context of Hungarian-Byzantine relations (Калић 1971: 25-36). Therefore, the aim of this paper is to compare the data of these two Arabic authors concerning different aspects of social, economic, cultural and political situation in the 12<sup>th</sup> century Hungary.

Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī, a prominent Islamic scholar, writer and traveler was born in Granada in 1080 A.D. His full name was Abū 'Abd Allāh Abū Ḥāmid Muhammad bin 'Abd ar-Rahīm bin Sulaymān bin ar-Rabī' al-Māzinī, al-Qaysī, al-Andalusī, al-Ġarnāṭī, al-Uqlīšī ibn Tamīm al-Qayrawānī. In the scientific circles he is better known as just Abū Ḥāmid, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī, or Abū Ḥāmid al-Andalusī. He was born in Granada (from which he derives the *nisba* al-Ġarnāṭī), in Andalusia (that is why he is often called Abū Ḥāmid al-Andalusī). For some time, he most probably lived in the city of Uclés, from which he probably derived the *nisba* al-Uqlīšī. In 1106-07 he left the Iberian Peninsula and never returned to his native country. For some time, it seems that he lived in Morocco. He undertook travels to Northern Africa (Morocco, Egypt), Volga Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia, Persia, took a pilgrimage to Mecca, and then went to Syria and to the territory of what is today's Iraq. Around 1117-1118 he went to Alexandria where he studied Islamic sciences. Afterwards, he also lived in Cairo up until 1123. He most probably obtained legal education as well. In Damascus he met a very prominent scholar, grand vizir Yahyā ibn Hubayra. To this man he dedicated his work *Al-mu'rib 'an ba'd 'ayā'ib al-Maġrib* which is the focus of our research on this occasion. This work, like *Tuhfat*, his second, but even more cited work, is full with interesting data, as well as legends and miracles. After briefly stopping to Damascus he left for Baghdad where he spent three years. During his trip, he visited Seljuk Empire and sultan Mesud I in Asia Minor, and also went to Persia, to Abhar and Isfahan. Throughout his life he lived in Hungary, Saxin in Volga Bulgaria and afterwards in Kwarizm. He travelled across a lot of Central Asia, settling again in Baghdad, but not for long. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġarnāṭī died in Damascus, in his very old age, in 1170 A.D. (Dubler 1953: 121-131; Калић 1971: 25-26; Lévi-Provençal 1986: 122; Özdemir: 1994, 128-130).

Not long after the Second Crusade (1146-1149) famous Abū Ḥāmid visited the Kingdom of Hungary. He spent three years in Hungary, in the period from 1150 until 1153. In his work he calls this county انقورية (Unqūriyya) and their inhabitants are described under the name باشغرد-Bāšġird (Dubler 1953: 26-27). The use of Bashkir name for Hungarians

was also present in some early Arab sources. As it was already stated at the beginning, his data are mostly on the Muslim population that lived in Hungary in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, but this Arab traveler also describes Unqūriyya and gives some scarce, but interesting, pieces of information on the country he stayed in for three years, Abū Ḥāmid mentions that there are 78 cities in the Kingdom of Hungary. In his second work, entitled *Tuḥfat al-albāb* (in its Copenhagen manuscript), Abū Ḥāmid writes on the 70 cities that there were in Hungary (Bolsakov, Mongajt 1985: 139; Zimonyi 1994: 84-85; Árpád 1994: 85-86). This claim is very similar to the account of an important contemporary German source, the works of Otto of Freising. He writes, on the other hand, that there are 70 counties in the Kingdom of Hungary and he does not mention any cities. All in all, he holds a very low opinion on Hungary. According to Otto of Freising, Hungarian population live in poor houses made of reeds, rarely of wood and most rarely of stone. This German bishop and historian said that Hungarians live also in tents which is reminiscent most probably of the Pechenegs (Waitz 1912: 48-52; Калић 1971: 25-26). One can here see two totally different opinions regarding Hungarian urbanization, but also here it is clear that the Arabic source is very important and that it gives information that can rarely be found in other medieval sources. From the Abū Ḥāmid's and Otto of Freising's point of view, Hungary looks quite different. The latter one, when he writes about poor conditions, could be most probably right, but in the eyes of a Muslim traveler it was vice versa.

The origins of Hungarian Muslims are unknown, and the scholarly dispute started during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some scholars claim that their origin is Volga Bulgaria (Réthy 1880:13; 16; Székely 1974: 53-74). There are opinions that the Hungarian Muslims arrived from Khazar Empire (Pauler 1893: 166; D'Eszlary 1956: 376-378; Károly 1970: 254-259). Moreover, there is an opinion that these Muslims are actually arrived from the Byzantine Empire after King Ladislas conquered Srem. There is also a hypothesis that they came with Hungarians in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century, especially during the reign of prince Taksony, who died in 970. Taksony's wife was of Cuman origin. According to Anonymus, Muslim emigration continued during Taksony's heir, Zoltan. Allegedly, during this period Pechenegs also settled in Hungary. The chronicle from the reign of king Bela III (beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century), written by famous Anonymus (the so-called P. mester), provides information that these Muslims settled around Pest (Berend 2001: 64-66; Bak, Rady 2010: 124-127). Abū Ḥāmid is the only contemporary Muslim source who provides information on this topic.

Abū Ḥāmid states that in Hungary there are two groups of Muslims. The first ones are from Maghrib (المغربية), and the second group is from Khwarezm-الخوارزميين. Maghribians openly practiced Islam and were most probably soldiers since Abū Ḥāmid writes that they do not serve Christians إلا في حروب (Dubler 1953: 27; 65; Berend 2001: 140-142) There is an opinion that these could be of Petchenegue origin (Hofmeister 1934: 854; Hrbek 1955: 216; 219-223; Калић 1971: 33-34; Узелац, 2010: 59-76). Second group is the Khwarezmians, and some earlier historians claimed that this group probably formed from the Kaliz population (Greek Χαλίζοι) from Srem. They were close to the king's court, formally Christian, but in secret they remained faithful to the Muslim religion (Dubler 1953: 27; 65). They were actually crypto Muslims. These Χαλίζοι are mentioned by the Byzantine historian John Cinnamos. They formed a part of the troops that went in 1150 to help Hungarians against the Byzantine army. John Cinnamos describes their religion as the

same as the Persian one. Since *Persians* is the common name for Turks in the Byzantine sources, it is clear that he writes about Islamic religion (Czeplédi 1970: 257-258; Brand 1976: 186; ВИИЈ IV 2007: 30-32; 86).

The number of Muslims in Hungary, according to Abū Ḥāmid, was many thousands (Dubler 1953: 65). But, there are some accounts and estimations that propose that the number of Muslims was probably between two and fifteen thousand of inhabitants of the Islamic origin (Berend 2001: 67). This Arabic traveler provides the most valuable information about the Muslims of medieval Hungary, even giving some accounts of their every-day life, habits and the way of living in this country. He said that he entered in relations with the Maghribians who had honored him much. When describing Muslims in Hungary and in Srem in particular, Abū Ḥāmid says that he had to teach some of them to speak the Arabic language. He found one man who spoke Arabic, and they had a dialogue on the relation between the books (certainly Qur'an) and the science. Their conclusion was that books lead towards the science. They did not know some of the bases of their own religion, like for instance they were not aware of the jum'ah prayer, but also of the ḥuṭbah, the preaching after the prayer. He forbade the Muslims of Hungary to drink wine, since it was hazardous to their bodies. He allowed them to have slave concubines as well as four legitimate wives as it was according to their temper. He told to the Hungarian king that if a Muslim drinks wine he goes mad, commits adultery, loses his mind and temper. He even says that they would have been bad soldiers who could not go to military campaigns, since they would spend all their money on drinking. He regulated some judicial practices and some customs regarding heritance (Dubler 1953: 28-29; 32-33; 66-67; 69-70). There is no mention that he interfered in the judicial processes amongst Muslims themselves, but he had most probably obtained good legal education (Hrbek 1955: 116).

Some other Muslims were also noticed by Abū Ḥāmid in Hungary. He speaks of the conflict between Hungary and the Empire during which the Hungarian king went deep to the Byzantine Balkan territory. Those captives are Turkmens (Turks) from Konya captured by King Geza II. According to Byzantine sources John Cinnamos and Niceta Choniates the vast number of prisoners was taken in the Byzantine territory in 1151 during a conflict between Geza II and Manuel I Comnenus (Dubler 1953: 31-32; 68-69, 141; Калић 1970a: 29; Brand 1976: 91-92; Magoulis 1984: 54; ВИИЈ IV 2007: 39-44, 124-126). One of these prisoners talked with Abū Ḥāmid. He said to him that they served in the Byzantine army for money. He did not know that there were other Muslims in Hungary, and Abū Ḥāmid told him that King allowed them to practice Islam, and that Muslims lived relatively freely in the kingdom of Hungary (Dubler 1953: 31-32; 68-69).

There are also some other very interesting remarks about Muslims in medieval Hungary. Abū Ḥāmid entered into service of Hungarian King Geza II (1141-1162). Abū Ḥāmid calls him Kazali-كزالي. He encouraged the Muslims to fight in the Hungarian army. He left his oldest son in Hungary. He went to Kiev Rus' with another Muslim Ismail ibn Hasan (his pupil). He was supposed to get permission to recruit mercenaries for the war against the Byzantine Empire (Dubler 1953: 34, 38-39, 71, 73-74). Abū Ḥāmid showed great interest in the economy of Hungary. He gives interesting remarks about prices in Hungary. For example, for one Arabic dinar twenty rams could be bought in Hungary, and when it comes to lambs and goats, thirty for one dinar could be bought, while 500 measures of honey were also valued a dinar. Abū Ḥāmid also bought a beautiful slave girl whom he

gave the name Maryam. Her price was ten dinars, which Abū Ḥāmid found to be very cheap. He even writes about their life together (Dubler 1953: 29-31, 67-68; Stojkovski 2011: 112-113).

When one compares these data with legal position of Muslims in Hungary, one can reach a conclusion that the pressure on Muslims in medieval Hungary was very strong and that is quite possible why they had forgotten their native tongue and customs. The laws of the Kingdom of Hungary were very strict regarding Islam. Laws considering Muslims were very strict towards them since the age of kings Ladislas I (1077-1095) and Coloman (1095-1116). First laws were published in 1092, where to Muslims it was prohibited to, after baptism, practice their old religion. Coloman's laws were even more severe. Muslims were forced to eat pork, marry Christians, build churches in their villages etc. The aim of these laws was the conversion and assimilation of the Muslim population into the Roman Catholic majority of medieval Hungary (Nagy 1899: 52-53; 108-111; Bak, Bónis, Sweeney 1989: 29; 57; Berend 2001: 237). There were even forced conversions, testified even by the Hungarian sources (Bak Rady 2010: 126-127). This was not something that Abū Ḥāmid was aware of, and his good relations with the King certainly influenced his opinions.

In 1153 Abū Ḥāmid went to Saxin, and then further continued his journey. But only a year after him, another Arab writer and scholar paid a visit to the Kingdom of Hungary. There are not many biographical data about the life of al-Idrīsī. It is said that it is so because of the fact that he lived and worked for the Christian King, Roger II of Sicily and that his work is mostly a praise of this ruler. It is well-known that al-Idrīsī did write on many occasions panegyrics of the Sicilian ruler (Feniello 2011: 200). Arab Muslim biographers, therefore, started to avoid writing his detailed biography. His full name was Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Šarīf al-Idrīsī and he was born most probably in 1100 A.D. in the city of Sabtah (modern-day Spanish city of Ceuta). He claimed that his family were the descendants of the Prophet Mohammed himself. His ancestor was undoubtedly Idrīs II, ruler of Malaga. Al-Idrīsī was one of the most famous Islamic geographers and travelers. He received a good education in Cordoba. He served as an adviser to Roger II, Norman king in Sicily, but it is unclear when, how and under what circumstances al-Idrīsī arrived to the court of this Norman ruler. Service in Sicily resulted in the completion of his famous major geographic work, one of the masterpieces of the Islamic geography and travel accounts. Al-Idrīsī undertook his journey throughout Europe and Africa in order to make the world map for King Roger II. The main result of this travel is the most famous work of al-Idrīsī entitled *Kitāb nuzhat al-muštāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq*. He personally visited the following regions: Northern Africa, Islamic (Near) East, Lombardy, Sicily, other parts of modern-day Italy, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, and finally Byzantium (territory of Serbia and Macedonia). Al-Idrīsī completed the book in January 1154, shortly before Roger's death. This source is valuable for its data on such regions as the Mediterranean basin and the Balkans.

After completing his journey and upon his return to the court of his maecenas Roger II al-Idrīsī made a world map consisting of 70 sections, which is also known as *Tabula Rogeriana*. The Arab geographer also made a silver planisphere on which a map of the world was depicted. The final result is his already mentioned capital work, chef d'oeuvre of the medieval Arabic geography *Kitāb nuzhat al-muštāq fī ikhtirāq al-āfāq* (often translated as *The Pleasure Excursion of One Who Is Eager to Traverse the Regions of the*

*World*). Also known as *Kitā Ruġār*, or simply *Al-Kitāb al-Ruġārī* (*The Book of Roger*) or just *Geography*. This work was completed in 1154 and that is the only certain year from the life of Al-Idrīsī. He died in 1165 A.D. in Sicily or Seuta (Lewicki 1945: 9-19; Недков 1960: 9-18; Elter 1985: 53-55; Oman 1986: 493-495; Şeşen 2000: 1032-1035). His famous *Geography*, and especially this map that was made for this purpose is not considered a scientific work, nor can it be used extensively in the scientific studying of medieval geography (Недков 1960: 13-18). But, the work of al-Idrīsī is a very peculiar source, and his view on the Southern Hungary and Serbia makes him one of the most specific authors from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. According to the words of Tadeusz Lewicki, this was an attempt of the revolution in geography by al-Idrīsī and King Roger II himself. His sources are mostly earlier geographical works as well as oral narratives. Al-Idrīsī was familiar with Greek sources since the forms of the names of some of the cities point to Greek origin. These were most probably data provided to him by the Greeks living at the Roger II's court (Lewicki 1945: 19-95).

