



The Dilemma Of Dialogue And The Ordeal Of Coexistence In The Novels Of Mohammed Eissa Al-Mu'adab

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Abstract:

The Arab novel attempts to set its clock to the current time amidst the clash of civilizations and cultures and the absence of dialogue. It challenges all fears with its religious, cultural, and ideological burdens to emphasize the need to drop the curtain between cultures and advocate for human coexistence and the formulation of a complex web of modern relationships, benefiting from the immunity of freedom of expression to raise issues that have been silenced, thus dissolving the poison in the contemporary text/discourse.

From here, Mohammed Eissa al-Mu'adab crafted a new narrative strategy to demolish the barriers to dialogue between East and West and between the self and the other, focusing on the human issue and raising essential matters such as cultural dialogue and the problem of freedom.

Keywords: Civilizational Dialogue, Cultural Coexistence, Identity, Freedom, The Self and The Other.

Introduction:

From al-Mu'adab's perspective, meanings are scattered, enriching the narrative and narrowing the gap between reality and imagination, becoming a tangible image that proves existence shaping events through time and leaving its mark in space. This represents the awakening of thought, delving into questions that provoke concern and an emotional sense (belief in humanity) and tightening its grip on the mob's idle talk that corrupts thought and plunges it into a cycle of falsification and deceit.

The text bears the weight of the message, and the writer/reader gets lost in its spatial and spiritual fluctuations to create a self-balance that forces us to awareness and good choice. Thus, the self/human identity becomes a goal and a life project for the text/writer/reader, requiring struggle and hard labor amid the noise and outcry that negate the other/humanity.

From here, Mohammed Eissa al-Mu'adab created a complete world through his narrative collection, pulsating with movement, events, and characters. He borrowed from the surrounding world, allowing us to read a real reality, not just realistic or parallel novels. His works carried the burden of this fragmented reality, fought sincerely and intelligently to adapt to the conditions of this era, paving the way for a new modern narrative and a surprising experimental narrative joy, challenging the reader/present/time with dignity.

In the trilogy "Man and Religions," the existential vision emerges when events intertwine with language to demonstrate the expansion of the horizon of tolerance and forgiveness, despite the uncertain future, swinging the discourse between historical, religious, and philosophical to revive the reality hidden in memory framed by space.

The novel "Gentle Jihad" focused on the sea space, reflecting the state of bewilderment and alienation, casting a sense of absurdity and helplessness on the characters. This vast space separated the novel's heroes from their land after their illegal immigration, becoming a dark corridor leading only to death, a bet by the narrator to prove a different kind of terror represented in poverty, oppression, and the tyrannical ruler, making the public discourse a call to reconsider the cultural, religious, social, and even political system.

The dialogic discourse flourished in the novel "Gold Bath" when al-Mu'adab pirated the religious history to rebel against the text and make it ideological, marking the narrative with historical sadism, revealing the suffering of Arab Jews searching for their lost self and identity in the space of Tunis city. The discourse and place conspired against the character until it was executed and entangled in moral chaos and existential dilemma.

Existentialism donned a Spanish shoe to portray the life of the hero "Manuel Gregori," who fled from Spain during Franco's dictatorial rule, facing the Republicans with violence, persecution, and execution. "Manuel" fled to Tunisia in search of safety and settled in the city of Kelibia, blending memory with nostalgia for the homeland and loyalty to exile. The narrative journey swung between peace and freedom and between self and identity, focusing on the historical and cultural relationship between East and West.

- How did the Arab novel work on modernizing dialogue in its imagined content?
- How did the novel face the ideological diversity that hindered dialogue within the text?
- Did the Tunisian novel achieve a multiplicity of discourses and allow the expression of the self/the other?

1. The Novel as an Art of Conceptualization:

The novel has made a qualitative leap in form and content, especially those emerging post-modernity or post-colonialism, characterized by the writers' awareness and diverse intellectual and aesthetic references, presenting a reality that matches the contemporary human experience.

