Classically Modern:
ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's Theory of Metaphor in the Interpretation of Contemporary Arabic Fiction

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
(African Languages and Literature)

at the
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
2013

Date of final oral examination: 10/24/2013

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Abstract:

The following study of comparative imagery will define and evaluate the rubric devised by the eleventh century Arabic grammarian ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī and apply his principles for the identification, classification, and interpretation of simile and metaphor in three examples of contemporary Arabic literature. It is of primary interest to the current study to analyze the images under examination in both their immediate context, intrinsically related to their function within the novels themselves, and to consider their relevance within specific literary contexts reflecting the various cultural imperatives related to their meaning. Three "branches" of figurative language (*majāz*), *tashbīh*, *tamthīl* and *istiᶜārah*, will be precisely defined with reference to the standard established by al-Jurjānī and applied to readings of the following twentieth century Arabic novels: Ḥalīm Barakāt's *ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr* (*Return of the Flying Dutchman to the Sea*), Hudá Barakāt's *Ḥārith al-Miyāh* (*The Tiller of Waters*), and Nawāl al-Saᶜdāwī's *Jannāt wa Iblīs* (*Jannāt and the Devil*). It will be argued that this approach to the study of figurative language is the most suitable and appropriate method of analyzing literature in Arabic.

Acknowledgements:

In my career as a graduate student in the Department of African Languages and Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dr. Dustin Cowell provided me with a constant source of support and direction without which this project would not exist. Over the years of my study with Dr. Cowell he offered me the guidance of an advisor, instructor, mentor and friend. Although I enjoyed the benefit of several language instructors in my pursuit of proficiency in Arabic, within and beyond our department, there is no question that any ability to read, write, speak and teach the Arabic language is the result of his consistent effort and his disciplined, dedicated commitment to his profession.

I similarly owe a debt of gratitude to the professors whose participation on my dissertation committee got me through the final stages of this process. In particular, Dr. Harold Scheub provided me with invaluable assistance well into the eleventh hour of my push towards the defense. Professor Ahmad Muezzin also provided extensive assistance reviewing the translations.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the love, patience and unending support of my family. To my wife and children, who followed me around the world and back in the pursuit of my goals, my success academically and professionally has been a testament to your willingness to sacrifice and to provide me with your unconditional love. Finally my parents, whose constant encouragement and support provided me with the self confidence and drive necessary to pursue and accomplish the greatest of my educational ambitions.

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Notes on Transliteration

The transliteration system in use throughout this document is based upon the United States Library of Congress standard. The following is a list of Arabic terms and their English equivalents commonly referenced within the text in their transliterated form:

majāz (مجاز)	figurative expression
tashbīh (تشبيه)	simile
tamthīl (تمثيل)	complex simile
istiᶜārah (إستعارة)	metaphor
takhyīl (تخييل)	imaginary/fantastic
ighrāq (إغراق)	hyperbole/exaggeration
tafṣīl (تفصيل)	particularization
naẓm (نظم)	composition or discourse arrangement
maᶜānī ᶜaqliyya (معني عقلية)	intellectual (analytical) meaning
al-mushabbah (المشبّه)	the referent in a comparison
al-mushabbah bihi (المشبّه به)	the borrowed term in a comparison

Notes on the Translations:

All translations of the Arabic texts included in the following study are original. Any correlation between previously available translations occurs as a result of coincidence as a natural consequence of the fact that any two translations of the same text into the same language will be similar. In the case of al-Jurjānī's *Asrār al-Balāghah*, there is no currently available translation of the entire text in English at this time. Contemporary critics analyzing this text have translated excerpts in their own studies. The current study includes some of these same excerpts as well as excerpts not previously translated to my knowledge. In a few cases, notable discrepancies between the translations included here and previously available translations are apparent. When necessary, an effort to identify and contextualize such discrepancies has been made.

Published translations of all three of the novels making up the subject of chapters two through four have previously appeared in English. However, in many cases those translations often omit certain references the translator may have deemed too difficult for an English speaking audience to understand because of cultural or linguistic nuances. In the following study an attempt is made to avoid such omissions so as to demonstrate the nuanced nature of comparative imagery as accurately as possible in English.