Without a doubt, the most illustrative relation towards the *other* in the work of al-Idrīsī is his description of the city of Bač. Here he writes about مدينة بقصين which, according to him, was a famous city, and that is one of the largest cities. There are squares in Bač, as well as traders, craftsmen and learned men who speak Greek (or maybe better translated as learned Greek men) or as al-Idrīsī writes علمعء إغريقيون. At the end of this short paragraph dedicated to the city of Bač Arab geographer states that in Bač *they have farms and arable land. Grain is very cheap because there is an abundance of it* (Opus Geographicum 1978: 884). Not only that this short passage depicts accurately the relations of al-Idrīsī towards other cultures, but this short description of Bač also coincides well with other contemporary sources and it is one of the most valuable sources for the history of the Byzantine church in Southern Hungary in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This information about the Greek learned men is confirmed by Byzantine historian John Cinnamos, the secretary of Manuel I Komnenos. He states that Bač was the ecclesiastical center of Srem (ВИНЈ IV 2007: 70; Brand 1976: 164-168). Greek inhabitants of the region of Sirmia (Srem) and Bačka had greeted Emperor Manuel I Comnenos during his campaign. Cinnamos also writes of people singing Greek Orthodox songs, namely a part from the Psalms, or some other hymns (ВИНЈ IV 2007: 69-70; Brand 1976: 167). Due to the lack of space in the following passages only some remarks by al-Idrīsī will be pointed out, those that illustrate the best the topic of this paper.

During this al-Idrīsī's journey a war broke out between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Byzantine Empire, and it was led mostly on the territory of the regions of Bačka and Srem. Furthermore, the Arab geographer writes about the city of Titel (Tītlūs), which is most probably where the Byzantine army had passed on its way from Srem. Titel/تيتلوس is, according to al-Idrīsī a city with many inhabitants and cattle, and people there are wealthy and live in abundance (Opus Geographicum 1978: 886). This data of al-Idrīsī shows that Titel was well-developed, and this city is known from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and was a seat of an ecclesiastical chapter, with a very important role in Southern Hungary (Ivánfi 1877; Érdujhelyi 1895: 49-85; Érdujhelyi 1899: 157).

Idrīsī also visited the territory of Srem (Sirmia). Firstly, he mentions Ifrankabilāh or Francavilla (Hungarian Nagyolasz, modern day village of Mandelos) a couple of times. Idrīsī does not describe this medieval town, he mostly mentions it in the context of distance

from إفرنك بيلة to some other cities, including أبرندس ('Abrandis). He describes afterwards a city that is perhaps modern day Petrovaradin (deriving from Varadinus), as a very civilized city with lots of squares and buildings (Györffy 1968: 230; Opus Geographicum 1978: 885-887; Покаи 1975: 107-108). Unlike the other Arab traveller he does not give any mention of Muslims in this area whatsoever. Al-Idrīsī states that cities of Hungary are among the most urbanized and well-built, with the greatest wealth and many possessions (Székely 1974: 72).

Belgrade was an important crossroads and a town which was crucial in the fights between Hungary and Byzantium. The strategic key point of Belgrade was described in detail by al-Idrīsī's contemporary Byzantine writer John Kinnamos, who writes extensively on the place of Belgrade in the Byzantino-Hungarian wars (Калић 1967: 47-50; Калић 1970b: 47-60; Brand 1976: 104-105; ВИНЈ IV: 2007: 39-55). Al-Idrīsī was certainly aware of the significance of this city; therefore, he writes that Belgradūn, i.e. بلغردون is a flourishing city that has many buildings and temples (Opus Geographicum 1978: 887). Here once again the Arabic writer is interested in the *other*, i.e. in the city he visited. In Belgrade, there are temples and other buildings which were described by Al-Idrīsī. With the lack of the archeological evidence, *Geography* is an interesting source that depicts how Belgrade looked in this period. The peculiarity is that in the period when the Arab geographer paid a visit to Belgrade the surroundings of the city were in the middle of the great Byzantine-Hungarian war (Калић 1967: 52). Therefore, these data by Al-Idrīsī have to be taken with precaution.

Another very important city on the Hungarian-Byzantine, later Hungarian-Serbian border was Braničevo. Hungary had its' trading colony there, the attack on this city by the Hungarians in 1126 was a direct cause of the Byzantine-Hungarian war. Interestingly, in 1147, the crusaders of the Second crusade passed through the city but according to them, it was poor (Динић 1958: 12; Калић 1967: 44). Al-Idrīsī had a different impression. This city situated in Serbia (من مدن مقدونية), Braničevo, which he calls أفرنيسفا is in a flat area. He confirms the already known data about trade, stating that trade is always going on here, and that this is a city with large traffic. He further writes that there are many cheap goods, and a great abundance of water from the river. In this city, al-Idrīsī says, the commerce always flows (Opus Geographicum 1978: 888). What is particularly interesting is that in the period when the Arab geographer passed through Braničevo, this second most important Danube fortress after Belgrade, it was been under Hungarian siege (Makk 1981: 31-33; Калић 1984: 19-20).

Finally, going down south al-Idrīsī visited the city of Niš. Already in the period when he visited this Serbian city this was an important strategic point, but also a very developed city. There had been excavated luxury ceramics found, and the church of Saint Procopius was famous for the relics of that saint. All that meant that the city was wealthy (Стојковски 2009: 67-68). Al-Idrīsī writes, completing this information, that the city is famous with many honey, milk, and fruits. He situates Niš-نيسو near the Morava (مورافا) which originates من جبال صربية (Opus Geographicum 1978: 893).

Unlike Abū Ḥāmid, al-Idrīsī provides very brief and sometimes scarce data on some cities in Serbia and Southern Hungary. For the latter one, geography, climate, economy and sometimes even religion, are in the center of attention. He does not give any data on the Hungarian Muslim population whatsoever. The data of al-Idrīsī are not always the most

reliable ones, when he, for instance, describes Belgrade or Braničevo, the truth is that in the time al-Idrīsī went there these cities were a stage for harsh Byzantine-Hungarian wars. Therefore, al-Idrīsī might not be always entirely accurate and precise. But, alongside Abū Hāmid, these two Arab authors of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, whether depicting *self* or the *other*, provide valuable information and complement each other, serving together as valuable sources from an Arabic-Andalusian point of view.

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THE *OTHER* AND THE *SELF* IN THE TRAVEL ACCOUNTS OF SOUTHERN HUNGARY AND SERBIA IN THE WORKS OF AL-IDRĪSĪ AND ABŪ ḤĀMĪD AL-GARNĀTĪ

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## ARAB TRAVELERS ABOUT POLAND. THE IMAGE OF IBRĀHĪM IBN YA'QŪB AND THE IMAGE OF THE SLAVS

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**Abstract.** The Arab empire had been formed long before the rise of the Polish state, so that period of the Arab-Polish relations should be viewed in a broader context, meaning Arab contacts with Slavs. The initial period of the Polish-Arab relations was mainly characterized by the unilateral interest of random Arab travelers coming to the Polish lands. Reports concerning Poland were included in the account by the Arab-speaking Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and in later accounts by al-Idrīsī (12<sup>th</sup> century), an Arab geographer who wrote *Tabula Rogeriana*, which contains very interesting descriptions of the city of Kraków/Cracow (then: the capital of Poland). The aim of the paper is to present the image of others: the Slavs (Poles) by Arab travelers, the image of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb in the Polish science (concentrating more on Ibrāhīm himself and less on what he reported about the Slavs and the Polish lands), stressing the importance of his account of the trip to the Slavic countries.<sup>1</sup>

**Keywords:** Arab Travelers, Poland, images, Slavs, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb.

### Arab-Slavic contacts and the image of the Slavs

Already in the 7<sup>th</sup> century the Arab world was connected with Europe by a number of links, especially trade links (Lewicki 1961: 61). Thanks to trading, Arabs and other inhabitants of the empire reached countries as distant as Poland or Russia. Through the accounts of their travels to the Slavic countries – created by some of the travelers who wrote in Arabic – it is possible to reconstruct the course of the Arab-Slavic relation.

Because the Arab empire had been formed long before the rise of the Polish state, that period of the Arab-Polish relations should be viewed in the broader context of Arab contacts with Slavs in Europe (Nazmi 1998). In the very first centuries after the Arab world had entered into the world history arena, the Slavs were mentioned as the peoples living in the distant countries of the North in the works of early medieval Arab historians, poets and writers [and geographers or travelers – M.S.]. The “Amber Road” led the Arab traders to the Slavic countries and they came back to the Arab empire with the stories of the Slavs (Głuski 1973: 1-2). Often they did not come with stories based on their own observations, but rather borrowed from the works of classical, older authors or other travelers (Lewicki

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1956: VII). Later researchers became accustomed to the fact that those responsible for preparing collections of works had not cared for the sources, changing them at whim: abridging or expanding, modifying single words or even entire sentences. Moreover, at times memory had failed them when they were quoting other authors or they had been making mistakes when copying other works (Kowalski 1946: 21). Thus, they had been paraphrasing the sources available to them. In contrast, eliminating discrepancies and making the accounts more credible were partially possible by means of comparing two or more works referring to the same account, through archaeological studies or by means of other, extra-Arab, sources.

Probably the first meeting of the Arabs and the Slavs took place in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in the areas of the Eastern Roman Empire (Lewicki 1949/1950: 326). The first mention of the Slavs [as *Saqāliba* – M.S.] occurred already in the 7<sup>th</sup> century in a collection of poems (*Diwan*) by Al-Akhtal. The Slavs were the first fair-haired European peoples with whom the Arabs had contact (except, perhaps, the Alans in the North Caucasus). As Ibn al-Kalbi, who lived at the turn of the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, wrote “Slavs are a numerous people, fair-haired and pink-skinned” (Lewicki 1956: 3-7). Ğarīr, another Arab poet and a contemporary of Al-Akhtal, discussed *Saqāliba* as “red” (Lewicki 1949/1950: 339). It is important to note that the Arabs got to know the Slavic countries long after they had met the Slavs. This happened when the Arab caliphate started to include lands that had long been in direct trade relations with the Slavs and the neighboring countries of Eastern and Central Europe; the Arabs came to Chorasmia, to Septimania in the southern France (with Narbonne as the main center), and the Pyrenees (Lewicki 1949/1950: 328).

There were more and more references to the Slavs in the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many travelers, historians, and Arab poets were mentioning them in their treatises and poems, such as al-Farghānī, Ibn Qutaybah, or al-Jāhīz, discussing their trade contacts with the Slavs, the Slavic customs, or the Baltic Sea (Głuski 1973: 2). Among the Arab geographers, writers, and travelers writing about the Slavic lands, peoples of Eastern Europe, and their customs, the Arab trade with the Slavs were such authors as: al-Khwārizmī, Ibn Khordadbeh, Aḥmad ibn Faḍlān, Ibn al-Faqīh, Ibn Ḥawqal, Ibn Rustah, ibn Sa‘īd al-Maghribī (Lewicki 1961: 237-238), al-Ya‘qubi, Al-Mas‘ūdī, Istakhri, al-Maqdisī (Lewicki 1961: 65-68), al-Balkhī, al-Gardīzī, Al-Bakrī, al-Idrīsī, Al-Bīrūnī (Lewicka-Rajewska 2004) or al-Balādhurī (Lewicki 1956: 211).

Since the turn of the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Arab sources were mentioning countries inhabited by the Slavs more and more often (Lewicka-Rajewska 2004, Lewicki 1961; Nazmi 1998). Starting from the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the accounts were getting more detailed: the authors divided them into tribes or enumerated them. For instance, Ibn Hawqal divided the Slavs into the western Slavs (in closer trade relations with the Muslim Spain) and the eastern Slavs (in closer relations with the Muslim East) (Lewicki 1961: 101).

### **First Arab-Polish contacts**

As it has been mentioned, since the Middle Ages, Polish-Arab contacts were mainly trade-related (i.e. Dziubiński 1997), e.g. the main trade route connecting Asia with the West led through Kraków (Lewicki 1961: 63). Kufic coins found in Poland and neighboring

countries constitute “a clear evidence of the existence of trade relations between these areas and the Arab countries between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> century” (Czapkiewicz, Kubiak, Lewicki 1956: III). In the early Middle Ages in Poland (when the Polish money market was just crystallizing), silver of many forms and of Arab or Western European origin served as tender (Felczak, Malarczyk, Małachowska 1997: 1). Mieszko I, the first king of Poland, used the Arab dirhem to pay his soldiers; therefore, the dirhem became the first coin of the Polish state (Gumowski 1958-1959: 24).

The initial period of the Polish-Arab relations was mainly characterized by the unilateral interest of random Arab travelers coming to the Polish lands (Piotrowski 1989: 5). Reports on Poland were included in the account by (the Arab-speaking) Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and in later accounts by al-Idrīsī (12<sup>th</sup> century), an Arab geographer who wrote *Tabula Rogeriana* (*The Book of Roger, Roger's Book*), which contains very interesting descriptions of the city of Kraków (then: the capital of Poland) (Lewicki 1945: 137). In 1945/1946, two prominent scholars published analyses of those travelers: Tadeusz Kowalski – about Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb, and Tadeusz Lewicki – about al-Idrīsī; they have remained one of the most essential sources regarding the beginnings of the Polish state (Lewicki 1956: VI).