Thus, the text opened up to experimentation, research, innovation, and difference, breaking the horizon of the modern recipient, to remove the chains that once shackled and imprisoned the word. "This new generation strives to add and renew, moving towards violating the boundaries between expressive forms and towards consolidating the autonomy of prevailing ideological discourses."¹

Hence, writing engaged in the pleasure of experimentation by infusing texts with innovative and new techniques, deviating from old classical molds, ensuring the novel focuses on contexts that captivate the reader, marked by their historical and cultural dimensions, making the encounter between reader and text a dialogue rather than a clash.

- Did the narrative discourse succeed in its bet on accepting civilizational dialogue?

It seems that the narrative discourse has entered the arena of modern conflict, transcending established awareness and replacing it with potential awareness after penetrating the collective society through various cultural mediums, discovering its ability to inoculate human selves through deep and bold narrative imaginary worlds, to walk over flat minds, strike them with an iron pen, and provoke the anxiety of questioning, making human values and history a problematic ordeal and downfall. But what kind of downfall?

- Is it historical downfall or civilizational downfall?

Or perhaps it refers to the fall of human humanity amidst this consumer culture.

The novel today acknowledges the failure of the technological civilization as it produces an imaginary reality that does not exist, creating a desperate and miserable individual who has lost all values and principles, becoming behaviorally petrified as if a type of programmed robot on nothingness.

It is the civilization of death (values/morals), and from here, it was imperative for the intellectual elite to reread reality to understand the cause of collapse "after Ibn Khaldun remained silent about the future," and to provide sufficient space for discourse to encompass history and its major issues because the narrative discourse is an aesthetic one that refers to reality, even if it employs the imaginary "²as the novel becomes the reflecting mirror where the people see themselves and their concerns appear clear and naked, making the novel more truthful than all the writings of thinkers and political historians."³

It is a mercurial panoramic form that encompasses all literary arts, skillfully depicting the dialectic that turned entrenched concepts into suppression of the self/the other. Therefore, the innovators took upon themselves the banner of experimentation and composed epics where reality met unreality, and consciousness met the unconscious, elevating the general scene and escalating dramatic events to pose the enigma of existence and the meaning of life.

2. The Power of Dialogue over Reality/Imaginary in the Novel "Gentle Jihad":

With trembling hands, the writer al-Mu'adab draws new geographical boundaries from the space of reality and its hell, becoming a true document, planting sadness and grief, creating an antagonistic emotion and a desire to destroy this time and place. The discourse "created a conscious and firm perception distinguished by a holistic vision of the essence and crisis of contemporary Arab existence, represented in the oppression and tyranny exercised to varying degrees."⁴

"The ruler has closed all doors before us, leaving us only hunger and oppression. My mother died of grief over my father, who died due to their tyranny and oppression in Borj al-Roumi. He languished before them, mocked and unmerciful... My father was not a criminal or a spy to die in such a brutal manner in the death chamber... What was his fault if he was with the land of corrupt officials? He did not steal or plunder; he only pointed out the ongoing thefts in public deals at the equipment services... They concocted a case against him, accusing him of opposing the state's policy and hindering its development projects... Damn it."⁵

The entire text is a comprehensive vision of the writer who allowed his characters to confess their intellectual narrowness and their inability to find a solution to escape historical disappointment. "I too cried in silence then ran towards the Nuba Palace, my father's fortress, his castle, taught him to rebel. He did not join the herd, did not lie, nor did anyone ride on his back. My father traveled to Palestine with his friend and returned standing tall like a palm tree. Since his return, he avoided news and politics, cursing all who spoke of politics and Arabs, for days yelling agitatedly: Damn the traitors, damn all Arabs."⁶

The voices of anxiety rose in the randomness of time and place "for cities are disasters and traps when the discourse ascends to an invisible realm, making the person transparent with himself and with the world." ⁷ The ancient time births another lost individual searching for his identity with a raspy-breathed chest, its noise resembling punctured drums played by the wind. "The village is desolate in your absence, Nidal, it's an unbearable prison. You are in jail, that's true, but the village, if you knew, is a bigger prison... Everything has changed, my friend, boredom dominates everyone, rest assured, don't worry, your family is fine, and I, my friend, am oppressed, my son died drowning in the sea trying to migrate stealthily... I cried from oppression and nearly lost my eyes, the important thing, time is merciless."⁸

The Tunisian novel focused on the miserable reality since the early sixties, attempting to comment on those present conditions and the country's past, accusing that era of colonization and the reasons for social collapse, and expressing the interests of the poor popular class.⁹

The events blend between confession and scandal to form a public dialogue with the self that breaks sharp corners of existence, and reality is dressed in the fears of an unknown

future illuminated by the writer with a dim lantern until it disappears behind the imagery, declaring the difficulty of approaching the truth.