Introduction:

In any use of language parallels exist between what is uttered or written in its literal sense and what is actually meant figuratively. As the fundamental process for creating comparative imagery in literature, this parallel is evident in the use of simile and metaphor. From mundane speech to inspired poetry, when the meaning of an image emanates from a similarity drawn between two otherwise unlike objects or concepts, language has the descriptive authority to stretch the limits of human perception. This current study of simile and metaphor is an effort to identify and analyze the use of comparative imagery in contemporary Arabic literature through the theoretical framework devised by the 11th/5th century grammarian ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī in his foundational work on poetic imagery, *Asrār al-Balāghah* (*The Mysteries of Eloquence*). Al-Jurjānī was not a literary critic in the modern sense; he is more appropriately described as a theologian, philosopher, and a master of Arabic grammar. However, in *Asrār al-Balāghah* al-Jurjānī provides a framework for the identification, classification, and analysis of simile and metaphor which remains the foundational standard for the examination of comparative imagery in modern Arabic literary criticism. The continued relevance of al-Jurjānī's theoretical framework justifies the assertion that his manner of reading poetic imagery is a suitable methodological approach to the analysis of imagery drawn from examples of twentieth century Arabic literature.

Beyond simply defining the meaning of terms relevant to the literary analysis of comparative imagery, al-Jurjānī codifies the meaning of several specific principles as they apply to the tools for examining comparative imagery. He does this by demonstrating how those principles apply to his interpretation of specific images drawn from the body of Arabic literature known to his contemporaries. This current application of al-Jurjānī's methodology is an effort to

provide the same approach to readings of comparative imagery in three representative examples of twentieth century Arabic literature. It is postulated that the keys of analysis al-Jurjānī provides afford the modern reader of Arabic literature perspectives enhancing the appreciation of comparative imagery. As a result of this underlying premise, in the examination of specific images it is necessary to consider words, phrases, and sentences in isolation and in aggregate as they apply to the composition of comparative imagery. Consideration of the meaning of a given image requires a deliberative process of interpretation, the translation of cross-cultural referents, and an effort to identify both the intrinsic relevance of the author's literary utterance and the extrinsic social, political, and theological context in which it appears.

Belying the charge that such an exercise is merely anachronistic, the significance and continued relevance of al-Jurjānī's theory of poetic imagery in the Arabic literary tradition is without question. By comparison, while Aristotle's commentary is still relevant historically in the development of Western critical analysis of simile and metaphor, his framework has been definitively shown to be too simplistic compared to the vastly more complex contemporary tradition.[1] In the Arabic literary tradition, al-Jurjānī's contribution represents what is still considered a pinnacle moment in the establishment of a framework for the analysis of comparative imagery. See, for example, W. Heinrichs who writes in his essay, "Literary Theory: The problem of Its Efficiency," that al-Jurjānī represents "undoubtedly the high watermark of Arabic literary theory" (Heinrichs, 21). In the field of literary criticism in Arabic, *Asrār al-Balāghah* endures as the standard for any approach to evaluating the linguistic phenomena related to the creation and interpretation of comparative imagery. In his text, *An Introduction to*

[1] See Marsh McCall's *Ancient Rhetorical Theories of Simile and Comparison* (Cambridge, 1969), C. Brooke-Rose's *A Grammar of Metaphor* (London, 1965), and Stephen J.M. Brown's *The World of Imagery: Metaphor and Kindred Imagery* (New York, 1966). For an outline of the specific differences between Aristotle and al-Jurjānī see also Kamal Abu Deeb's "Al-Jurjānī's Relation to His Background with Special Reference to Aristotle's Works" in his book entitled *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery* (Warminster, 1979).