Poland (*Bulunija*) was among the Slavic countries most accurately described by al-Idrīsī in his book (full title: *Kitab nuzhat al-mushtaq fi'khtiraq al-'afaq*, meaning “The book of pleasant journeys into faraway lands”; in short: *Kitab Ruggar*, that is *Roger's Book*). al-Idrīsī divided the inhabited Earth into 7 climates, and then each climate into 10 parts – each of them with one special map; Poland was in the 6<sup>th</sup> climate, constituting the third and the fourth part of the climate. A commentary comprising 70 chapters corresponding with special maps was added to the atlas; it is a very detailed commentary including, i.a., the description of countries and their peoples (along with the ornaments and clothing), the communication routes categorized by their lengths, and other strange wonders observed by those traveling to the countries, and checked by the authors (Lewicka-Rajewska 2004: 60).

Among the Slavic countries, the following were the most accurately described: Poland (*Bulunija*), Rus' (*ar-Rusija*), Slovakia and Czechia (*Bu'amija*), Croatia (*Chorwasija*), Dalmatia, Serbia, and Bulgaria. Except for some passages, it was a completely original description of the countries, totally separate from older Arabic literary sources (Lewicki 1961: 231). For example Poland was described in the following way: as a country of knowledge and wise men (*tullab al-elm*), of many Romans (Christians) coming from other horizons, overpopulated, with many people. Kraków was one of the Polish towns mentioned (*Eraqo*) as a beautiful town with many houses, buildings, and market places. The author also mentioned, i.a., Gniezno (*Dznazna*) and Wrocław (*Raclava*) (al-Idrīsī 2002: 889-890).

*Roger's Book* has remained the most important cartographic and geographical work of the late Middle Ages preserved to this day. However, its reception has become divisive nowadays: it is either enthusiastic, or highly critical. Despite it all, it is doubly significant in the history of geography: as the first (large-scale) attempt at revising geography in the Middle Ages and as the first significant effort to bring mathematical and descriptive geography closer together (Lewicki 1945: 69). Translated into Latin, al-Idrīsī's geographical work was accepted and acquired by Europe (it is now kept by the French Museum of Saint Martin). For about 400 years, it was the only official interpretation in the

European institutes (Aṣ-ṣīhī 1984: 16, 241), regarded as supreme and more accurate than the Greek works (Aṣ-ṣīhī 1984: 239).

### **The image of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb**

Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb was a comprehensively educated Jewish scholar. Because he was interested in the countries of the Northern and Eastern Europe, his character and biography were not that popular in the Muslim world and he remained rather obscure. It was only the 19<sup>th</sup> century European science that appreciated his account of the Slavs (Kowalski 1946: 47) and, consequently, its author.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb was generally considered an Arab traveler. Since his account was written in Arabic, it was also considered one of Arab sources. Moreover, according to Urszula Lewicka-Rajewska, his language, interests, and the manner in which he expressed the observed facts – all indicate a thorough Arab upbringing and education, later deepened during his travels (Lewicka-Rajewska 2004: 46). Tadeusz Kowalski thinks that it was enriched by being in contact with some of the eminent Arab intellectuals of that time. His command of Arabic was that of a native, he also used Arab and Muslim concepts; his interests (especially in ethnography and geography) as well as the manner in which he recounted the observed facts were not different from the conceptual world represented by the Arabs of Spanish descent in the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Kowalski 1946: 43). As Tadeusz Lewicki emphasizes: when discussing “Arabic works”, he means the language of the writing, not the ethnicity of the author, as it is irrelevant (Lewicki 1961: 65). Since it was written in Arabic, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s account is counted amongst the Arab culture and the Arabic literature. Being “Arabic” or “Arab” in the Arab/Muslim empire, which had assimilated many peoples and cultures, was not about descent or nationality but about the language used to capture the discoveries or works (Meissner 1977: 78). However, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s ancestry was the subject of many inquiries and investigations.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb al-Tartushi was called Abraham Jacobsen (Labuda 1991: 122). Later, however, he was described as “brought up in the Arab culture” (Piotrowski 1989: 5), “an Islamized merchant and a Jewish traveler” (Meissner 1977: 316), or “a Spanish Jew from Tortosa” (Lewicki 1961: 67), despite the fact that Tadeusz Kowalski had analyzed parallel passages of accounts in versions preserved by various aforementioned authors and concluded that the following was the full name of this traveler: Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb (ibn Yūsuf?) al-Isrā’īlī al-Ṭurṭūshī (Kowalski 1946: 21-35). Taking that into account, the contemporary description by, e.g. Andrzej Zaborski, seems to sum up all the characteristics of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s descent: an Arabic-speaking Jew from Tortosa (Zaborski 2008: 5).

Not much is known about Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb; presumably, he was born by 912/3 or close to that year. His biography does not exist and some data – of purely hypothetical nature – come from Ya‘qūb’s own accounts. As many other Arab and Jewish scholars in Spain, he was in close contact with the caliphs, especially during the reigns of the greatest ones: ‘Abd ar-Rahmān III (912-61) and al-Ḥakam II (961-76) (Swoboda 1961: 238-239). Also, Józef Widajewicz describes the genesis of the scientific dispute over the question whether Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb al-Ṭurṭūshī was one person or two (or even three) different

travelers (Kowalski 1946: 33-34; Widajewicz 1948). Finally, it was Tadeusz Kowalski who proved that there was just one Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb; he also refuted the thesis that ibn Ya'qūb was of African origin (Kowalski 1946: 21-35). Nothing is known of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's later life.

From 960 to 966 Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb served the Caliph of Cordoba, al-Hakam II, as a member of the delegation to the Holy Roman Emperor Otto I (Dziekan 2012: 137). It is hard to say whether all the facts in the Arabic literature that quote Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb refer to one or more of his trips (Kowalski 1946: 46). The goal of the visit is unknown. It might have been trading or politics, or maybe both reasons were crucial. Perhaps Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb was the delegation's doctor and interpreter during the time when the mission was at the Emperor's court; he was interested in the natural world, especially hygiene, diseases, and the healing practices of the Slavs (Swoboda 1961: 111). The reason might have also been religious; he was supposed to meet Jewish representatives of the visited areas (Dziekan 2012: 137). In any case, as Urszula Lewicka-Rajewska states, it was not a typical trading expedition: Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb was a shrewd observer and a traveler with a flair for science (religious, sociological, and natural sciences), the interests that were surfacing in his descriptions of the towns and countries he had visited. While there is no evidence that it was a diplomatic or political mission, his role in the delegation suggests that the journey, at least to some extent, was official (Lewicka-Rajewska 2004:47).

Some scholars claim that Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb described countries he passed through during his journey (Dziekan 2012: 137). Jerzy Strzelczyk, for instance, thinks that Ibrāhīm did not visit the country of Mieszko I personally; he probably visited Prague and Magdeburg, where the Emperor Otto I himself told him some things about it, although the Author does not consider them the most credible (Strzelczyk 1999: 17). According to Roman Jakimowicz, the only country Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb actually visited in person was Nako's country (hence the detailed description of graves) and today's Czech Republic or, to be accurate, Prague (Jakimowicz 1948: 443). Jakimowicz is of the opinion that Ibrāhīm was probably never in the country of Mieszko I as he did not provide as numerous and meticulous details as he did with the aforementioned countries; Ibrāhīm did not mention the road or the distances, nor did he mention the Baptism of Poland or its preparations (Jakimowicz 1948: 445).

### **Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb about Poland**

As an Arab-speaking Jewish traveler, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb is a very important (and somehow even symbolic) figure in the Polish-Arab relations. Although he had not traveled to Poland personally, he described Slavs and their life, as well as Kraków – one of the main Polish towns in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. His account of the trip to the Eastern European countries is one of the first written documents that declare the beginning of Poland. This report was translated from Arabic into Polish by Tadeusz Kowalski and published as *Relacja Ibrahima Ibn Jakuba z podróży do krajów słowiańskich w przekazie Al-Bakriego (Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account from a trip to the Slavic countries as passed on by Al-Bakri)* by the Polish Academy of Learning [Polska Akademia Umiejętności, PAU] in 1946, in a series called *Monumenta Poloniae historica*. Since it is one of few sources dating back to the time when

the Polish state was just forming, the account is extraordinarily important when discovering more about the history of Poland or Central and Eastern Europe. Still, there are no Polish sources conforming Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s visit (Dziekan 2012: 139).

Pieces of information given by Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb [or added by Al-Bakrī from other sources – M.S.] contained a number of facts regarding the social, economic, and political development of the entire Slavic world, including detailed descriptions of four Slavic states: Mieszko I’s (the account is one of the main sources for the history of the early Piast state), Nako’s [the so-called Obotrite’s state – M.S.], Czechia and Bulgaria (Old Great Bulgaria) (Swoboda 1961: 238). According to Jerzy Strzelczyk, who believes this to be the most important source material regarding the beginnings of Mieszko I’s reign, the most unique pieces of information Ibrāhīm disclosed on Poland were those concerning the internal affairs of this young state (especially the prince’s *družhina*, literally: fellowship) and those confirming or specifying certain issues related to the wars led by Mieszko I.

Moreover, Strzelczyk claims that this traveler’s account – despite being fragmentary – in a sense constitutes a complex image of “Poland” (a name unknown in the 10<sup>th</sup> century). For Ibrāhīm, Mieszko’s state was one of four Slavic countries he noticed and it was the most extensive one (Strzelczyk 1999: 17). Ibrāhīm also knew that Mieszko I’s state (Arabic *Miszqa*) neighbors with the Czechs (Arabic *Bojema*), with the Rus’ to the east, and with the Prussians to the north (Arabic *Burus*) (Lewicki 1961: 102).

In spite of various inaccuracies, thanks to Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb account it is known that around the year 965 and 966 Mieszko I’s state was the biggest Slavic state (despite the fact that Kraków did not belong to this state) and that it waged wars with the Veleti. As Jerzy Strzelczyk emphasizes, through Ibrāhīm’s account it is also known that it was already a relatively well developed and a dynamically managed state, with competent armed forces; it means that Mieszko I’s state was a significant partner in this part of Europe (Strzelczyk 1999: 48). Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb also wrote about: the climate, agriculture, the inhabitants of Mieszko I’s country, religion, customs, clothing, the musical instruments, diseases, food, or the construction of a bath (Lewicki 1956: 50-52). Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb noticed that in Mieszko I’s state there was an abundance of food, a very specific form of the armed forces’ organization and that payments to the prince’s treasury were probably done mostly by foreign merchants (Strzelczyk 1999: 39). He also observed types of commodity money in the Slavic countries, including fur, honey, and, most of all, very carefully woven linen wipes [*platki*, literally: petals or leaves] (Jakimowicz 1947).

### **The history of translating Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s account**

The missing *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s account*... is known only indirectly from later works, among them Al-Bakrī’s *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-al-Mamālik* (*Book of Kingdoms and Routes*) (dated around year 1068) which contains its broadest version. Tadeusz Kowalski, who mainly edited the source, focused on Ibrāhīm’s text without any further discussion regarding Al-Bakrī’s collection, in which the text was found. It is worth noting that Al-Bakrī’s work goes far beyond geography, as it also contains numerous references to politics and history.

It should be noted that the title, *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account from a trip to the Slavic countries as passed on by Al-Bakri*, which is not what Tomasz Kowalski had intended, is a bit misleading. In reality, only a snippet of Al-Bakri's *oeuvre* with a passage about the Slavs was published. It consisted of a compilation of at least a couple of literary works by recognized "Oriental" authors, including Al-Mas'ūdī, Ibn Rustah, Al-Gaihani or Al-Udhri (his mentor and teacher). Because of the bond between Al-Bakrī and Al-Udhri, Al-Bakrī's *Book of Kingdoms and Routes* is said to be the most true-to-life and accurate record of Ibrāhīm's journey (Levi-Provencal 1971).

Although fragmentarily, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account survived in four records written by: Al-Bakrī (11<sup>th</sup> century), al-Qazwīnī (13<sup>th</sup> century), ibn Sa'īd al-Maghribī (13<sup>th</sup> century) and al-Ḥimyarī (15<sup>th</sup> century) (Lewicki 1961: 67). Due to the discrepancies in the passages, Jerzy Strzelczyk believes that it is hard to distinguish which parts actually had originated in Ibrāhīm's account and which were later added or distorted (Strzelczyk 1999: 16-17). Tadeusz Kowalski attributes the fact that Ibrāhīm's account was not preserved in its entirety and has been met with a lukewarm response in the Arabic academic literature to the Muslim intelligentsia's lack of greater interest in the countries to which Ibrāhīm had traveled (the Slavic countries, through France and Germany) (Kowalski 1946: 44). Only European scholars have appreciated his account. Tadeusz Kowalski claims that there is no evidence that Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb wrote a more extensive geographical work and that he probably only authored reports on his journey, which were intended for the caliphs' archives. To support this hypothesis, Kowalski points to the fact that only Spanish-Arab authors, such as Al-Bakrī or Al-Udhri who were close to Ibrāhīm, made use of his account and it was thanks to such authors that its snippets ended up in later cosmographic or geographical volumes (Kowalski 1946: 47).

