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# Representation Of Identity In The Contemporary Arab Representation And Writing Novel

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## Abstract:

Representation in its linguistic meanings results from similes and depictions that make something prominent and upright for people to imitate, so it becomes a fluid example and a renewed lesson.

If we move from representation in its linguistic and rhetorical meaning in the Arab heritage to clarify the term in its intellectual and philosophical manifestations, then we hint at a serious attempt to form a coherent formal structure through details.

A variety of real or virtual reality for people, places, or cultural events, to things or groups to be represented. From here comes the researcher to uncover representations in contemporary Arabic novels, mentioning the most important Arabic novel that devoted a large space to representing the black community. We have relied in this research on analysis mechanisms.

The structure starts from the cover image and title of the novel, all the way to the events and levels of the narrative.

**keywords:** representation; Arabic novel; black community; identity, conflict.

## Introduction:

Acting in our contemporary reality carries the meanings of control and imposing hegemony, materially and morally. Theatrical representation means assuring roles; leading the stage, and imposing presence on the masses. Parliamentary representation means taking responsibility for expressing the hopes and pains of citizens; trying to formulate their ambitions, solving their problems; and speaking in their name.

Diplomatic representation means representing the state and speaking its name, taking care of their interests and conducting negotiations on their behalf<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> - look: Nader kadem, representation of the other. The image of blacks in the middle Arab imagination.

There are many means and mechanisms of representation but the most prominent and dangerous of them is writing and speech, that is writing about the other on his behalf and speaking on his behalf, which means that his sources are the history of this other; his culture and his natural right to talk about himself or to represent himself in his own right.

The borders that contribute to forming and stimulating identity may be natural geographical borders; such as mountains and seas, and they may be religious, ethnic; or linguistic. There is an instinctive incentive that drives each member of the groups to maintain the cohesion and unity of those borders, especially when those borders are cohesive with the borders of other groups or their members sense a threat coming from other cultures, people become more aware and sensitive of their culture when they stand on its borders that is when they encounter other cultures<sup>2</sup>.

This is where the conflict begins.

### **The conflict of the identities and its stages in Arab culture:**

The convection between the Arab cultural identity and the cultural identity of the black groups has undergone fluctuating transformations characterized by change between dominance and shrinkage from both sides. These transformations are the:

- The stage of conflict
- The stage of reconciliation
- The stage of enslavement
- The stage of trying to integrate
- **The stage of conflict** dates back to approximately a century before the emergence of Islam, when the Abyssinians occupied Yemen and ruled it for more than half a century, and the Arabs submitted to the rule of Abraha the Abyssinian, as he married the daughters of the ancient kings of Yemen (Rayhan-his son Dhi Fadan) after seizing her from her husband (Dhi Yazan).

The emergence of Islam achieved a stage of reconciliation between the Arab cultural identity and the Sudanese community who entered Islam influenced by the value of humanity, which equalizes all people and does not differentiate between them on the basis of color, race, or gender ...

For God Almighty says: "A people; we created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes that you may come to know each other. Indeed the most honourable of you in the sight of God is the most pious of you indeed, God is All-knowing, All-aware". Al-hudjurats- verse 13.

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<sup>2</sup> - same ref, page 48.

According to the saying of the messenger peace be upon him “there is no superiority for an Arab over a non-arab, nor for a white to have any superiority over a black except through piety”.

The worked to move the Abyssinians from the field of historical enemies to the field of friendly protectors by directing Muslims to emigrate to Abyssinia twice because its Negus king did not oppress anyone.

The momentum that attracted the blacks to Islam was driven by one if the great companions (Omar ibn Al khattab), and he raised one of the symbols of the blacks at beginning of Islam (Bilal ibn Rabah Al-Habashi) and our Nobel Messenger spoke out with his famous saying: “Abu Bakr, our master, free us and slavery; and the flood of slaves pushed to arteries of the Islamic state.

### **Narrative representation, historical and social representation:**

Perhaps we agree on a linguistic and rhetorical fact, which is that linguistic discourse is usually consistent with social conditions customs and established traditions that are settled in the superficial pyramid. Based on this, we notice in the stages of negative confrontations with Sudan that the novelist discourse reflected the most important thing in the representation of the black in most Arab and international novels, this was evident at the level of wording in the small space given to them in the narrative texts (Slaves, Servants, guards; farmers, outlaws ...) <sup>3</sup>.

At the beginning of the integration stage, black novelists took the initiative in representing their cultural identity and narrating their suffering, moving in their novels in a humanistics direction in dealing with others by instilling ideal moral values. This is evident In the novels that dealt with the presence of blacks in America; such as (Harriet Petctier stone) in her famous novel (Uncle Tom’s house) and novelist (Aler Haley) in his novel (Roots).