Arabic Poetics, the renowned contemporary Syrian poet Adūnīs describes al-Jurjānī's criticism as having been distinct in its own era because it "refutes almost completely the poetic criteria of pre-Islamic orality and establishes other criteria for a poetics of writing, taking inspiration from the horizons opened up for the written word by the text of the Qur'ān" (*Poetics*, 49). Al-Jurjānī's work emerges during the fifth century of Islam. The centuries that preceded him witnessed dramatic changes in the Arabic language, including the refinement of the orthography inspired by the necessity to codify the message of the Qur'ān. In his own era, al-Jurjānī's writing represents a notable change in the history of Arabic literary theory because of his advocacy for the relevance of the written word in opposition to a tradition with deep pre-Islamic roots celebrating oral aspects of literary performance.

Contrasting with his predecessors, al-Jurjānī's approach to analyzing poetic imagery considers the beauties of oratory and auditory pleasure emanating from an image to be less significant than elements of composition and the intellectual pleasure which that image may evoke. Within the previous paradigm, a critic may celebrate a poet's competence with reference to spoken elements of performance. For al-Jurjānī, competence is associated with compositional elements of performance. Adūnīs points out that in al-Jurjānī's day "the clarity of the pre-Islamic oral tradition was no longer a standard of beauty capable of arousing passion. On the contrary, al-Jurjānī and others came to see it as the antithesis of what was poetical. True poetic beauty was to be found in ambiguous, difficult texts which permitted a variety of interpretations and offered a multiplicity of meanings" (*Poetics*, 52). Thus, poetic beauty as it pertains specifically to the creation of comparative imagery is determined by what is ambiguous, difficult to understand, and open to a variety of interpretations. Analysis of such imagery requires a deeper consideration of several factors related to composition.

The purpose of simile and metaphor speaks to the human capacity to seek truth in the seemingly incomprehensible. There are many possible meanings and paths to the evaluation of figurative language as Adūnīs has eloquently stated:

> Metaphor does not allow a final and definitive answer, because it is in itself a battleground of semantic contradictions. It remains a begetter of questions, an agent of disruption, in contrast to the type of knowledge which aspires to certainty. All this indicates that metaphor is linked to a vision of the truth. It is not only an attitude to the truth, but also a way of thinking about it, exploring it and expressing it (*Poetics*, 71).

Metaphor provides the space for a "vision of the truth," opening new avenues for exploring reality. As will be evident in Chapter One of the current study, this reference to the "truth" is a fundamental aspect of al-Jurjānī's analysis of simile and metaphor. Adūnīs goes on to suggest that the Arabic language, "in its metaphoric or poetic structure, is a language which arouses a desire to search, to know the unknown and to attain perfection. It is too vast to be confined within the limits of the given and the actual: there is a dimension of infinity to its powers of expression, which corresponds to the non-finite aspects of knowledge" (*Poetics*, 72). Although the question of truth is of paramount concern in al-Jurjānī's analysis, the inquisitive intellect is rewarded in this search to know the unknown; and in its power of creative expression, language is infinite.

In *al-Thābit wa al-Mutaḥawwil* (*The Permanent and the Changing*), Adūnīs considers how al-Jurjānī's discourse defined a new emphasis on the qualities of written composition in literary analysis. This approach contrasts with traditional efforts in literary analysis focused on evaluating the quality of rhyme and meter. As Adūnīs points out, al-Jurjānī was among critics

who attempted to provide an answer to questions regarding the poetic value of texts lacking meter and rhyme:

لم يعد، كل كلام موزون مقفى شعراً، بالضرورة. بتعبير آخر، لم يعد الوزن والتقفية معياراً نوعيّاً للشعر [...] وهذا يتضمن التوكيد على أن هناك نصوصاً موزونة مقفاة وليست، مع ذلك، شعراً. أسس هذا الجواب الشعراء أنفسهم، وتبعهم في ذلك بعض النقاد. عبد القاهر الجرجاني، بينهم هو أول من حاول أن يصوغه، نظريّاً. يرى الجرجاني أن شعرية النص لا تجيء من الوزن والقافية، بالضرورة، وإنما تجيء مما سمّاه طريقة النظم، ويعني النسق الذي تأخذه الكلمات. وهذا ما نسميه اليوم طريقة الأداء أو التعبير، أو بنية الكلام.