Al-Bakrī's text was found in the Nuruosmaniye Mosque's library by Charles Scheffer in the 1770s (Labuda 1947). The account of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's trip to the Slavic countries was first published by Russian scientists, Arist Kunik and Wiktor Rozen. The Polish translation by Władysław Łebiński from 1887 was popular in the scientific community and central to the discussion over the economical basis of Mieszko I's state. A significant contribution to the development of studies conducted over *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account...* was brought by a Dutch orientalist, Michael Jan de Goeje, who received the manuscript from Scheffer (based on the manuscript, he also translated the account of Ibrāhīm's trip to West Europe into German language). George Jacob's works have been supplemented by the studies conducted by André Miquel and Friedrich Westberg. Tadeusz Kowalski's corroboration also corresponds with those done by Michael Jan de Goeje, Georg Jacob, André Miquel and Friedrich Westberg.

After the Historical Commission accepted his research plan (critical edition of sources) in 1934, Tadeusz Kowalski went to Istanbul to examine the manuscript containing the work of Al-Bakrī (i.a. accounts by Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb) (Zaborski 2008: 5). While Tadeusz Kowalski finished his critical edition of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account in October 1939, it was published after War World II. Outstanding Polish scholars later supplemented Kowalski's commentary: Józef Kostrzewski (archaeological commentary on *grodziska*, Slavic fortified settlements), Kazimierz Moszyński (ethnological remarks), Kazimierz Stołyhwo (remarks on the anthropological type in Czechia), and Kazimierz Nitsch (commentary on the Slavic language). By the decision of the Historical Commission of the



Polish Academy of Learning's [PAU], Józef Widajewicz's historical commentary was published separately as a small volume entitled *Studia nad relacją o Słowianach Ibrahima Ibn Jakuba* (*Studies of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account on the Slavs*) in 1946 in Kraków.

Similarly, publishing Tadeusz Lewicki's two-part paper entitled "Polska i kraje sąsiednie w świetle *Księgi Rogera* geografę arabskiego z XII w. al-Idrīsī'ego" ("Poland and its neighboring countries in light of *Roger's Book* written by al-Idrīsī, an Arab geographer from the 12<sup>th</sup> century") from 1938 was delayed because of the war. It was thanks to Tadeusz Kowalski that the sheets were preserved and that the first part was published in 1945, when Lewicki was still out of the country. The manuscript of the second part (a toponymic commentary) was found in 1947 and published in 1954 (Lewicki 1954).

As Andrzej Zaborski, once emphasized: although nearly seventy years have passed since the first edition of Tadeusz Kowalski's *Relacja...*, more than half of century since the publication of George Jacob's translation (together with subsequent amendments by Westberg), and almost fifty years since Andre Miquel's translation [*L'Europe occidentale dans la relation arabe d'Ibrahim b. Ya'qub (Xe siècle)*] – all these works remain factual and useful. Many scholars only point out the lack of information on the current state of research and the fact that Kowalski's edition is not accessible to scientists who do not know Polish<sup>2</sup>. *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account* published in English by Dmitrij Mishin (*Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb At-Turtuhi's Account of the Slavs from the Middle of the Tenth Century*) is mostly based on George Jacob's elaboration. It only takes into account the newer research, but does not contain philological or historical commentary, which would broaden the previous ones (van Leeuwen, Ferré 1992).

### **Why Ibrāhīm's account is so important to Poland and Eastern Europe?**

Since 1949, the Chief Office for Studies on the Beginnings of the Polish State [Kierownictwo Badań nad Początkami Państwa Polskiego] was in charge of researching Arabic texts as writings of profound significance for deepening the knowledge on the period of the Polish state formation, a period without any Polish written accounts (Głuski 1973: 2). Especially since *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account...* is one of the most interesting and most often cited sources of the history of Central and Eastern Europe. This fundamental source from the period of the formation of the Polish state plays a huge role in the medieval studies of this part of the world. This source/monument is crucial not only for the national history, but also for the history of Central and Eastern Europe. Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account is a highly reliable source and has often served ethnographers, historians, and archaeologists as a tool to interpret and to verify other sources (Lewicka-Rajewska 2004: 47-48). Tadeusz Kowalski not only translated (from Arabic into Polish) and interpreted Al-Bakrī's version of *Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb's account...*, but also recreated the biographical identity of Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb from Tortosa (he also established his proper name: Ibrāhīm ibn Ya'qūb (ibn Yūsuf?) al-Isrā'īlī al-Ṭurṭūshī). Finally, he proved that there was only one

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<sup>2</sup> Thanks to the efforts of the Author of this paper, it was possible to obtain funds for the translation of Tadeusz Kowalski's account into English (project funded by The Ministry of Science and Higher Education - National Programme for the Development of Humanities), the planned date of publication - 2019/2020.

Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb and he established the date of his trip. In his edition, Kowalski also prepared a very rich philological commentary (Kowalski 1946).

To sum up, when considering the impact of this Arabic source on the Polish culture, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb becomes a symbol of the beginning of the Polish-Arabic relations. Despite the fact that he was not an Arab (but his account was written in Arabic), that Poland was not yet state when he visited this part of Europe, and that Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb did not visit Poland personally (he only knew information about Poland the Emperor Otto I). Despite all of this, thanks to Tadeusz Kowalski’s edition, Ibrāhīm’s account has become available for scientists. Thus, it was possible to reconstruct and verify the facts from Ibrāhīm’s report that dealt with the beginnings of Poland. So far, it has been one of the most important sources of the Polish medieval history. Some fragments of Ibrāhīm’s account, e.g. the description of Mieszko I’s country, can be found in every book on the history of Poland, from primary schools textbooks to professional publications, not only in the field of history, but also in linguistics, ethnography, and archeology (Lewicka-Rajewska 2008: 75).

Finally, it should be added that Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb’s account has been also a subject of further research outside Poland – Andrzej Zaborski even uses the notion of “Ibrahimology” to label the range of the studies (Zaborski 2008).

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# THE WANDERINGS OF ABŪ AL-ḤASAN AL-ŠĀDILĪ (D. 1258) ACCORDING TO IBN ‘AṬĀ’ ALLĀH’S *LAṬĀ’IF AL-MINAN* AND IBN AL-ŠABBĀĠ’S *DURRAT AL-ASRĀR*

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**Abstract.** Al-Šādīlī was one of the great spiritual masters in Islam, founding an important eponymous Sufi order (*tariqa*). Born in Morocco, he died and was buried in Egypt, on his way to Mecca. His life was marked by his numerous travels and wanderings whereby he met other influential figures, among scholars and governors. It was in Tunisia, where he founded his first circle of disciple, that his fame started to grow so much so that he was called by the name of a Tunisian village (Šādīla) to which he never really belonged. Fragmentary information that reached us on his life is mainly due to Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī (d. 1309) who wrote *Laṭā’if al-minan* and Ibn al-Šabbāġ and his *Durrat al-asrār*. This article retraces the main episodes of his life with regard to his travels and humbly questions some assertions largely admitted by the academia so far: such as whether Šādīlī left written records of his teachings, and whether he was Ibn Mašī’s unique disciple.

**Keywords:** Šādīlī, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī, Ibn al-Šabbāġ, Sufism, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt.

## State of the Art on al-Šādīlī’s Life and Works

Despite the wide academic interest in Sufi studies, modern academic works dedicated to the life of Abū l-Ḥasan al-Šādīlī (d. 656/1258), founder of one of the most influential Sufi orders in the world, are still scarce<sup>1</sup>, due certainly to the rarity of reliable primary sources. To date, two major works have provided the quasi unique sources on which has relied almost all subsequent secondary literature, be it hagiological treatises or works written in a more academic tone. Authors (myself included), would somehow continuously rephrase the same fragmentary information found in these two major sources, which are: *Laṭā’if al-minan fī manāqib al-šayḥ Abī l-‘Abbās al-Mursī wa šayḥih Abī l-Ḥasan*<sup>2</sup>, by Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh al-Iskandarī and *Durrat al-asrār wa tuḥfat al-Abrār fī aqwāl wa af‘āl wa aḥwāl wa*

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<sup>1</sup> For his biography, cf : (Lory 1997), (Douglas 1948), (Mackeen 1971b) and (Abu Rabi’ 1993: 1-10). Modern apologetic works in Arabic will count (‘Ammār 1952) and (Maḥmūd 1999, 3rd ed, 5-175). A more critical work by an anti-sufi author (al-‘Utaybī 2011: 47-234) points out the exaggerations, incongruities and other irrational elements found in hagiological sufi sources. For an extensive outlook at primary and secondary sources on Šādīlī’s life see (Honerkamp 2012: n1).

<sup>2</sup> Hereby referred to as *Laṭā’if*. The book has been translated to French (Geoffroy 1998) and to English (Roberts 2005) and edited many times in Arabic. Although the version edited by Maḥmūd (1974) is one of the best, we used a flawed version edited by Maṣṣūr (2005).

*maqāmāt wa nasab wa karāmāt wa aḍkār wa da‘awāt sayyidī Abī l-Ḥasan al-Šāḍilī*<sup>3</sup> by Ibn al-Šabbāg al-Ḥimyarī. A third relatively early source, by ‘Abd al-Nūr al-‘Imrānī has been recently discovered by Honerkamp (2005), and critically edited by him (Honerkamp 2012) where most of the paragraphs resemble anecdotes already mentioned in *Laṭā‘if* and *Durra*. However, this text is not devoid from additional original material.

Although much information derived from these sources has often been repeated in secondary literature, they still contain some hidden treasures of information that had not been yet fully exploited. Nevertheless, the reader should be warned beforehand about the doubtful historicity of some details found in these sources, since hagiology and hagiography have looser criteria in accepting their stories than history. This paper won’t provide an extensive biography of Šāḍilī. It will concentrate on two aspects: 1) sketching his numerous travels and wanderings, and 2) humbly questioning some of the assertions largely admitted by the academia so far.

### Did Šāḍilī Leave Written Records of his Teachings?

An example of such assertions found in these early sources which had made their way into academic scholarship on Šāḍilī is the idea that he didn’t leave any writings or books, except his *awrād* and *aḥzāb*<sup>4</sup>, a claim based on *Laṭā‘if* (p.6), where Ibn ‘Aṭā’ makes Šāḍilī say: “my companions are my books”. But a thorough look at the full text of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s statement would throw doubts on such a statement:

"وكان أصحاب الشيخ الإمام القطب أبي الحسن قدس الله روحه قد أثبتوا جملاً من كلامه، وإن كان هو رضي الله تعالى عنه لم يضع كتباً، وقد بلغني عنه أنه قيل له: يا سيدي لم لا تضع الكتب في الدلالة على الله تعالى وعلوم القوم؟ فقال رضي الله تعالى عنه: (كتبي أصحابي)."

Actually, the first part of this quotation suggests that it had long been known to him that some of Šāḍilī’s direct disciples -preceding him- have already gathered in a written form parts of his teachings. The fact that compilations of Šāḍilī’s teachings by these earlier disciples have not reached the same fame as Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s own works doesn’t exclude the possibility that Šāḍilī had, in a way, left some written records of his thoughts other than his *awrād* and *aḥzāb*.

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh says in another instance (*Laṭā‘if*: 62):

" وإلا فكلام الشيخ أشهر من أن ينبه عليه، وأكثر ما ذكرته هنا لا يوجد في الكلام المنسوب إليه "

Here again Ibn ‘Aṭā’ hints at the existence of a corpus of teachings attributed to Šāḍilī widely circulating during his time. Another scholar, Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1323), also

<sup>3</sup> Hereby referred to as *Durra*. Douglas (1993) has translated it to English. An online translation into French can be found (De La Hilay 2012). The Arabic text has not yet been scientifically edited. We used a flawed version edited in Cairo in 2001 (the first digits before the slash) and compared it with the version edited in Tunis in 1887 (the second digits after the slash).

<sup>4</sup> Such as found in (Mackeen 1971), (Douglas 1948), (Geoffroy 1998), (Lory 1997) and others.

attributed to Šāḍilī a written text<sup>5</sup>. These indications highly suggest that the circulation of compilations of quotations attributed to Šāḍilī was well-known during Ibn Taymiyya’s and Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s time. We think that these well-known quotations attributed to Šāḍilī are probably what is found in the fifth chapter of *Durra*, which includes indeed Šāḍilī’s direct teachings.

In 2008, two texts attributed to Šāḍilī : *Risālat al-amīn fī l-wusūl ilā rabb al-‘ālamīn*<sup>6</sup> and *al-Wasāyā* were edited. For their editor, Šāḍilī’s paternity of these two works is certain, but he justifies Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh’s assertion by adding a nuance : Šāḍilī may have actually not ‘written’ books but only ‘dictated’ them to his disciples. Some earlier sources, especially al-Baġdādī (1951 :1:710), attribute a list of works to Šāḍilī. This question clearly deserves further exploration, exceeding the scope of our paper.

### About the Two Sources

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh (d. 1309) is an author whose fame has widely out-passed that of a local spokesman of a sufi *ṭarīqa*. Indeed, as the writer of what would have been deemed by modern criteria a bestseller, the celebrated *Hikam ‘Aṭā’iyya*, largely commented and quoted ever since in different parts of the Muslim world, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh enjoys a great reputation of a serious Muslim scholar, well-grounded in various Islamic sciences such as *fiqh*, *‘aqīda*, *ḥadīth*, etc., in addition to his indescribable, precious and precise knowledge of spiritual teachings, of which he has become an important transmitter. His semi-autobiographic book, *Laṭā’if*, is a hagiological and hagiographical account on the lives of his direct master, the Andalusian Abū l-‘Abbās al-Mursī (1212-1287) and his indirect master, the founder of the eponymous *Sufi ṭarīqa*, Abū-l-Ḥasan al-Šāḍilī.