The dialogue in the narrative text is distinguished by two phenomena:

A- The Dialogue/Transmitted Discourse Phenomenon:

It primarily relies on the orthographic nature of the transmission act, as the responses and dialogues spoken by the character are conveyed as originally established, without undergoing any distortion during the transition from reality to imagination, from speech to writing, and without integrating them stylistically into the narrator's story.¹⁰

"The remarkable aspect is that her voice never ceases to reach me in my moments of drowsiness or wakefulness, echoing from the depths of the sea and blending with the echoes of the song of the Zanj in the vineyards of grapes and with the last cries of Alioun as it fades away. The voice reaches me heavy, troubled, and laden with the whistle of the wind...

" Oh ship, emit a sound, loud to the sea

Earth's vastness

Sky clear, giving its back

To a bitter life, carrying the valley when it rains

Oh ship, emit a sound..."¹¹

Colloquial language occupies a significant space in the narrative text, as it represents a modern literary necessity or what is known as linguistic hybridity. The intertwining of dialogue with non-standard linguistic vocabulary enriches the text on one hand, while on the other hand, it conveys the warmth of authenticity to the events and characters, making the general discourse an interactive one. "¹²

The discourse blends with discourse that achieves its goal to enter into a lively and serious interaction."

The text is characterized by a modern dialogic relationship based on the idea of pure voice and the idea of written voice, making the discourse naturally bifurcated, representing the social class to which the speaker belongs.

Since the novel draws from reality, colloquial language becomes its symbolic representation with a multi-layered and implicit ideological impact, shaping a panorama of cultural images.

B- The Conveyed Dialogue/Discourse Phenomenon:

This type "narrates dialogues and soliloquies and then re-conveys the text without the wording and without the established stylistic structure. In this way, the primary narration is obscured, and the expressive form that characterizes the character is eliminated,

meaning that the narrator fulfills the role of narration in terms of wording, storytelling, and construction because it relies on its own techniques."¹³

"I recall the faces we fled to the rocky shore, Rahma was the last thing I saw as she expanded her steps towards the unknown. Did she escape completely and enter paradise? My jinn will know how to go to Palermo and avoid the eyes of security, deviants, and beggars. I spoke to her at length and advised her to be cautious of the mafia gangs until she reaches Teatro Massimo, and there she will meet dear Giorgio... the jinn."¹⁴

The passage serves as a recounting of a previous utterance that occurred in the boat during the characters' escape or departure at night (burning). The author maintained the general form but gave the discourse through the transmitter/character "Nidal Fattah Allah" an expressive degree where narration intertwines with the narrated, creating narrative scenes that delve into a bitter reality and then placing them in the evaluation scale from all its political, social, and ethical aspects.

The novel thus demonstrates a conflicting and ideological spirit in Tunisian and Arab society. It is noteworthy that the novel "Gentle Jihad" engages in an interactive relationship between language and reality with its ideological burdens.

3. Dialogic Discourse:

3.1 Hidden Debate and Open Debate:

"Bakhit" stands at the dialogue's verbal or discursive dialogic when it expands and becomes a "dialogue," meaning a second speech parallel to the first speech, giving the second discourse a dialogic dimension. The significance of the hidden debate is enormous, as in fact, every style contains an internal debating element that is the nature of this debate.¹⁵

This type of dialogue is characterized by:

A. The Other's Word:

It strongly influences the author's speech by impacting and inspiring it, forcing them to speak in a way that suits the event. We find the novel's protagonist becomes inflated and grows beyond the author's control, especially when expressing disdain for the state.