> All metered and rhymed discourse is no longer considered to be poetry by necessity. In other words, meter and rhyme are no longer specific criteria for poetry. […] And this includes the assertion that there are metrical and rhymed texts and those that are not, and yet, they are poetry. The poets themselves established this answer, and some of the critics followed. Among them, ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī was the first to try to express it theoretically. Al-Jurjānī sees the poetics of the text not coming from meter and rhyme by necessity. On the contrary, poetics come from what he calls the method of composition [*ṭarīqat al-naẓm*], and by this he means the order taken by the words. And today we call this the method of performance or phrasing, or the structure of discourse (*al-Thābit*, 244-245).

Analyzing aspects of composition is a key component of al-Jurjānī's evaluation of simile and metaphor. His use of the term *naẓm* will be scrutinized in the following study with reference to how several contemporary critics interpret his use of this term in addition to how it may be applied to the question of compositional "unity" or "unities" in the evaluation of the novels considered in Chapter Two through Chapter Four.

Regarding how al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm* operates in readings of poetic imagery, Doris Berhens-Abouseif points to the connection between meaning and linguistic structure in her text, *Beauty in Arabic Culture*. She writes that al-Jurjānī's

> great innovation was to formulate the inseparability of meaning, imagery, and the syntactic structure as components of poetry. He viewed imagery as a form of thought integrally related to linguistic structure, and he equated the structure of the image with the essence of the meaning. He expected the intelligent poet (as opposed to the incompetent poet) to be capable of reasoning and imaginative thinking (Behrens-Abouseif, 100).

The choice and order of words, the phrasing of sentences, the "unity" of an expression's meaning within a text all contribute to the poetic quality of comparative imagery. Berhens-Abouseif goes on to say that al-Jurjānī "attributed the power of poetic imagery to its ability to penetrate hidden meanings and thus reveal invisible things. […] Veiled poetic speech invites the recipient to search for the hidden pearl; it is this quest rather than direct rational speech that stimulates pleasure" (Behrens-Abouseif, 104). In this citation, Behrens-Abouseif evokes one of al-Jurjānī's own repeatedly referenced images with her reference to the "hidden pearl." As will be shown in Chapter One, al-Jurjānī suggests that when recipients of poetic images comprehend a difficult meaning they are like the pearl diver with treasure in hand; the search is difficult, but the reward is great.

While applying al-Jurjānī's theory of poetic imagery to readings of contemporary Arabic novels, it is of primary interest to analyze the images in their immediate context, intrinsically related to their function within the novels themselves, and also to explain their extrinsic

relevance within specific literary and cultural contexts. In his analysis of al-Jurjānī's definition of three particular branches of figurative language, simile (*tashbīh*), "complex" simile (*tamthīl*), and metaphor (*istiʿārah*),[2] Kamal Abu Deeb provides contemporary scholars with a framework to actively utilize al-Jurjānī's theory in evaluations of the relevance and meaning of figurative language in Arabic literature. As it pertains to the methodological imperative for the current study, in his book *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery* Abu Deeb explains that each of these three forms of comparison "has been related directly to the associations which are recognized between two objects in a certain cultural, social and literary environment. As such, each individual simile or metaphor must be studied as an independent case in relation to the objects compared and the context in which the comparison is used" (Abu Deeb, 175). Whether in a passage of poetry or prose, Abu Deeb calls upon critics to actively employ al-Jurjānī's theory of poetic imagery regardless of the literary form in which an image appears. For al-Jurjānī, examples of simile and metaphor must be analyzed on the basis of particular linguistic, compositional, and cultural referents related to context. According to Abu Deeb, this is because

> there is no inherent relationship between metaphor or simile and any particular form of literary creation. As al-Jurjānī's study implies, each metaphor or simile must be analyzed in its immediate context and the context of the cultural environment as a whole before one could determine whether or not it is suitable to the literary expression, be it a piece of poetry or a passage of prose (Abu Deeb, 176-177).