Born in Alexandria, Ibn ‘Aṭā’ lived and died in Egypt, and his *Laṭā’if* is full of anecdotes related to his direct sufi and scholarly milieu as well as that of his masters. He performed the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once and travelled a lot within Egypt. It is not clear whether he ever visited the Maghreb; if so, he surely didn’t judge it important enough to be mentioned. He divided his *Laṭā’if* into ten chapters, preceded by a general introduction giving a theoretical and theological ground to the notion of sainthood in Islam. The first chapter is dedicated to Abū l-Ḥasan al-Šāḍilī and contains the testimony of other important scholarly figures affirming that he was the *quṭb* (pole) of his time. The second chapter is about his direct *ṣayḥ*, Abū l-‘Abbās, and his inheritance of Šāḍilī’s polehood (*quṭbāniyya*). The whole book intertwines quotations of these two founding fathers of the Šāḍilīyya, with extraordinary anecdotes to affirm that each of them had gained the status of *quṭb*. *Laṭā’if* is written in a highly literate style, displaying the author’s great mastery of different disciplines of religious and linguistic studies.

Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh has never met directly al-Šāḍilī, but his father did (*Laṭā’if*: 52). Concerning his direct master, Mursī, the author seems more keen to prove his spiritual supremacy and his polehood after Šāḍilī. Thus, even if most of the charisms (*karāmāt*) cited

<sup>5</sup> Ibn Taymiyya (1429/2007: 109) attributes to Šāḍilī a text titled : *ādāb al-ṭarīq fī ‘ilm al-ḥaqīqa*.

<sup>6</sup> Which paragraphs correspond word by word to those in *Durra*. Unfortunately, the editor doesn’t indicate the sources from which the text was extracted, nor does he say if he had found manuscripts remoting to Šāḍilī or some of his early disciples, or if he only presumed that this chapter of *Durra* is an independent book.

in *Laṭā'if* are well incorporated into a larger theological framework, the book still displays a supernatural touch. It is noteworthy that the most sensational anecdotes in *Laṭā'if* involve Mursī<sup>7</sup> more than Šādīlī, whose life and anecdotes are told in a more sober tone. This author and his works have attracted the attention of academics, especially (Taftāzānī 1958), (Nwyia 1990), (Geoffroy 1998) ; (Grill 2005). The years 2013-2014 seem to be, all of the sudden, a moment of a strange coincidence of intense scholarly focus on this author : (Cecere 2013a) ; (Cecere 2013b); (Hofer 2013) ; (Cook 2014); (Özel 2014); and (Touati 2014).

Less famous is Ibn al-Šabbāg al-Ḥimyarī, whose life details are obscure (unknown dates of birth and death, still alive around 1316). Ibn al-Šabbāg never met Šādīlī nor Mursī. He was rather a disciple of less famous Šādīlī's indirect disciples. He did for sure read Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's *Laṭā'if* as he included a few paragraphs from it in his major (and maybe unique) work, *Durra*. He claims to have relied on sources in the Maḡrib and the Mašriq, and cites the child of Yāqūt al-Ḥabašī, one of al-Mursī's disciple, as one of his direct sources. At the end of his book, he apologizes for his poor grammar and limited linguistic abilities<sup>8</sup>. His account is indeed full of colloquial words and expressions in a *maḡribī* dialect misunderstood by *mašriqī* editors. His style is plain, and the anecdotes he tells are more supernaturally tainted than Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh's. But the main interest of this source, compared to *Laṭā'if*, is that it focuses on Šādīlī's early youth and his Tunisian era, while Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh was more concerned by his Egyptian era.

#### Examples of Colloquial Occurrences in *Durra*

المعنى	طبعة القاهرة 2001	طبعة تونس 1887
البلاجة: ج. بلارج، التسمية المغربية لطائر اللقلق <sup>9</sup> .	طيور على قدر البلاجة	9 طيور على قدر البلاجة
سراق: سارق	سواق الحمير	10 سراق الحمير
جنان: الحديقة، مشتق من كلمة "جنة" الفصيحة.	وكان في خبانه بخارج المدينة	11 وكان في جنانه بخارج المدينة
تملينا: امتلأنا، بمعنى شبعنا	فأكلنا حتى تحلينا	18 فأكلنا حتى تملينا
وذر لا تعني "أهلك" بل ضيع أو أضاع	ودرت (أهلكت) ضيفك	18 ودرت ضيفك

#### In Search of the *Quth*: From Morocco to Iraq and the Way Back

The wanderings of Abū l-Ḥasan al-Šādīlī start at an early age. Al-Šādīlī was born in the North of Almohad Morocco, in lands occupied by a great autochthone tribe known as

<sup>7</sup> such as (*Laṭā'if*: 69) where Mursī comes flying in the air to save one of his disciples.

<sup>8</sup> (*Durra* 1881 :173) the paragraph is absent from Cairo edition.

<sup>9</sup> For a study of the names of this bird in Arabic see (Mayeur-Jaouen 2013).

Ġumāra<sup>10</sup>. He seemed to belong to a noble family descending from the Prophet Muḥammad, nonetheless, this lineage was questioned by his contemporary opponents (*Durra*: 29/10) and later critics.

Nothing is known about his parents and his childhood. Very scarce information hint at his early stages of religious learning. Nothing is mentioned about the teachers thanks to whom Šāḍilī received his formative background. Thus, ‘Uṭaybī (2009: 167-8) doubts about the soundness of Šāḍilī’s scholarly knowledge of religious sciences, and questions the affirmation in *Laṭā’if* that Šāḍilī shared with scholars of the exoteric sciences their knowledge but out-passed them in the knowledge of esoteric truths.

However, numerous anecdotes reported in the two sources make it evident that Šāḍilī knew the Qur’ān and many texts of the Sunna by heart. He had probably learnt them during his childhood or early youthful years, as it was the prevalent tradition. Furthermore, Šāḍilī’s eagerness, at a very early age, to seek apprenticeship at the hands of none but the *quṭb* himself is clearly mentioned (*Durra*: 22/4). This single fact sheds an important light to the high spiritual ambition and the restless motivation that stirred Šāḍilī, while still a young man, to quit his land and move eastwards in pursuit of what he considered to be the purest source of knowledge.

Of this journey in search of the *quṭb*, little is said. We only know the two stations in which Šāḍilī seemed to have stopped: Tunis and Bagdad. His first travel to Tunis, under Ḥafṣid rule, coincided apparently with a terrible food shortage. Šāḍilī wanted to save hungered people by buying some bread with his Moroccan coins, but the baker accused him of practicing alchemy and using false money (*Durra*: 23/5). This anecdote reveals Šāḍilī’s early generosity, as well as the prevalence of stereotyped images about Moroccans as practicing alchemy and other occult disciplines.

During this first visit to Tunisia, Šāḍilī is reported to have encountered a great Tunisian ṣūfī master, Abū Sa‘īd al-Bājī<sup>11</sup> (1156-1231) (*Durra*: 24/6). Although he benefited from the teachings of this important *ṣayḥ*, who was a direct disciple of the Andalusian *ṣayḥ* buried in Tlemcen Abū Madyan (1126-1198), Šāḍilī’s spiritual thirst seemed still unquenchable and his resolution to continue his pursuit of the *quṭb* didn’t fade away.

The second station was Bagdad. We don’t know what convinced Šāḍilī that chances to meet the *quṭb* were higher if he went to Bagdad. Besides, all median steps, from Tunis to Bagdad, are kept silent, as if they were of no importance. In Bagdad, Šāḍilī frequented a *ṣayḥ* named Abū l-Faḥ al-Wāsiṭī, until ‘some saint’ told him: “you are seeking the *quṭb* here when the *quṭb* is in your country.” (*Durra*: 22/4)<sup>12</sup>.

Some modern sources point out that Abū l-Faḥ al-Wāsiṭī was one of Aḥmad al-Rifā‘ī’s disciples (Najjār 1995: 125-6), (Šayyāl 1965: 166)<sup>13</sup>, and that he was sent to

<sup>10</sup> Some sources mistake the name of the tribe as a name of a place, but there is no city or village in Morocco bearing the name of Ġumāra.

<sup>11</sup> For a biography of this master who gave his name to the village where he was buried: Sidi Boussaïd, see (Amri 2015).

<sup>12</sup> We may risk here a comparison between this episode and a bestseller novel by Paulo Coelho (1988), *The Alchemist*, whereby the hero follows his ‘personal legend’ and leaves his natal Andalusia hunting for a treasure, of which he dreamed that he had go to Egypt in order to find. In Egypt, he finally discovers that he has to go back to his homeland to find his far-fetched treasure.

<sup>13</sup> In addition, Lory (1997) alludes briefly to Wāsiṭī’s links with the Rifā‘ī order.



represent the Rifā'ī order in Alexandria, where he died and was buried, and where his shrine is famous. An earlier source reports a curious story of a second encounter between Šādīlī and Wāsiṭī in Egypt, whereby Šādīlī had asked Wāsiṭī's permission to enter Alexandria, but the latter had replied : "such a hat is not large enough for two heads", and had died that very night<sup>14</sup>.

Even though these sources need to be dealt with cautiously, the likelihood of Abū-l-Faṭḥ al-Wāsiṭī's belonging to the Rifā'ī order in Iraq, then in Alexandria, is not negligible and would pave the way for further studies about a possible influence of Rifā'ī's teachings and principles on Šādīlī<sup>15</sup>.

Nevertheless, this journey to Bagdad reveals at least two things about the mentality of our young wayfarer : firstly, that the humbleness of Mağribīs in their pursuit of knowledge led them to assume that scholars of the Mašriq were surely of greater importance than their own; and secondly, that although the Abbasid capital was losing its monopoly as the brilliant scientific and intellectual centre it used to be, it still kept, at least in Šādīlī's mind, a glittering attractiveness.

Acting upon the advice received in Bagdad, Šādīlī headed back to his home country, and while he was wondering whether he should continue his wanderings in deserts and wild places to devote himself to worship or dwell in cities in order to frequent scholars and pious men, a saint was described to him who lived in the peak of a mountain (*Latā'if*: 60). There he finally met his master 'Abd al-Salām Ibn Mašīš (d.625/1228).

### Meeting the Master in Morocco

The extraordinary encounter between Šādīlī and his master happened probably in the 'Alam mountain in Morocco. Ibn Mašīš instantly recognized him and welcomed him by his name, followed by the names of his successive fathers until the Prophet himself (*Durra*: 22/4).

During his apprenticeship with Ibn Mašīš, Šādīlī witnessed some of his master's charisms. One story deserves particular attention: Šādīlī asked himself once whether the master knew the greatest name of God. Without expressing his thought, the master's son, present at the place where Šādīlī and Ibn Mašīš were, answered him : "Knowing the greatest

<sup>14</sup> See (Munāwī II: 133). The dates reported by Najjār and Šayyāl are imprecise: they say that Rifā'ī himself had sent Wāsiṭī to Alexandria in 620 AH; which is impossible, since Rifā'ī died in 578 AH. It seems more likely that Wāsiṭī was an indirect disciple of Rifā'ī. Secondly, if Wāsiṭī died in 632 AH as reported in these modern sources, many scholars consider that Šādīlī didn't arrive to Alexandria before 642 AH, thus making it impossible for the two men to have met. On the other hand, Douglas (1993: 247 n2) quotes Brockelmann's note on a certain Abū l-Faṭḥ al-Wāsiṭī (d. about 589 AH) who authored a hagiological treaty on Rifā'ī, his direct master. Douglas concludes that it is not the same person as the one mentioned in *Durra*. 'Utaybī (2009: 206-7) doesn't fail to point out the inconsistency of these reports. But even if the dates don't coincide, it is clear from Munāwī's report that the people of Alexandria had probably kept the memory of a passage of Wāsiṭī in their city at an era close enough to Šādīlī's arrival, popular myth did probably rest in knotting legendary accounts.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh, being himself from Alexandria did certainly know about Wāsiṭī's link to the Rifā'ī order, would it be for this reason that he didn't make any reference to this episode in his *Latā'if*? He nevertheless mentions someone called al-Wāsiṭī (*Latā'if*: 104), but he probably meant Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī, one of the men cited in Quṣayrī's *Risāla*.

name of God doesn’t matter, what matters is to be yourself the greatest name of God.” (*Laṭā’if*: 61). *Durra*’s report is more sensational since the master’s son is described as being a small child who not only answered Šāḍilī’s unspoken question but who also shook him from his collar while replying (*Durra*: 22-23/4).

This anecdote shows that Ibn Mašīš was not a secluded saint, that he had a normal family life since he used to receive –even during his spiritual retreats– visits from members of his family. The answer given by his son, whatever his age was, indicates that the latter received some of the spiritual insights his father was famous for. This alone is maybe not enough to ascertain that Ibn Mašīš’s son was one of his disciples but chances are great that he probably was<sup>16</sup>.

This remark leads us to another issue deserving further inquiry regarding academic research on al-Šāḍilī, who is said to be Ibn Mašīš’s unique disciple<sup>17</sup>. This statement needs to be questioned since other anecdotes, in addition to the story of Ibn Mašīš’s son, would tend to confirm that Ibn Mašīš had other spiritual aspirants than Šāḍilī.

Actually, in *Laṭā’if*, Šāḍilī used the expression ‘a saint was described to me’ while referring to his encounter with his master, which indicates that Ibn Mašīš was already popularly renowned. Šāḍilī is also quoted twice in *Durra* as referring to other people who came to seek Ibn Mašīš’s guidance: one man asked him to give him a list of *awrād*, while the other asked his permission to perform *jihād* against himself. In both instances, Šāḍilī reports his master’s answers (*Durra*: 34/15).