The dialogue feels intense and tense, "I certainly benefited a lot from what my friend advised me, and my brain began to think. Does my mother prepare enough money to meet the need? My father's money melted away, and the money I brought from Kaf Graba was mostly exchanged for euros and handed over to Mrs. Mariza. How cheap is this Tunisian dinar? I cursed the ruler while receiving the bundle of dinars from the hand of an Egyptian currency trader, who was rude and vile, exploiting me as he wished and then ignoring me."¹⁶

B. The Word Mixed with Voice:

These are important confessional statements from the heroes, filled with a tense relationship towards the other's word¹⁷, giving the word another meaning, strong or light depending on the situation and impact, laden with a consciousness unveiled through the narrative.¹⁸

C. Flattery in the Word:

Flattery makes the heroes' self-definitions uneasy, and the word in it does not cling to its meaning, ready to change at any moment like a chameleon.¹⁹

The dialogue forms narrative scenes derived from the community's memory, where death/anxiety/disruption/loss form an infinite loop reflecting the mental rift of the novel's characters, turning the general discourse formed by the dialogue into an ideological, authoritarian discourse where the self still seeks stability to define its existence after the psychological castration it suffered, relying on the principle of honesty in speech and action to assert its presence in the narrative and thus legitimizing the dialogue.²⁰

4. Narrative Interconnection between Memory and Identity in "Gold Bath":

We begin to write history when we rid ourselves of the question 'Who are you?' When we discard false consciousness and eliminate terms like monopoly and disdain that have ravaged the societal body, history will record the human action reflected in peaceful religious, cultural, and ethical coexistence.

Diversity is a universal trait and the law of nature since creation. The negation of the self is the triumph of the individual over the primitive human model, creating a cognitive/moral model defended by philosophers since time immemorial, floating in the space of human thought, answering the nature of existence that emerged from the self, which Descartes esteemed and Nietzsche humiliated, a self distinguished by the ability to speak and address the other.²¹

- Did the narrative text "Gold Bath" create a rift in the memory by drawing circles of the present to prove the sterility of dialogue?
- How did the novel defend humanity and the other?

4.1 The Gold Bath: A Horizon for Dialogue Between Reality and Mirage

"Gold Bath" as a Horizon for Dialogue between Reality and Mirage: The challenges we face as humanity call us to seek what is known as salvation, the escape from the madness and uproar of this era, to adjust the mind's chemistry, clarify our worldview, and achieve intellectual/national/sectarian/religious coexistence, etc.

Here, the role of the intellectual begins in raising questions of cultural awareness that enter the psychological makeup of humans, acknowledging the principle of dialogue, diversity, and acceptance of the other, engaging the narrative discourse in a dialogue game

aimed at denouncing hatred in all its forms towards the other and leading the audience to accept them as human beings, irrespective of beliefs.

"Gold Bath" serves as a message creating intellectual/behavioral balance and performing a therapeutic function, like language therapy that frees it from presentation problems, clarifies a certain way of using language when addressing an issue, and the ecological research that has become a strong tradition today, possibly evolving into a spiritual horizon based on human thought in the future.²²

Without water and steam, our minds bathe under the dome of the "Gold Bath," where al-Mu'adab restores our intellectual freedom, distancing us from illusions, falsification, and defamation, to focus on our selves. The text shook all constants and beliefs inherited, eventually transforming the mind into an antithetical entity and intellectual rigidity, demonstrating the misery of thought, which reflected on our behavior, turning the individual into a carrier of evil forces and strange energy capable of harming the other.

Thus, we enter the labyrinths of the mind and its chaos, wandering its alleys, sweeping away all residues and causes of downfall, to control our thoughts and reorder them to remain in touch with human consciousness, aiming for universal citizenship. Thus, humans achieve enlightenment and reform in thinking patterns, i.e., emerging from mental deficiency and accepting life under guardianship.

It's about daring to use reason, revisiting human projects (knowledge, religion, ethics, culture, spirituality), i.e., rooting the moral instinct reflecting human nature and realizing true freedom. Belief in humanity is the realization of the religion of reason, hence the text is open to humanity, combating the illusion of culture through space that led to religious bigotry, leaving many people under blind and foolish myths, making it futile in this world. Religion with God is humanity, supporting the idea of absolute goodness present in the unconscious and reactivating it in consciousness.