This trend developed in the post-colonial in Africa such as the novels of the Nigerian novelists (Chinua Chibe) and (Uruale Sonika). The novel season of migration to the north, which was first published in 1959 by the Sudanese novelists (Tayeb Salih) can also be included among the pioneering novels in this rebellious trend in the colonial view of the black person.

the hero of the novel, Mustapha Saeed; is The one who tried to conquer the colonial white flag of (England), but he returned to his black world (Sudan), defeated in an isolated village on the banks of the Nile river, disavowing everything attributed to western civilization.

Perhups Tayeb Sulih's narrative speech in his novel (senson of migration to the north) was influenced by the stereotypical image of the black man in Western culture,

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<sup>3</sup> - look : Abdo Badawi : black and Arab civilization Cairo 1976, page 100.

because he repeatedly emphasized that Mustapha Saeed's methods in his attempt to conquer England did not deviate from the traditional tools of the black man, which are his excessive virility, his always overwhelming lust, and his skills in playing the instrument. The strings of the first civilization and the naïve natural life through which he which he attracted his victims from women of London.

The Spanish narration emphasizes from the Beginning the positive mental qualities of the lightening of the night, as he is intelligent, discerning, and quick-witted<sup>4</sup>.

The novel "the lightning of the Night"<sup>5</sup> by the pioneer of the Tunisian novel, "Al-Bashir Kharif", whose first edition was published in 1961 belongs to the trend of the artistically mature historical novel. The title of the novel "The lightning of the Night" refers to the main character, and the author opens it by (This is the story of the Tunisian hero, the lightning of the Night, who lived through dangerous historical events in the tenth century AH ... He had strange attitudes when he was a Negro slave who was bought by the Tunisian chemist Mr Hamid bin al-Nakili, to help him in his work, and his physical characteristics were similar to many black Africans. His shiny Black face was round, his smiling face was between two large ears, one of which had beads of red coral, and his bright eyes sparkled with bright white, his eyesight was iron. He had a snub nose, beneath which show clear white teeth. He was long, his legs were light and his movements were light.

The physical characteristics of Night Lightning are consistent with the external appearance known in the stereotypical image of black Africans; but the narrative discourse in the novel contradicts the mental and moral characteristics that are attached to the black man, such as laziness, dullness, lack of understanding, and excessive complacency, to make Night Lightning a popular hero who is characterized by intelligence and courage and contributes a major role in the struggle against the invasion.

There are novels that represented black people and made their discussion an important tributary of the interrogation of novelistic discourse:

- The novel "Dongola" by the Egyptian novelist: Idris Ali.
- The novel "Maymouna" by the Saudi novelist: Mahmoud Traori
- The novel "Rihanna" by the Emirati novelist: Maysoon Saqr.
- The pre-Islamic novel by the Saudi novelist: Al-Jahnami.
- The novel "Black taste ... Black Scent" by the Yemeni novelist: Ali Al-Masry.

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<sup>4</sup> - Al- Tayab Saleh: Migration Season to the North- Cairo- Dar-Al-Ayn. 2004. page: 33.

<sup>5</sup> - Al Bachir Khalif, the lighting of the night, National publishing and distribution compay, Tunisia, 1961, page 27.

- The novel "Coco Sudan Kabashi" by the Egyptian novelist: Salwa Bakr.

By studying and analyzing the novels, the main themes of representations of black people in Arabic novels can be crystallized:

1. Alienation and disconnection from neighbouring communities.
2. Talking extensively about suffering and pain and holding others responsible for it.
3. Constant nostalgia for the ancient past.
4. Seeking to change the negative stereotypical image of the black person present in previous narratives and replacing it with a positive image.

We find in the novel "Dongola"<sup>6</sup> by the writer Idris Ali that he insists on framing the title of his novel in its front cover with an explanatory and emphatic subtitle. Which is the novel (Nubian) by which he draws the recipient's attention to the novel's specificity and distinction from others. The writer shows the gap between the people of "Nuba" and the people of "Egypt" in the North. Saying: "To Dr. Siri Al-Azab and my friends and the loved ones, the people of the North, these are all my papers, so do not tear it, and this is my voice, so do not silence it, and this is me, so do not stone me, because I lived among you, ate with you, and loved your civilization, and I still do, I am conveying to you. with hurtful honesty, some of my pain and the pain of my people".

In the novel "Black Taste ... Black Smell"<sup>7</sup> the recipient feels the writer's keenness to eliminate disconnection and alienation and highlight discrimination and privacy by forming the title and repeating the signifier (the) twice and designing the cover by placing a photograph of a black woman carrying a red novel on her head, and turning her back to the reader and to the entire world as a tangible representation of the desire for separation and disconnection from society.

The cover of (Maimouna)<sup>8</sup> was designed and decorated with a painting by the writer and artist "Hana Hijazi". It depicts an African feminine face that is consistent with the title of the novel. It depicts stories of revolutions of minorities and oppressed people throughout history. The cover design of the novel "Rihanna" also came to emphasize the slavery around which the novel's discourse revolves. The events of the slavery in the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf by displaying clips from the journey of (the slave Rihanna and her family) in the house of thief. The room of Rihanna and the other female slaves was not much different from the rest of the rooms, lined up in the corridor, and when she

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<sup>6</sup> - look: Idris Ali, Dongola- Cairo- general book authority, 1993.