It is thus certain that Ibn Mašīš sew his spiritual seeds and delivered his advice to whomsoever asked it from him. It is very plausible that he used to have regular visits from people seeking his wisdom and blessings and Šāḍilī seems to be the most illustrious amongst them. It is certainly wrong to count two later Sūfī *šayḥs*, al-Dasūqī and al-Badawī as Šāḍilī’s comrades in taking their spiritual training from Ibn Mašīš<sup>18</sup>, but Šāḍilī was probably not the only disciple of this master.

Another issue reinforcing this probability is the missing link in the transmission of the famous prayer on the Prophet named *al-Šalāt al-Mašīšiyya*<sup>19</sup>. Actually, neither *Laṭā’if* nor *Durra* contain anything that looks like this *Šalāt*. The only similitude between this prayer and one of the litanies reported in (*Durra*: 81) is the expression : *fa bi al-sirr al-jāmi’ al-dāll ‘alayk* فبالسرّ الجامع الدالّ عليك.

The absence of this prayer in the earliest surviving corpus of works on al-Šāḍilī, and the fact that the first occurrence of Ibn Mašīš’s *šalāt* remounts to al-Raqrāqī (or Ragraoui) (still alive around 819/1416) (Zouanat 2005: 54), leaves a gap of more than a century and a half in the transmission of this text. Although Raqrāqī claims a transmission chain including two people between him and Šāḍilī, this sounds very unlikely for someone who lived around a century later than Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh. The absence of a valid transmission chain of this *šalat* suggests that Ibn Mašīš used to have, in Morocco or elsewhere, other students

<sup>16</sup> The lineage of Ibn Mašīš is still prestigious in the Maghreb where many families of religious notables claim to be his offspring.

<sup>17</sup> For instance, (Geoffroy 2005: 15) and (Zouanat 2005: 53).

<sup>18</sup> as did al-Kūhin al-Fāsī in *Jāmi’ al-Karāmāt al-‘aliyya* and those who followed him in such a claim.

<sup>19</sup> Translated in English by Burckhardt (1978).

whose notoriety remained obscure but who transmitted this prayer to later circles of the Šāḍiliyya.

Whether it was the case or not, at one moment, Ibn Mašīš announced to Šāḍilī that he had to move to Ifrīqiyya (Tunisia), that he would settle there in a place named Šāḍila because God had named him al-Šāḍilī, and that because of problems with the sultan there, he would have to move to Egypt where he would finally inherit the polehood (*Durra*: 23/5).

### Settling in Tunisia then Moving to Egypt

Šāḍilī followed his master's advice, and the subsequent steps of his life resembled what was foretold. Upon arriving to Tunis, he asked a woodcutter to show him the way to Šāḍila<sup>20</sup>, where he used to pray and meditate, and from where he used to start his wanderings in the surrounding Zaġwān mountain. From then on, his fame started to grow and spiritually-driven aspirants started to flock around him. His master's prophecy came true, as people started to call him al-Šāḍilī. *Durra* (p.29/10) reports that he once asked God why He had named him after a town he did not belong to. He was answered: "You are not al-Šāḍilī (the one from Šāḍila), but *al-Šāḍḍu lī* (the one who is set apart for My service and My company)"<sup>21</sup>.

Whereas *Laṭā'if* is quite silent about the Tunisian era of Šāḍilī, *Durra* is overabundant with details concerning this period. *Durra* attributes an important role to Ibn al-Barā' (described as the Chief *Qāḍī* in Tunis<sup>22</sup>) in persecuting Šāḍilī, on the pretence that he had some hidden political agenda. The position of the sultan of Tunis himself towards Šāḍilī seems somehow contradictory in *Durra*: after a first test by the *fuqāhā'* the Ḥafṣid sultan stands with Šāḍilī but still keeps him in his palace for a while then frees him. Later on, a calamity befalls on the sultan (touching actually one of his beloved wives) and everyone, starting by the sultan's brother, thinks that it was because of his mistreatment of al-Šāḍilī (*Durra*: 28-29/9-10).

Whatever was the nature of Šāḍilī's relations with Ḥafṣid power, he had decided to leave Tunis to head to Egypt. *Durra* is somehow inconsistent, since the hypothesis of quitting Tunis because of Ibn al-Barā's accusations is in a way, denied by Šāḍilī himself who affirms that he only left to perform hajj (p.30/12), promising to come back after that, which he did. *Durra* further evokes his travel back to Tunis, and gives details about his encounter with his great disciple and direct successor Abū-l-'Abbās al-Mursī, making him say: "I would not have come back to Tunis were it not for the sake of this young man" (p.31/12). Other occurrences in *Durra* and *Laṭā'if* tend to plead in favour of continuous

<sup>20</sup> I am indebted to Pr. Honerkamp who sent me a note where the exact geographical situation of Šāḍila has been identified, especially thanks to al-'Imrānī's manuscript mentioning شاذلة الحنايا, which gives a clear indication that the village of Šāḍila was close to roman aqueducts situated in the way linking Tunis to Beja, around 20 km north-west of Tunis.

<sup>21</sup> This story explains why the *ṭarīqa*'s name is sometimes pronounced *al-Šāḍuliyya* rather than *al-Šāḍiliyya*.

<sup>22</sup> (Mackeen 1971b: 485 n87) pointed out that Ibn al-Barā didn't exercise such a function until the year 1258-1259 (after Šāḍilī's death), but this doesn't totally undermine *Durra*'s story. Indeed Ibn al-Barā might have enjoyed a great influence in the Tunisian court even if he wasn't officially named Chief Qāḍī until few years later.

visits and contacts between Šāḍilī and his earliest followers in Tunisia, which didn’t stop upon his arrival to Egypt.

Yet it was in Egypt that Šāḍilī inherited the role of *quṭb* from Abū l-Ḥajjāj al-Uqṣurī (d. 642H). At last, his highest spiritual dream, for which he travelled since his early youth eastward and westward, came true. Such a position is not one that goes without risks. Ibn al-Barā’s accusations followed him to Egypt, where strict security measures were taken to hinder his arrival. However, Šāḍilī managed to be admitted: while all other groups of travellers underwent a control by the soldiers at the entrance of Alexandria, he and his group entered the city without anybody bothering them (*Durra*: 30/12).

Arriving to Egypt, Šāḍilī met a group of people, known as ‘the Tribes’, who underwent some injustice from the governor of Alexandria. He promised them to intercede for them in front of the governor. Once there, the governor told him that instead of interceding for the Tribes, he would better have had someone intercede for him because he had letters from Tunis against him. Šāḍilī replied: “you, me and the Tribes are all in God’s fist”. The governor was instantly rigidified losing all ability to move, while Šāḍilī was turning his back and proceeding to leave the assembly. People from the governor’s circle followed Šāḍilī to beg his pardon, and he agreed to go back to the governor, who miraculously recovered his ability to move just when Šāḍilī touched him (*Durra*: 30-31/13).

It seemed that from then on, Šāḍilī gained in Egypt a great reputation among the population and the governors alike. Both *Durra* and *Laṭā’if* describe him as having a busy life, travelling a lot between different cities in and out of Egypt and show that he occasionally went back to Tunisia, referred to as al-Maḡrib, which is a very broad appellation, while Egypt is hinted to as being al-Mašriq. This clearly suggests that although frontiers changed tremendously in the history of Muslim North Africa, the split between Maḡrib and Mašriq seem to have been situated somewhere between Tunisia and Egypt.

An important mark that Šāḍilī had imprinted and with which his name became associated was his frequent pilgrimages to Mecca (*hajj*), at a time where the Middle East was undergoing Crusades and Tatar attacks, the usual routes from Egypt to Mecca, across Bilād al-Shām (Great Syria), were deemed dangerous. So much so that many *fuqahā’* forbade performing *hajj* in such hazardous circumstances<sup>23</sup>. Al-‘Izz b. ‘Abd al-Salām issued such a *fatwa* but Šāḍilī met him and convinced him that he had the possibility to do so safely (*Durra*: 34/16).

*Durra* (p.34-35/16) and *Laṭā’if* (p.52-53) report the return of Šāḍilī from this first *hajj* and his meeting with al-‘Izz in different terms. *Laṭā’if* speaks soberly of Šāḍilī wanting to greet al-‘Izz even before getting back home, transmitting to him the Prophet’s salutations, and describes al-‘Izz as receiving that testimony with extreme humility. On the other hand, *Durra* gives more spectacular details making the great *faqīh* al-‘Izz b. ‘Abd al-Salām take the initiative to go out of Cairo in order to welcome Šāḍilī because he had heard returning pilgrims’ statements about the ‘divine gifts’ bestowed onto Šāḍilī during the journey. It further says that Šāḍilī told the *faqīh* that if he had wanted to, he could have brought the whole procession of pilgrims to ‘Arafāt by only one step the very day of ‘Arafāt, but he had restrained himself from doing so, out of decency. Then *Durra* makes

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<sup>23</sup> For this question see (Hendrickson: 2016).

Šāḍilī show al-‘Izz and all the people present with him a live image of the Holy Ka‘ba, upon which, the *faqīh* immediately hailed Šāḍilī as his spiritual master.

It was actually during one of his numerous pilgrimages that Šāḍilī died, not without manifesting posthumous wonders. Thus, Ḥumayṭirā’ (a town in the Egyptian desert of ‘Aydāb), the place where he passed away, used to have a small sour water spring, which is said to have turned into a more abundant and a purer source from the moment Šāḍilī’s corpse was washed with its water (*Laṭā’if*: 61). After burying him there, his followers continued their journey to Mecca by boat, under Mursī’s leadership. The latter reported facing a violent storm on their way, and were it not for a dream that Šāḍilī had previously told him, whereby he had pronounced a special prayer to calm down a stormy sea, Mursī wouldn’t have known what to do. Remembering his master’s prayer on such an occasion, Mursī repeated it word by word, and the storm instantly stopped (*Laṭā’if*: 56).

## Conclusion

Our sketchy survey of these three major eras in Šāḍilī’s life gives a glimpse of the magnificent variety of places and people he met, and the experiences he lived. Yet, a complementary approach would have included a thematic study of the recurring ideas and patterns in these two sources which would probably shed an interesting new light into many areas related to medieval studies, in addition to Islamic and Sufi studies.

As a matter of fact, while (Cecere 2013b) already discussed interreligious encounters in Šāḍilī’s life, it would be useful to discover other aspects related to his life, such as the omnipresence of dreams and visions and their importance in determining personal interactions; the description of supernatural psychological powers, especially mind reading; the use of hunger and food in spiritual teachings and trainings ; saintly women encountered during his life; etc.

Furthermore, these two sources may still provide a remarkable ground for the study of other Sufi and scholarly figures of that time.

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## **II: BOOK REVIEWS**





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يقع هذا الكتاب في القلب من الدراسات المقارنة التي لا تقف عند حدود الأدب، متعدية إياه إلى الفلسفة والطبيعات والتصوف، ومن ثم يطالعك ابن عربي والطوسي والقشيري والغزالي كما يطالعك كانط وهدجر وليبنيتزو وأفلوطين ويطالعك نيوتن وشروندنغر وسننغ وكينغ وكذلك تساورو وسيسيل داي لويس وسوزان سونتاغ... كل هؤلاء في عناق حول أفكار متقاربة متعانقة متقاطعة، لنقرأ في النهاية نصاً صوفياً فلسفياً حول الإبداع، حول المقدس، وما بينهما. وكتابة أميرة الزين هنا كتابة من النوع الجاد الرصين المثقل بالتفاصيل والشروح والتوضيحات والإحالات، هذه الإحالات التي ربما كان يمكن لها أن تأخذ مكانها في المتن عند آخرين، غير أنها ترجئها جميعاً إلى الهوامش؛ لتقدم نصاً مسترسلاً ماتعاً، يتقلب في أحضان التصوف والميتافيزيقا والطبيعات والاستعارة.

ويأتي الكتاب بمثابة رحلة تتبع فيها المؤلف العلاقة بين الخلق والإبداع، وكيف أنهما توأمان؛ صدرا عن أفق واحد جامع، عبر قراءة الوجود من خلال "البياض" و"الصمت" و"المسافة". منطلقاً من "الوجود الممكن"؛ تلك الحلقة المفقودة بين الوجود والعدم، هذا المفهوم الذي يتقلب في الماورائيات والطبيعات والإبداع والخلق، في المقدس والإلهيات، فمثل أو كاد "الزمان المتخيل" في الفيزياء أو "الفضاء الافتراضي"، أو "الطبيعة الأخرى" عند كانط، أو "البرزخ" عند الصوفية، ذلك الحائل بين الأجسام الكثيفة والأرواح المجردة؛ حيث طور الرؤياويون نظرة عرفانية للوجود؛ رؤية متعالية لأنفسهم وللعالم متحررة من أغلال الحرف، ينطلق فيها الرؤياوي العارف إلى متعاليه حُرّاً في أجواء العرفان، على نحو ما أعطى "ابن عربي" الإنسان معنى الفصول الأربعة، التي لا تكتمل دورة الزمان إلا بها. ولم يكتفوا بصياغة رؤيا ثورية للمتعالي، وإنما أسسوا لرؤيا وجودية متعالية للكتابة المقدسة

والكتاب يبحث توأمة الخلق والإبداع في معظم ثقافاتنا الإنسانية، عبر ملاحظة التناص بين "الطبيعات" و"الإلهيات"، وهو ما يمكن اختزاله في القول بأن "العالم قصيدة كتبها الله"، التصور الذي أعيد إنتاجه وأعيدت صياغته في بقاع مختلفة من العالم، وعبر عصور مختلفة وبلغات عدّة، غير أنها في كلّ لم تخلع عنها ثوب الاستعارة؛ فهذا "اسحق نيوتن" يرى أن "كتاب الطبيعة ليس إلا استعارة مكتوبة بلغة الإلهة البصرية"، وكان هيام أهل العرفان بهذا التصور وهذه الاستعارة هو الوجه الإسرافي لهيام الميتافيزيقيين المتبحرين بما وراء الطبيعة؛ حيث يعرضون عبرها ما حجبته عنا طبيعة حواسنا وملكاتنا المحدودة، وحيث لا يمكن تفسير الفناء بعيداً عن استعارة لرحلة وجودية في "زمان متخيل" أو "فضاء افتراضي" يتذوق فيه العارف طعم الموت والحياة في الله.