In the effort to analyze examples of simile and metaphor in contemporary Arabic literature, the current study will seek to provide a definition of each of these three "branches" of *majāz* (figurative language) and to further apply these definitions in the identification, classification,

[2] These and other transliterated Arabic terms listed on page iv will be preferred in the chapters that follow.

and examination of specific images in three contemporary Arabic novels: *ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr* (*Return of the Flying Dutchman to the Sea*), by Ḥalīm Barakāt, *Ḥārith al-Miyāh* (*The Tiller of Waters*), by Hudá Barakāt, and *Jannāt wa Iblīs*, (*Jannāt and the Devil*), by Nawāl al-Saᶜdāwī.

Notes on the Reading:

The opening chapter of this study will establish a basic premise for the study of *majāz* in contemporary Arabic novels. Al-Jurjānī's concepts provide the theoretical framework in which the novels in question, and the use of figurative language within them, will be scrutinized. In addition to the identification and classification of images according to al-Jurjānī's criterion for creating simile and metaphor in Arabic, a number of images will be analyzed within the framework of his concept of particularization (*tafṣīl*) and composition (*naẓm*).

The series of events following what is widely known in the Arab world as the "disaster" (*al-nakbah*) culminating in the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, the subsequent displacement of Palestinian peoples, and the consequences of persistent civil strife and war in the Arab world in the aftermath, have left a lasting imprint on Arabic literature. Not surprisingly, the literature produced since 1948 is rife with images of calamity involving war, profound loss of life, social and political upheaval.

In *The Arabic Novel: An Historical and Critical Introduction*, Roger Allen defines Arabic literature in the second half of the twentieth century as an unique historical category within the expansive tradition of Arabic literature distinguished by the Arab literary response to the circumstances surrounding various events occurring in 1948 and 1967. Concerning the June War of 1967 in particular, Allen writes that the aftermath of this conflict

> has stimulated a great deal of thought and discussion about the very basis of Arab society and its values, leading many intellectuals to a profound reevaluation of their cultural heritage. With these factors in mind, it should come as no surprise that many of these novelists share with their colleagues within other literary traditions an intense preoccupation with the concerns of intellectuals in society and particularly with their sense of alienation in the face of the individual and collective tensions of life in the modern world. Such considerations have often led novelists writing in Arabic to an investigation of the values found in other cultures through a reading of their fictional and intellectual heritages. This, coupled with readings in the literary genres of the great classical tradition of Arabic narrative, produces a contemporary Arabic fictional tradition that involves the reader in a rich and often complex process of interpreting transtextual and intertextual references (Allen, 139).

The three novels examined in the following chapters are all examples of what Allen suggests constitute a "profound reevaluation" of Arab cultural heritage. They are all preoccupied with the concerns of intellectuals confronting the tension of modern life; and in the context of the current study of simile and metaphor, readings of each novel necessitate reflections on "transtextual" and "intertextual" information influenced by the classical tradition of evaluating Arabic narrative and the work of al-Jurjānī in particular.

The subject of Chapter Two, Ḥalīm Barakāt's novel *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr*, is set during the June War of 1967. The novel's realism is adorned with examples of simile and metaphor that aid the reader to visualize the profound anxieties of its characters as they confront the horrors of war. The novel's primary motif is built upon a comparison between the Palestinian people and the sailors of Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*. In view of the lack of direction

in the effort to assert Arab sovereignty in Palestine, Barakāt compares the cadre of Arab leaders directing the initiative to create a Palestinian state to those commanding a ship with no rudder. Through the use of comparative imagery Barakāt creates several images that challenge pervasive Euro-American perceptions of the Middle East, including a reversal of the traditional narrative of the Western man's infatuation with the exotic female of the orient.