<sup>7</sup> - look: Ali- Al- Maghribi, Black taste ... Black smell, Beirut, page 01.

<sup>8</sup> - Mohammed thawry, Maimouna, the thief publications of the house of culture and information.

sleep, she heard the sounds of the clanging of chains on the feet of the prisoners, as they moved from the prison room to the bathroom next to the large door in the front.

The recipient is surprised on the front cover of the novel "Islamic- pre- Islamic time"<sup>9</sup> with a picture of an example that resembles the idols of pre-Islamic times in Islam. After reading the text of the novel, the recipient realizes how appropriate the cover design is to the events of the novel and its main topic, which revolves around racist practices in contemporary societies due to the color black and the female gender, which brings to mind some customs and traditions.

The title (CoCo Sudan Kabashi) draws attention with its wording that violates the meanings of the Arabic alphabet and is in harmony with the plastic painting drawn on the front cover, depicting a black man and a black woman representing the stage of slavery and enslavement that the African peoples went through. The events of the novel are shaped on two levels:

1. A Contemporary narrative level that tells the facts of life. An Egyptian lawyer interested in human rights issues in Contemporary Egypt.
2. Historical narrative level that tells the facts of the ordeals and violations that occurred with members of the Sudanese band who were bought from the jungles of Africa and then Sent by the Egyptian government in 1863 to help the French Emperor Napoleon III. it is an absurd war that these people have nothing to do with. Neither Egypt war Africa has it at all.

The narration in the novel (Rihanna) uses documentary passages extracted from historical books that tell the history of slavery in the Gulf states and the Arabian Peninsula. It says: "Alyona, Rihanna's sister and the youngest daughter of Mubarakah, a Negro woman who was Kidnapped since childhood from Africa. She brought her to Oman on fishing boats. She remained at sea for several months and then was sold here. By its owner who bought her in Amman.

She stayed with them, serving, cooking, and learning Arabic, but it broke sometimes, when she heard the drums of the big bands, her whole body would twitch as if someone had been touched by a Finn, and she would fall to the ground unconscious, her mouth foaming and foaming, and she would struggle with Negro words that they did not understand. In those days, buying slaves cost nothing, and the focus of the narrative discourse is in the novel "black taste ... black to smell" to clarify the contemporary tragic reality in the aris of the Akhdam community (blacks) in Yemen, where they occupy the lowest rang of the social ladder<sup>10</sup>.

The Knowledgeable narrator begins to monitor the details of the miserable, inhuman life that the servants live he says in the words of "Surror", one of the servants:

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<sup>9</sup> - Leila Al Juhanamy, Ignorance, Beirut, house of Art, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> - Salwa Biker, "CoCo Sudan Kabashi", Cairo, General book authority, Family library 2008.

“we sleep with our dirt without a bathroom. We defecate and urinate in the same places where we eat and where the children play. Our clothes do not change until they wear out from the dirt or break and fall off”. from our bodies, and if we do not find a substitute for them, we remain naked, nothing can cover us, even if we walk naked in the city, no one cares about us and covers us, they say that this is a naturel thing for us. How can we not die while drinking polluted water and eating garbage? will there ever come a day when we have homes? and electricity and water pipes reach our homes like the rest of the people?

He sighed, then squeezed his right fingers together tightly, as if he insisted on doing something. If you want an answer from me. I believe that day will never come. I no longer have hope, I lived as if I were dead. I am ready to accept death, whether it comes with “illness a stab, or a bullet ...) Black taste ... Black smell”. Thus, contemporary novelists of African descent or writers who sympathize with the issues of minorities and marginalized people have sought to question the negative and metaphorical vocabulary for representing blacks in order to reach a correct and true representation of the image of the back man and to attempt to modify the stereotypical image that has been fired in people's minds.

### **Conclusion:**

This research sought to clarify the representations of Blacks in the contemporary Arab novel and present the three-fold and formative ares that crystallize the components of the narrative representational image of Blacks, which are:

1. Aversion and disconnection with surrounding societies that are different from the cultural identity of Blacks.
2. Extensive presentation of images of the oppression that blacks have been subjected to throughout history.
3. Nostalgia for the ancient must past.
4. The attempt to change the negative stereotypical image established by cultural narratives opposed to blacks and replace it with a positive image.

The narrative discourse succeeded in shaking the stable classical axioms and presented diverse narrative representations that embodied the distinctiveness of Black groups, the specificity of their cultural identity, and their lack of tendency towards violent clashes with other cultures unless they were subjected to violation and humiliation. It highlighted the injustice that befell them in different eras and sought to amend the distortions of previous representations of blacks, by rejecting it or interpreting it, which clarifies its true aspects. He presented a positive picture that reveals the nobility of their past, the goodness of her race, their harmony with themselves and their response to the natural influences around them.