4.2 The Reality of Disappointment for "Us":

One of the most significant distortions accompanying the post-colonial era is the cultural deformation followed by moral decline. Currently, the Arab region has become one of the areas in the world most violating human rights, characterized by tyranny, bureaucracy, confiscation of freedom, and the dominance of unjust law.

Adding insult to injury is its cultural isolation, making it a unidimensional human who does not believe in diversity and difference, as if isolated from the world. The prevailing values in understanding religion, language, history, and ethics rely on a unilateral interpretation with a generalized and absolute nature, thus distancing multiplicity and interpretation.

The words bleed to emit the scent of disappointment from the corners of the text, forming as follows:

A. Questions of Disappointment:

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The author tries to hide behind the characters of the novel to speak the falsified historical reality, as when the heroine questions her lover, expressing her wonder about Muslims' relations with the People of the Book, as if they have never read the history of religions.

B. Historical Disappointment:

"In my opinion, the issue is not fundamentally racist; it primarily goes back to the lack of historical integrity. Traditionally, historians, or let's say most of them, write history only on demand. To be more precise, for example, in 1942, the German army forces liberated Tunisian territories accompanied by an SS unit, whose primary task was to implement the anti-Jewish policy in Tunisia. About 13,000 Jews were deported to concentration camps in Europe, and few historians have spoken about this, except in terse and hasty writings, which is regrettable."²³

"My mother says: 'Our ancestors were expelled from Spain; they suffered oppression and physical extermination. They first migrated to Livorno in Italy, where the Grand Duke Ferdinand II was merciful to them, but as soon as the Duke died in 1937, they felt constrained and humiliated again, as if it was their fate. So, they were forced to migrate to Tunisia and settled in the Hara district.'"²⁴

C. Ideology of Disappointment:

"This is our painful and sad history that I will not forget, and it didn't end there," my mother continues narrating with tears in her eyes, "our neighborhood faced all sorts of contempt and hatred, and we had no enmity with our Muslim neighbors. What happened on many nights was sheer terror; strangers and masked men would attack our homes, stealing our money and gold. 'Elie's' shop was not spared from looting and attempted arson either."²⁵

D. The Disappointment of the Receiver:

"In an unknown moment, I climbed to the top of the opening with the tablet box in hand, which Helen took from me... In terrifying seconds, the sand slid from all sides, and the ground shook... her screams choked me... Helen screamed for the last time, 'Oh God, for the last time, how did I endure her last screams: "Saad... Lara... Shira..." and she faded away as I did... The dust rose and flew like crows bursting out of the cave all at once."²⁶

The core of the text is filled with meanings, and any attempt to grasp the meaning is doomed to fail amid the multitude of ideas and the evolution of events. Observers of its trajectory will notice the violence of the narrative scenes (real and social), with Jewish characters suffering from shattered identity/belonging, rejected by all despite their deep roots in the place.

Thus, we face a writing/voice, voice/text, voice/mind, voice of consciousness/unconsciousness, voice of existence/non-existence, entering the narrative discourse between the obsession of being/self and the history/religion/culture, proposing the humanity project that was killed after its development in the text and

slipping from the writer's hands, forcing the author to engage with words to reconcile with himself and others.

The text expels its characters as the whale expelled Jonah, emerging emaciated after the struggle of existence, to be ultimately annihilated and buried, exercising its authority after fate exerted its power, changing the discourse from communication and openness to others and their cultures and rapid acceptance of differences to suppressing discourse and burying truths, after exposing them and attempting to quell any new intellectual revolution that provokes the reader/ideologue's mind, leading the text into a narrative game, revealing secrets at times and then rejecting them again, deepening the nature of the tragedy that began with the title and continued to the last line of the novel.

E. Spanish Shoe: A Journey of Memory between Reality and Imagination

Evoking memory in silence is a gamble to penetrate history and break barriers between words. The discourse becomes permissible and fearless as it flows through the sediments of time and the alleys of space, creating a new breath for the narrative where human relationships (social, cultural, religious...) intertwine, forming a distinct linguistic and artistic image.