ويرى الكتاب أن معظم ثقافاتنا الإنسانية اصطلحت على "وجود-ما" أو "حقيقة-ما" في هذا البرزخ الكائن بين الوجود والعدم، عدتها "حقائق" أو "أشكالاً من الوجود" نسبتها إلى الأسطورة أو إلى السحر أو إلى الدين أو إلى "التعالي" وغير ذلك من حقائق الغيب والميتولوجيا واللاهوت والفلسفة. حقائق لم تكن أبداً موضوعاً للبحث العلمي والاختبار التجريبي، وفي المقابل لم تعرف إنسانيتنا إلى الآن علماً ينفي وجودها أو يثبت أنها عدم مطلق. مثلت هذه الحقائق أو أشكال الوجود تجربة معرفية خاصة، لا سبيل إلى مشاركتها إلا بمشاركة تعبير الرؤيا صاحب الرؤيا وتمثّل لحظتها.

وفي هذا البرزخ حيث لا تجد المعرفة محسوساً تستند إليه؛ ينطلق الرؤياوي العارف متخطياً رقاب الحواس نحو نعمة التأويل، متحرراً من جميع الأكوام؛ ليقراً في نفسه كتاب ربه.

كتب الشاعر النمساوي راينر ماريا ريلكه إلى شاعر مبتدئ ينبهه إلى ما في نفسه من كنوز: "كل ما حولك، كل ما تراه في حلمك من صور، كل ما في زوايا ذاكرتك هو ملك لعينيك. أما إذا ما بدا لك أن حياتك اليومية فقيرة جديداً؛ فلا تلمها؛ بل لَمْ نفسك، أنك لست الشاعر الذي يستطيع أن يكتشف ما فيها من غنى". وقيل ريلكه بقرون قال أهل العرفان: "من عرف نفسه؛ عرف ربه"، وطوروا مع السهروردي وابن عربي معرفة إشرافية عميقة للوجود. وكان

القرآن قد دعا من قبل إلى النظر الحُرِّ: "وفي أنفسكم أفلا تبصرون" (21: 51)، وقوله: "سنريهم آياتنا في الأفاق وفي أنفسهم" (41: 53).

لقد قدّم العرفانيون تجربةً إبداعيةً شخصيةً تُرّة تنبض بالحياة، رحلةً بالأنا الملتهبة وجدًا من المؤقت إلى المؤبد فيما وراء الزمان والمكان العاجزين، كما يقول "برتراند رسل"، عن مقارنة الأبدية. ومن ثم كان وجد العارف طريقًا إلى مشاركة أطياف المتعالي الذي يجزي العارف على قدر استعداده، هذا الاستعداد الذي يكون بالأصالة على قدر وجدّه، هذا الاستعداد الطبيعي للوجد الذي يراه أفلوطين "ملكة يملكها جميع الناس، ولا يستعملها منهم لا القليل". وهنا يربط الكتاب بين هذا الوجد المتحرق إلى وجود المتعالي وكيونته العاشقة التي تتساءل عن منبع وجودها ومصبه، وبين هذا المتعالي، الذي لا يتوقف تصوره أو وجوده على شيء غيره؛ فبالوجود والعشق، لا بالخوف والهلع، أو اللذة والطمع تشد الكينونة حبيبها المتعالي؛ فالتوسل بالخوف والطمع هليلة لمعناه وتشويه لتعالیه، فالمتعالي هو ما نحب، لا ما نخاف، إنه ما يكون لا ما نعرف.

وهنا في نعمة التأويل وملكوته كانت فضائل الاستعارة، لتبقى في السياق المقدس ملكة التعبير، حيث المتعالي الذي يرفض القياس ويسمو على كل معنى، كما كانت وثبة الكتابة العرفانية نحو الحرية ونجاتها من أصفاد الظاهر في تحويمها حول المقدس، توأكب بها وثبتها وراء تخوم المعرفة الموضوعية.

كما يقرأ الكتاب في فصله الثاني الخلق والإبداع معًا بوصفهما توأمين، ولد كل منهما مع الآخر، فيربط بين "شيبُّس هيني" شاعر الخيال المسكون بالأسرار المقدسة، الذي كان يعتبر الشعر سبيلاً إلى الخلاص، وكان يرى الخالق رمزاً للشعر الأسمى، ويرى الشعر استسلاماً لطفرة الوجود نحو المتعالي، وبين "بومغارتن" فيلسوف الجمال الذي كان يرى القصيدة مثل العالم أو الكون الذي وصفه الفلاسفة العقلانيون، كان يراها كلاً كاملاً للنظام، سببه الكافي هو الله. وقبلهما كان "أفلوطين" يقول بأن "العالم قصيدة كتبها الله"، ومن قبله كان البابليون، الذين نظروا إلى السماء وتاملوا أبراجها وعدوها رموزاً لها، وأروا أن "رموز الأرض لا تختلف عن رموز السماء".

على الدوام كان هناك هذه النظرة الشاعرية للخالق والطبيعة؛ فكان عمل الخالق واكتمال الطبيعة يُقرأ بوصفه شعراً، كما كان هذا الطبيعي يمثل هذا المقدس الإبداعي؛ فكان "إيمانويل تساورو" يقول في استعارة مشهورة بأن "العالم قصيدة ميتافيزيقية خلقها الله"، قصيدة من تصورات ومجازات واستعارات رائعة. وبأن هذا العالم خلقه إله مبدع، وهو كما في القرآن "بديع السموات والأرض" (2: 117)، ولذا يسمي "ابن عربي" الله عز وجل "حضره الإبداع"، ويقول في شعره:

حضره الإبداع لا مثيل له فتعالت حيث عزت أن تُتال

هذه الاستعارة المشهورة لتساورو، التي استهوت أكثر من استهوت من معاصرة "غاليليو غاليليه"، فحاول قراءته وترجمته إلى لغة الرياضيات. صارت أساساً في علم الكون مع قراءة نيوتن لعالم الطبيعة؛ حيث اكتشف أن قوانين السماء هي القوانين التي تعمل على الأرض، وتبين له أن "كتاب الطبيعة ليس إلا استعارة مكتوبة بلغة الإلوهية البصرية". ومن ثم لم يكن بعيداً إقرار معظم شارحي نيوتن بصعوبة فهم نظرياته دون الاستعانة بالاستعارات والرموز ولغة الشعر.

ومن "جاليليو" و"نيوتن" إلى "وليم جونز" الذي درس عدداً من القصائد التي نُظمت في الكونيات وحفلت بفيض من الاستعارات الميتافيزيقية في كتابه "بلاغة العلم"، الذي رأى فيه أن نظرية نيوتن قد فتحت كتاب الطبيعة للعيون والأفهام ليقرأ الشعراء في صفحاته حكمة الله.

وهنا يقدم لنا "إيمانويل كانط" ما يمكن أن يُعدّ أساساً فلسفياً للفضاء الممكن Virtual حين قال بأن المخيلة التي خلقت الاستعارة تخلق لنا طبيعة أخرى، تخلقها انطلاقاً من المادة التي قدمتها لنا الطبيعة. لهذا كان هيام أهل العرفان بالاستعارة وجهاً إشراقياً صوفياً لهيام الميتافيزيقيين المتبحرين بما بعد الطبيعة.

ومن العرفاني إلى الطبيعي إلى ما وراء الطبيعي كانت الاستعارة حاضرة على الدوام غوايةً مفتوحةً للعناق والمجاسدة بين متباينات الوجود ومتشابهاته، على مهدها خلقت تلك الرؤى الوجودية التي بنيت عليها كثير من ثقافتنا الإنسانية في الفن والفلسفة والعلم.

بقي أن نشير إلى قضية تبدو مصطلحية مفهومية؛ فمن المؤكد أن الكتاب ينحاز انحيازاً كاملاً للتأويل وفيضه وعشقه، للكشف ونجواه المتعالي عبر سفر الجوارح، ولم يكن هذا ليكون بعيداً عن الإشارة والمجاز والرمز والاستعارة. وقد يفهم كيف للنص أن يُقدّر الرؤية الثورية التي قدمها العرفانيون للمعرفة، التي ربما لم يكن لئتنجز بعيداً عن الاستعارة والمجاز، ولكن النص في عمرة هذا التقدير بدا مزدرياً ما ليس استعارةً أو رمزاً. ودوماً ما نطالع مثل هذه التعبيرات:

- "عبيد الحروف"
- "عبودية الحرف"
- "أغلال الحروف"
- "هاوية الحرف"
- "حزرتة من جماليات الجُمَل"
- "دفع بلاء عبيد الحرف عن أهل الوُجُد"
- "العروج من الحرف ومفضوح العبارة"
- "ثاروا على الحرف وعلومه وطقوسه وأوثانه"
- "هناك كثير من الأشباح في مقابر الحروف التي لا يرى سكانها في المتعالي إلا الكوابيس"
- "ليس في حقيقته إلا تأليها للحرف- ينفذ عن وعيه غبار الحروف وأوهامها"
- "يسمو بنفسه عن القناعة بأن الوجود الممكن هو كل ما في الحروف، أو أن هذه المعاجم والفهارس وعنعات الموتى تتضمن معنى الوجود الكلي- فطالما كانت هذه الحروف وما زالت تهدد وجد العارف بجهنمها"
- "لغة المؤقت الزائل وغيرها من أعشاب الحروف السامة"
- "لقد وجدوا في الحروف ما يجده عاشق العبودية في سلاسل الحديد؛ منها بنوا كنيستهم التي أجدبت الأرض واختزلت رحابة السماء، وهم في هذه المازوخية المقدسة يمشون في جنازة عقولهم ويتركون لحروف الموتى أن تفكر عنهم. أما الإبداع فلا يبقى له عندهم إلا توابيت الآباء والأجداد"

وقد يُشكّل هذا الاستخدام على بعض القراء؛ فالمألوف في استخدام "الحَرْف" في أدبيات التصوف دلالاته الإيجابية ومكانته الجليّة، فهو مقابل للموجودات عند "ابن عربي"؛ فـ"الحرف... هو ما يخاطبك الحق به من العبارات"<sup>(1)</sup>، وهو "أجزاء كلمة الحق المقولة"<sup>(2)</sup>، وعادة ما يعني في اصطلاح الصوفية "الحقائق البسيطة من الأعيان"، فالحرف هو كل حقيقة مفردة في أي عالم من العوالم، "فهو في عالم الثبوت حرفاً غيبياً، وفي عالم الوجود حرفاً عينياً"<sup>(3)</sup>، بتركيبها تظهر الكلمات؛ فالإنسان كلمة من حيث يجمع في ذاته حقائق متعددة (حروف). يقول ابن عربي: كلمات العالم أو حقائقه تسمى في الإنسان حروفاً من حيث أحادها، وكلمات من حيث تركيبها، وكذلك أعيان الموجودات تسمى حروفاً من حيث أحادها وكلمات من حيث امتزاجها<sup>(4)</sup>. و"الحروف العاليات" هي الشؤون الذاتية الكامنة في غيب الغيوب، كالشجرة في النواة. إن الحروف عند أهل العرفان حية، ناطقة، تلقي بأسرارها مكاشفةً. وهي كالطبايع والعقاير لها خواص بانفرادها وأخرى بتركيبها، وعادوا في ذلك إلى القرآن الكريم وحروفه المقطعة، وجعلوا من علمها علماً خاصاً بالأولياء.

وقد نفهم من هذا اقتصار معنى الحرف على ثقافة النقل والفهم الواحد والتفسير المحدد الذي يتقيد إلى ما يعتقد أنه الظاهر الجليّ البين، الذي لا يرى فيه لبساً ولا تشويشاً. والحَرْف لغةً يحمل معاني عدة مرجعها إلى كونه<sup>(5)</sup>:

- "حَدّ الشيء"؛ الحَدّ والطَرْف، فَحَرْف كل شيء حَدّه، والطَرْفُ والجانبُ، وبه سمي الحَرْفُ من حروف الهجاء.
- "العدول"، والتحرّيف. بإخراج الحرف اللغوي، أي الكلّم، عن معناه إلى معنى آخر ليطابق غرض الشخص.

1 ابن عربي: الفتوحات المكية. طبعة دار الكتب العربية- مصر- 1850. ج2- ص130.  
2 نظر: د. سعد الحكيم: المعجم الصوفي. دندرة للطبع والنشر، توزيع المؤسسة الجامعية للدراسات والنشر، بيروت، لبنان، ط1، 1981م. ص307.  
3 السابق: نفسه.  
4 ابن عربي: السابق. ج2- ص392.  
5 نظر في هذا:  
ابن منظور: لسان العرب، دار صادر - بيروت، مادة (حرف)  
بن فارس: مقاييس اللغة. تحقيق: عبد السلام محمد هارون، دار الفكر، بيروت، لبنان، 1979م، مادة (حرف)  
الفيروزآبادي: القاموس المحيط، تحقيق: محمد نعيم العرقسوسي مؤسسة الرسالة، بيروت، لبنان، ط8، 2005، مادة (حرف).