In his sociological study of contemporary Arabic culture, *The Arab World*, Barakāt identifies the imperative behind his own career as a novelist suggesting that "poems, stories, novels, plays, paintings, graphics and songs constitute historical sources of knowledge about society as well as aesthetic objects to be appreciated in their own right" (*The Arab World*, 210). In *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr* Barakāt endeavors to record a vision of historical reality relevant to the direct experience of Palestinians who lived through the events of the June War, and the imagery he creates in the process is vividly stimulating and emotionally provocative.

Chapter Three will focus on Hudá Barakāt's novel *Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, and her use of simile and metaphor in the creation of her protagonist's surreal experience of life after death. As he wanders through the streets and alleyways of war torn Beirut, this protagonist hovers between the potential for reward or punishment in the hereafter utterly alone and unaware of his own demise. Figurative comparisons range from conventional references such as the correlation between weaving fabric and narrating history, to the provocative, as in the notion that a woman's knowledge of fabric mirrors the development of her sexual maturity. In the comparison between the city of Beirut and the Garden of Eden, the imagery of disaster, infused with religious symbolism, inevitably leads to a form of commentary or speculation on the relevance of belief in the hereafter. The images arising in support of this motif emphasize the notion that both paradise and the fire are evident on earth in the context of human tragedy.

Finally, as the subject of Chapter Four, Nawāl al-Saᶜdāwī's *Jannāt wa Iblīs* locates a confrontation between good and evil and between God and the Devil in an asylum for the mentally ill. Al-Saᶜdāwī invites a profound reevaluation of Arab society by challenging individual and collective identities traditionally defined by patriarchy. In the novel men are like gods, the Devil is an innocent pawn in an ancient patriarchal order, and women must bear the burden of "sin." Al-Saᶜdāwī also creates imagery pondering the notion that Eve in her desire to "eat" from the tree of knowledge, and the devil in his refusal to bow before Adam, are both victims of the patriarchal hierarchy represented by traditional religious, social and political institutions in Egypt.

Purpose of this Research:

Contemporary literary and cultural critics analyzing the writings of al-Jurjānī typically outline his views on a particular topic often evaluating its relevance to theoretical approaches to subjects as diverse as grammar and theology. The current study seeks to build upon recent efforts to reassert the relevance of al-Jurjānī's theories in contemporary Arabic literary criticism, and it is an effort to apply his method of reading examples of simile and metaphor to examples of Arabic literature produced in the second half of the twentieth century. In fact, this is similar to what al-Jurjānī does in *Asrār al-Balāghah* in as much as he introduces examples drawn from poetry and prose esteemed by his contemporaries as historically significant in illustration of the principles he espouses. The difference between this project and other recent readings of al-Jurjānī's theory of poetic imagery is that this current research seeks to take the next step by going beyond an evaluation and analysis of al-Jurjānī's ideas as they relate to the examples he

chose to examples drawn from modern literature. Whereas Chapter One establishes a model for identifying, classifying, and interpreting comparative images, the remaining chapters will explicitly apply this framework in order to demonstrate its validity and continued relevance in the evaluation of simile and metaphor in contemporary Arabic literature.

Chapter One

Reading the Poetic Image:

ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's *Asrār al-Balāghah*

أسرار البلاغة

The Mysteries of Eloquence

ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī codifies the meaning of three terms central to the process of creating comparative poetic imagery: *tashbīh*, *tamthīl*, and *istiᶜārah* as they apply to Arabic literary theory. Collectively these expressions constitute a comparison or comparisons between unlike objects or concepts that share similar attributes. In al-Jurjānī's framework, the terms *tashbīh* and *tamthīl* both refer to simile; however *tamthīl* is a distinct and more complex form of *tashbīh* and *istiᶜārah* refers to metaphor. The translation of these Arabic and English terms, however, is not entirely analogous in every circumstance. The following analysis will demonstrate, al-Jurjānī uses the term *tashbīh* to denote the general process for comparing unlike objects or concepts as well as for referring to specific instances of comparative imagery similar to those categorized in English by term, "simile." Al-Jurjānī uses the term *tamthīl* to describe expressions which require an in depth analysis to determine meaning as compared to instances of *tashbīh*. As a result the term *tamthīl* is, therefore, more closely related to the English use of the term "extended metaphor." Finally, al-Jurjānī uses the term *istiᶜārah* to describe images where the expression includes an explicit reference to only one of the two (or more) units of comparison. Thus, the term "metaphor" is more broadly defined in English than in Arabic because instances of *tamthīl* and *istiᶜārah* are both categorized as metaphors in the West. In the following study, each form will be defined and evaluated in reference to al-Jurjānī's examination