The fictional memory becomes precise, recording the lapses of a history filled with predictions, bearing the collective conscience's responsibility for betraying history/identity and the cause of collapse and chaos.

Here, the novelistic text becomes a legal document where perpetrators are punished, and the narrator becomes the fair judge defending the individual's voice in solidarity with the collective voice. Thus, the narrative space leans on the imagination that fertilizes memory to raise the issue of awareness and question humanity.

5. Dominance of the Imaginary and Suppression of Memory:

Al-Mu'adab undertook the arduous task of narrating history to challenge memory through invisible characters, delighting in its artistic torture within narrative scenes that instill an unusual sense of absurdity in the reader, experiencing the protagonist's journey as it merges with her space, expanding through the memory spaces defending existence/identity. These spaces combine three elements: the creed that provides a vision for existence, the language through which expression is made, and the long-term cultural heritage.²⁷

By listening to memory, we confront the characters' pain, realizing that the beginning of the text is its end, a writing style that signifies narrative calm to fulfill the story's purpose: "This is your museum, and it's all you have left: a black leather shoe, a red Knesset, a blue kerosene lamp, a black hat, a copper cross hanging on a starfish, a small wooden box, a sea urchin skeleton, and a poetry book... To your health, Florida... To your health, Manuel." ²⁸

This is the character's colorful personal legacy, carrying a psychological and existential impact. Why did the author choose these specific colors, and what is their relation to the discourse?

A. The Black Color:

This color is associated with the history of nations, symbolizing darkness, sorrow, defeats, death, and calamities. Black is the antithesis of white and represents mourning for some²⁹, signifying oppression, tyranny, and a form of threat, embodying enigmatic characters shrouded in mystery.

Perhaps the author intended the color's deviation from its reality to signify power and the rise of a defeated character to strength. This novel, in its poetic language, is very painful, where the author traditionally delves deep into the intricacies of the human psyche, addressing complex issues like ideologies, religions, and even the madness of love.

B. The Red Color:

Red is one of the first colors known to humans, derived from the sun's glow and the intense heat of fire, with the longest wavelengths. In Western religions, red symbolizes sacrifices for principles or religion and represents hell in many beliefs³⁰. In Hindu culture, red signifies life and joy, associated with blood during childbirth and blood flow, with some tribes smearing the newborn with blood to ensure a long life³¹. In the narrative, red symbolizes revenge; the red Knesset signifies the discourse of truth and the danger of its circulation.

C. The Blue Color:

Blue has broad and varied significations, perhaps due to its range from light to dark shades, with dark blue nearing black, hence evoking aversion, hatred, and association with demons and negative forces on Earth. Light blue is linked to water and the sky, suitable for tranquility and coolness.

In Hebrew culture, blue is the color of God Yahweh, making it sacred among Jews. For the Chinese, blue is the color of death. In the narrative, the blue lamp represents the peace and mental calm of the hero after reconciling with himself, symbolizing resistance and lost paradise.

The novel re-establishes the story of "Manuel Gregori," a Spanish marine infantry officer during the Civil War from 1936 to 1939, fleeing Franco's tyranny with many officers and civilians to Bizerte, then to Kélibia, creating its memory through contemporary real-time narrative voiced by Anwar Qasim, with documents spanning urgent letters and memoirs forming the character's voice, completing the story tied to both imaginary and real aspects. Culturally, socially, and politically, the novel opens to two countries: Spain, the country of exile, and Tunisia, the refuge.³²

By resorting to epistolary art, the author reconciles with the discourse despite its forceful presentation, I read the letter intently, and upon rereading, I realized that reconciliation among civilized peoples only comes through digging into the forgotten history and understanding what happened accurately. As Arabs, we spill blood and then abhor looking at it. We fear excavating our bloody history; our present is confusion, and our future is built on air, leading us in a circular path, not progressing.³³

The symbol turns into an idea through the cursed memory when reality becomes an arena for dialogue and discourse conflicts, breaking down the barriers between dialogue/freedom, dialogue/identity, dialogue/coexistence, maintaining communicative context with the reader through a dense scenario linking the story threads with historical knowledge, as the narrative scenes closely depict the existential inevitability, conveying the existential hunger, drawing us into the intellectual/cultural feast and exploring the adventure of a shoe,