- "تقدير الشيء" ومنه "التحرّف" للقتال، وهو ما يقتضي الميل والعدول، بما ظاهره توليه الدبر أو الهرب أو النكوص، وباطنه الحيلة والخداع من أجل العودة للهجوم. يُقال: "رماه عن شُرُنٍ" أي تحرّف له، وهو أشدُّ للرمي" (6). وجاء في لسان العرب: "وقوله: نَحَتَ له، يعني امرأةً تحرّفت له بعينها فأصابت فؤاده" (7). غير أن معنى آخر يبدو وجيهاً هنا وهو الحرف بمعنى "الوجه"، كما جاء في مقاييس اللغة؛ تقول "هو من أمره على حرّفٍ واحد، أي طريقة واحدة. قال الله تعالى: "وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَى حَرْفٍ"، أي على وجه واحد" (8). وقد لا يعطي الكتاب أي مساحة لهذا الحرفي، الظاهري للعمل، بل يبدو وقد أقصي تماماً عن أفق المعرفة. نعم يناوئ عالم متصوف مثل "ابن عربي" التأويل الحرفي الذي يوقع في التشبيه والتجسيم، على نحو ما فعل بعض المتكلمين، وبعض غير المسلمين، ويعبر من الظاهر إلى الباطن، من التنزّل إلى التأويل، ولكنه ودون أي تعارض يدرج موضوع "الحروف" في قسم "المعارف"، الباب الأول من كتابه "الفتوحات المكية"، أي في نظرية العلم. وقد يبدو هذا الاتهام بالحرفية والأحادية وجيهاً عندما يكون التطبيق على نصوص تتميز بطبيعتها بالإيحائية والرمزية، وقد يتصل هذا ببعض جوانب النصوص الدينية، ولكنه قد لا يكون محل اتفاق على الإطلاق إن أُريدَ تعميمه على هذه النصوص.

عندما يصطدم الفهم بمحدودية اللغة؛ تنشأ في اللغة نتوءات من اللامعنى، ومن ثم كان هناك على الدوام هذا السعي المحموم إلى تخلص العلامات من الالتباس، وتخلص استعمالاتها من الغموض والانطباعية، والبحث عن المعنى "الحقيقي" لكل مفهوم ولكل تصور ولكل قضية. وفي تاريخ التأويل كان هناك قراءات عدة تبلور معاني مختلفة للنصوص من معنى حرفي إلى معنى مجازي إلى معنى باطني إلى تأويل أخلاقي.

بالإضافة إلى هذا، قد نؤمن بأنه ليس من الحكمة أن نُقْصي ما يسمى بالإنسانيات من أفقها تماماً ما نعتمده الطبيعية في نظرتها. كما نقدر أن يكون لدى بعض علماء الطبيعيات، الذين كانوا علامة فارقة في تطور العلم، أفق مجازي استعاري عرفاني، وهي ربما حيوية كفلت لفكرهم أن يكون حياً ابتكارياً مفارقاً، ولكن هذا الأفق لم يكن بحال معتمدهم الدائم في النظر والتأمل والتفكير والتجربة، ولعل هذا ما أخصب تجربتهم.

ويبقى الكتاب الذي جاء عودةً إلى أحد أهم الأسئلة الكبرى في الفن والوجود، إضافة أصيلة في العربية إلى تلك المنطقة التي تتأمل العلاقة بين الإبداع والمقدس، عبر التصوف والطبيعيات والفلسفة والأدب، ويبقى في هذا فريداً في مقارنته، رشيحاً في عبارته، محكماً في صياغته.

6 انظر: ابن منظور: لسان العرب، مادة (شزن).

7 السابق: مادة (تألب).

8 ابن فارس: مقاييس اللغة. مادة (حرف).

**Andreas Fink. 2017. *Der arabische Dialekt von Hasankeyf am Tigris (Osttürkei). Geschichte – Grammatik – Texte – Glossar*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag. 353 p. ISBN: 978-3-447-10898-0**

**Reviewed by GABRIEL BIȚUNĂ**

Andreas Fink is an Assistant Professor at the University of Heidelberg, in the Seminar of Languages and Cultures of the Near East. The volume currently under review, titled *Der arabische Dialekt von Hasankeyf am Tigris (Osttürkei). Geschichte – Grammatik – Texte – Glossar* (The Arabic Dialect of Hasankeyf on the Tigris (Eastern Turkey). History – Grammar – Texts – Glossary) represents the revised version of the author's Ph.D. thesis.

The book consists of: *Danksagung* ("Note of thanks") (pp. XIII-XIV); *Abkürzungen und Symbole* ("Abbreviations and Symbols") (pp. XV-XVI); *Literatur* ("References") (pp. XVII-XXXV); seven main chapters: *Einführung* ("Introduction") (pp. 1-52), *Phonologie* ("Phonology") (pp. 53-72), *Morphologie* ("Morphology") (pp. 73-148), *Syntax* ("Syntax") (pp. 151-170), *Paradigmen* ("Patterns") (pp. 171-202), *Texte* ("Texts") (pp. 203-270), *Glossar* ("Glossary") (pp. 275-340); two annexes: Anhang I (pp. 341-344) and Anhang II (pp. 345-348); and *Karten* ("Maps") (pp. 349-353).

In the first chapter, *Einführung* ("Introduction") (pp. 1-52), the author discusses: the geographical and historical contexts in which the Arabic spoken in Hasankeyf is found, a very thoroughly researched etymology of the city's toponym, the religions and the cultures (Syriac Christians, Armenians, Ottomans, Turks, Kurds, etc.) that have existed across history in the area, the current sociolinguistic situation of the speakers of Hasankeyf Arabic and their future (according to the author's estimate, the dialect is bound to become extinct in the next 50 years, (p. 42)), the position of Hasankeyf Arabic in the Mesopotamian *qəltu* Arabic dialects and its description as part of the Anatolian Arabic branch, and a brief description of the main phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical features of the Arabic dialect spoken in Hasankeyf. This chapter is very well documented and it shows that the author has gone to great lengths to decipher the otherwise opaque and intricate historical and sociolinguistic research of this dialect.

The second chapter, *Phonologie* ("Phonology") (pp. 53-72), is concerned with the consonantal system (including consonants emerging from loan-words and phenomena such as consonant assimilation and emphatization), the vowel system (as well as sections dedicated to the *'imāla* phenomenon, the epenthetic vowel), and the accentuation of words (with special cases, in which the accentuation is influenced by prefixes, suffixes and other words).

In the third and the biggest chapter, *Morphologie* ("Morphology") (pp. 73-148), the author covered: the morphology of pronouns (personal pronouns, the copula, the demonstratives, the interrogatives, the relative pronoun, and others), the verbal morphology (with all the derived forms of the "strong" verbs and the "weak" verbs, verbal object

suffixes and verbal modifiers for tense and mood, as well as “pseudoverbs” – *fī* “there is”, *lu* “he has”, *kallu* “he had” –, and verbal nouns), the morphology of the *nominal group* (where, although the research shows a big number of derivation patterns, some examples might have been more eloquent, had a clear distinction between nouns and adjectives been made), the numerals (cardinals, ordinals, fractions), particles (prepositions, conjunctions, interjections).

The fourth chapter, *Syntax* (“Syntax”) (pp. 151-170), is surprisingly reduced in size for what it could offer, as part of a dialectological monograph. The author deals with: the syntax of pronouns, the copula, demonstratives, definiteness, noun phrase agreement, the relatives, the tenses and moods of verbs, as well as clauses (temporal, causal, conditional, and others) and the negation.

The fifth chapter, *Paradigmen* (“Patterns”) (pp. 171-202), contains verb conjugations for all types of roots (triconsonantal, as well as quadriconsonantal), and all derived forms for each root. This chapter is a very valuable and necessary component of any monograph, because it showcases the productivity of the dialect as a living language that is still in use.

The sixth chapter, *Texte* (“Texts”) (pp. 203-270), is the most valuable part of the volume, because Arabic dialectologists will be able to use the recordings made by the author for further research. The texts (recorded from informants belonging to various social classes, ages and work fields) are accompanied by excellent translations and referenced footnotes that make reading the Hasankeyf Arabic samples seamless and “dialectologically” rewarding.

The last chapter, *Glossar* (“Glossary”) (pp. 275-340), is an interesting addition to the volume, because it provides the reader with a list of over 1400 root-based words (of Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish origin), accompanied by their etymology. This chapter will successfully prove itself of great help to Anatolian Arabic researchers, especially for finding out the meanings of words that seem to develop only in these Arabic *Sprachinseln*, found “in a Kurdish microcontext, situated in its turn, in a Turkish macrocontext (Grigore 2007: 27)<sup>1</sup>.

In conclusion, the volume is a necessity for Arabic dialectology nowadays, especially for the research of Anatolian Arabic, a branch that is still highly productive lexically and requires continuously updated corpora of recordings, although its future looks less and less certain, due to the current sociolinguistic situation of the area.

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<sup>1</sup> Grigore, George. 2007. *L'arabe parlé à Mardin – monographie d'un parler arabe « périphérique »* –. Bucharest: Editura Universității din București.

**Mehmet Şayır. 2017. *Mardin Arapça Dialekti*. Istanbul: Akdem Yayınları. 178 p.  
ISBN: 978-605-2385-22-7**

**Reviewed by GABRIEL BIŢUNĂ**

Mehmet Şayır is an Arabic lecturer at Gazi University in Ankara, where he has been teaching classes of Arabic Dialectology, Contemporary Arab Communities, as well as Arabic Advanced Speaking Skills and Arabic Language Practice. Born in Mardin, Mr. Şayır is a native speaker of Mardini Arabic. He has published various translations from Persian and Arabic into Turkish since the 1990's. He holds a Ph.D. thesis in Arabic Dialectology, titled *Mardin'de Konuşulan Arapça Lehçenin Sesbilgisi Biçimbilgisi Ve Sözdizimi Bakimından İncelenmesi* (An Examination regarding the Phonetics, Morphology and Syntax of the Arabic Dialect Spoken in Mardin). The thesis has been revised and published under the name *Mardin Arapça Dialekti* (The Arabic Dialect of Mardin) at the end of 2017, and this is the work currently under review.

The book consists of “Giriş” (Introduction) (pp. 17-30), three main chapters: “Sesbilgisi” (Phonetics) (pp. 31-69), “Biçimbilgisi” (Morphology) (pp.70-126), and “Sözdizimi” (Syntax) (pp. 127-166), as well as “Sonuç” (Conclusion) (pp. 167-172), a bibliography and a map of the Mardin area.

In the “Giriş” (Introduction) (pp. 17-30), the author discusses the diglossic situation of the Arabic language in the Arab world and outside it. Afterwards, a very thorough description of the Arabic dialects spoken in Turkey is given, with mentions of over 30 villages where *qeltu* dialects from the Mardin branch are still spoken nowadays. There is also a historical description of Mardin, followed by a research on all the major works on Anatolian Arabic, which have been cited as the author's guiding resources for carrying out his monograph.

In Chapter 1, “Sesbilgisi” (Phonetics) (pp. 31-69), the author deals with the vowel system of Mardini Arabic, the consonantal system, diphthongs, allophones, phonemes, *imāla*, phonetic transformations (consonant voicing: *yesbeḥ* > *yəzbeḥ* “to swim” (p. 53), consonant devoicing, consonant emphatization, consonants from loan-words, and others), as well as similarities between Modern Standard Arabic and Mardini Arabic (presence of diphthongs, interdental consonants, etc.).

Chapter 2, “Biçimbilgisi” (Morphology) (pp.70-126), is concerned with the analysis of the morphological system of Mardini Arabic. An array of concepts are discussed here: morphemes (mainly for verb conjugation, but also for noun and adjective declension), noun phrases, noun plural patterns (internal and external, as well as plurals for loan words), adjectival patterns (colors, comparatives, adjectives of superiority), verbal morphology (which is scattered throughout the book without following a clear system: the main conjugations, verbal auxiliaries, and some reduplicative verb forms are in this chapter, while the verbs with root particularities are dealt with in the syntax chapter), verbal nouns,



pronouns (independent, possessive demonstrative and copula pronouns), prepositions, adverbs, loan-words, collective and singulative nouns, and diminutives.

In Chapter 3, “Sözdizimi” (Syntax) (pp. 127-166), the author discusses the nominal sentence, the verbal sentence, the conditional clause, religious phrases in which Alla is the subject, interjections and the vocative, prepositions, external noun plurals, values of *ke:n* “to be” (pp. 140-146, as full verb or preverbal particle or auxiliary), values of *ta:k* “to be able” and *beḳa* “to remain”, the negation, interrogative particles, verbal tenses, and preverbal particles plus auxiliary verbs.

The volume ends with a “Sonuç” (Conclusion) (pp. 167-172), in which the author recounts the main phonetic, morphological and syntactic features of Mardini Arabic, adding that the dialect under study has a richer phonetic structure than the other Anatolian dialects, while its syntax has been visibly influenced by the languages that coexist with it in the area (Turkish, mainly).

To conclude, the volume offers dialectologists a new source of unique language samples (most of which have been collected by the author) in the Arabic spoken in Mardin, while also setting the way forward for Turkish researchers in the domain of Arabic dialectology.

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