of specific poetic images in order to provide a model for the subsequent analysis of three contemporary Arabic novels. Furthermore, the term *tafṣīl* refers to the process for evaluating the particular details of a comparison in the effort to interpret and determine meaning, and the term *naẓm* refers to the potential for compositional unity. These terms will be introduced in order to construct a comprehensive rubric for the analysis of comparative imagery in the Arabic language.

1a: Tashbīh

The construct of *tashbīh* serves as the foundation for the theoretical discourse concerned with analyzing comparative imagery. In addition to referring to the active process of drawing general comparisons, the term *tashbīh* also defines a simile as based primarily upon perceptible physical or sensual points of similarity. Complexity can be introduced in *tashbīh* when a sensually perceptible object is compared to an intellectual concept, or when two or more intellectual concepts are compared. However, the successful *tashbīh* in any case should still be reasonably plausible, explicitly stated in the expression, and accessible to the intellect without a deeper reflection on context. The term itself is a verbal noun of the verb *shabbaha* (شبّه) "to make equal or similar, or to compare."[3]

In *Asrār al-Balāghah*, al-Jurjānī, suggests that compared images will appeal to an audience if the shared attributes satisfy a specifically defined criterion. For example, as a fundamental principle in the composition of poetic imagery, *tashbīh* is a general term of which both *tamthīl* and *istiᶜārah* are specific instances. As such, the quality or value of language in

[3] Wehr, Hans, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, 4th Edition*. (Ithaca: Spoken Language Services, Inc.) 530.

instances of *tashbīh* expressions can be examined in a given linguistic moment with respect to value judgments based on questions ranging from the remoteness, or disparity, apparent between the borrowed images to the intensity of the comparison.

Al-Jurjānī suggests that in instances of *tashbīh* the intended comparison must be plausible and clearly stated. Such an expression may be considered to be successful if "the intention of the comparison in this method was explicitly apparent, existing by virtue of the expression, and proper in terms of its theme, so that if the expression was not related back to something its meaning was preposterous" (*Asrār*, 231).[4] An instance of *tashbīh* should be comprehensible without reference to a broader context beyond the explicit expression because the intended meaning is apparent in the expression and the comparison is relatively clear. More than a simple reference to an individual simile, al-Jurjānī uses the term *tashbīh* to describe the central process for producing similarity between a set of images through a discovery of opposition. In this process, when the recipient encounters an instance of *tashbīh*, the expression "does not stir or excite [the reader] unless the similarity is established between two different things in terms of species […] And in this way, if you examine instances of *tashbīh* you find that the greater the distance between the two things was, the more pleasing and delightful to the soul they were" (*Asrār*, 99).[5] For al-Jurjānī, the pleasure in encountering a new image through the comparative process of creating *tashbīh* is initially manifest in the recognition of harmony between widely dissimilar images. Thus, the wider the divide between images, the more dynamic and agreeable the imagery becomes.

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[4] كان قصدُ التشبيه من هذا النحو بيِّناً لائحاً، وكائناً من مقتضى الكلام، وواجباً من حيث موضوعه، حتى إن لم يُحمَلْ عليه كان مُحالاً.