"Although I lived in exile in North Africa, specifically in Tunisia, I managed to turn pain into an experience of struggle and peace, striving to transform the iron shoe that incapacitates humans into a soft leather shoe illuminating their path."³⁴

Shoes are associated with tyranny, self-torture, and violation, but what is their relationship with history, revolution, and freedom? Shoes have a history as old as human civilization itself, symbolizing protection and warmth from natural elements. However, the text imbues them with meanings where the concepts of center/margin and power/powerlessness clash, mocking the Arab intellectual and dressing him in worn shoes to experience oppression and humiliation, urging us to dive into bold discourse to interpret the crisis of struggle and existence and to present worried and sincere human models.³⁵

The Arab novel doesn't just focus on bodily limits, blending between the taboo/forbidden, desire/lust, freedom/identity, and self/mysticism. It also invokes feet that signify military and dictatorial rule, thus creating another history that lies in the hidden, lower history found in letters and memoirs. "When I looked up at the newspaper he was holding, I read his name in large letters, Manuel Gregori. I didn't read the rest of the title, just spelled out the letters to ensure I read the name correctly... I returned to the full title and read: Manuel Gregori: The Spanish Shoe that Defeated Franco's Shoe."³⁶

After deconstructing the symbolism of the shoe or sandal and its relationship with the discourse, we consider the following points:

- The iron shoe symbolizes oppression, violence, and torture: "On a wooden bench, they placed my feet between iron plates, and my flesh sunk into pointed teeth, then the plates gradually came together to break the bones of my leg... I urinated in my pants, and my urine was hot, leaking from a bleeding hole".³⁷

- The shoe signifies a revolution against all forms of violence and tyranny and symbolizes the continuous journey towards the goal and the achievement of freedom/identity.
- Wearing the shoe means walking in tainted minds to purify them, as shoes are removed in a sacred place.
- The shoe is related to migration and the search for freedom and safety in the north of the Mediterranean, which is why Manuel found exile and peace in Tunisia.
- The shoe acknowledges the cultural legitimacy of the East as it represents a safe place, unlike the dictatorial West.
- The shoe marks the beginning of a step towards civilizational dialogue, especially between the East/West, i.e., the center/periphery.
- As the shoe embodies dualities of opposition, the text encapsulates them in "life/death," "security/insecurity," "homeland/exile."

The presence of memory, as it dons history in the novel "Spanish Shoe," was an imperative necessity for the author Mohammed Issa Al-Muadab to redraw the features of a new world away from divisions and fragmentations. These features are not momentary but result from accumulations that present and contain the crisis, allowing memory alone to embody realistic images of diverse origins, reflecting different stages of life with obstacles, collapses, and frustrations.

Through narrative worlds, memory creates a cultural, political, and social discourse that serves as a new memory for subsequent generations.

6. Conclusion

The narratives cross imaginary bridges derived from reality to chase the impossible through events that reflect the moral tragedy and personality dissociation in Arab society. Al-Muadab reads his literary spell by invoking historical memory to question reality in search of reasons for disappointment.

The reality exists and is accepted, according to its material or ideal concept, but the formation of thought in humans varies from one individual to another according to personal conviction. Thus, the outcome of perception, analysis, and research differs and diverges in diagnosing truth and reality. The materialist Karl Marx "sees that the truth of man is nothing but a natural extension of this material reality and that thought is merely an objective reflection of it, nothing more"³⁸.

Conversely, the idealist George Berkeley posits that reality is nothing more than what man conceives, a mental image imprinted by God in the mind, and therefore diagnosing the truth of reality depends on the freedom of the individual in forming an idea about reality³⁹.

The writer made us feel the gap between fantasy and truth, while narrowing the distance between reality and truth, awakening in us the sensation and awareness that the collapse, frustration, and despair of his characters are an extension of reality's impact on them.

The characters violently collide with reality and the environment, rejecting this truth, confronting, and resisting with a desire to rebel, yet failing, they resort to the past as a refuge for their depressive psychological states. The scenes of oppression and repression, as narrated, are evidence of the absence of justice, the death of freedom, beauty, and the social injustice and violence.

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