[5] لا تهُزُّ ولا تُحرِّك حتى يكون الشبه مُقَرَّراً بين شيئين مختلفين في الجنس [...] وهكذا إذا استقريت التشبيهات، وجدتَ التباعدُ بين الشيئين كلما كان أشدَّ، كانت إلى النفوس أعجب، وكانت النفوسُ لها أطرب

Al-Jurjānī elaborates repeatedly on the "poetic thrill" of *tashbīh*. He explains that this excitement emanates from the fact that instinctual human nature is such that "if something appears from an unfamiliar place, and it emerges from a place which is not its place of origin, the soul's desire and fondness for it is greater and [it is] more worthy" (*Asrār*, 100).[6] Both the writer and audience experience this "thrill" innately when encountering new and creative images drawn from similarities they had not previously recognized. Acknowledgment of this "pleasure" principle should not lead to the conclusion that al-Jurjānī believes that the central purpose of comparative imagery is to provide frivolous ornament or decoration to otherwise ordinary or mundane language. Instead, the pleasure derived from an encounter with a well crafted comparative image enhances its quality and contributes to the overall cognitive impact of that image as it applies to various aspects of composition. A distinct correlation exists between al-Jurjānī's appreciation for the relevance of the poetic thrill associated with comparative imagery and traditional Western anxieties about ornamental language being problematic in the use of metaphor in philosophical discourse. Contributing to a long running debate, in his book entitled *Models and Metaphors*, Max Black concludes that a prohibition on the use of metaphor in philosophy based on the charge that a metaphor should more appropriately be rendered in explicitly literal language "would be a willful and harmful restriction upon our powers of inquiry" (Black, 47). In this case, both al-Jurjānī and Black appreciate the unique capacity of figurative language to stimulate thought and to inform philosophical discourse.

The discovery of a similarity in dissimilar images is only an initial stage of analyzing instances of *tashbīh* because not all attempts to relate dissimilar objects are appropriate or valid. Al-Jurjānī considers this added dimension of the process of evaluating examples of *tashbīh* by

[6] إذا ظهر من مكان لم يُعْهَد ظهوره منه، وخرج من موضعٍ ليس بمعِدنٍ له، كانت صَبَابةُ النفوس به أكثر، و كان بالشَّغَف منها أجدر.

pointing out that a similarity between entities drawn from different species must actually exist. These entities in an expression must constitute a plausible comparison accessible to the intellect:

> ولم أُرد بقولي إنّ الحذق في إيجاد الائتلاف بين المختلفات في الأجناس، أنك تقدر أن تُحدِث هناك مشابهةً ليس لها أصل في العقل [...] ألا ترى أن التشبيه الصريح إذا وقع بين شيئين متباعدين في الجنس، ثم لَطُفَ وحسُن، لم يكن ذلك اللُّطف وذلك الحُسن إلا لاتفاقٍ كان ثابتاً بين المشبَّه والمشبَّه به من الجهة التي بها شَبَّهتَ.
>
> I did not mean by saying that being skillful in the creation of harmony between things different in species that you are able to create a similarity that does not have an origin in the intellect. […] Do you not see that if an explicit comparison (*tashbīh*) occurs between two things dissimilar in species, and it is of fine quality and beautiful, their fine quality and beauty is only by reason of a harmony intrinsic between the referent and the borrowed term [*al-mushabbah wa al-mushabbah bihi*] in the aspect in which you have made the comparison (*Asrār*, 115-116).

The key here is that the perception of similarity is where the power of the image to inspire both the poet and the recipient is manifest. Beyond the simple necessity that disparate entities are juxtaposed in *tashbīh*, the recipient discovers the "fine quality and beauty" of the meaningful poetic image in the recognition of a harmonious synthesis between said entities; their similar attributes are actually perceptible to the senses and comprehensible to the intellect. While the remoteness of difference in the comparison magnifies its efficacy, the successful *tashbīh* relies upon the perceivable and plausible existence of an affinity or affinities between disparate images; thus, the effort employed by the intellect to decipher the similarity apparent in an instance of *tashbīh* contributes to its poetic value.

According to al-Jurjānī, the standard for evaluating examples of comparative images requires a close reflection upon the breadth of dissimilarity between compared objects and also a determination of the harmony the comparison achieves through the explicit juxtaposition of unlike objects. Al-Jurjānī writes:

وذلك بَيِنٌ لك فيما تراه من الصناعات وسائر الأعمال التي تُنسَب إلى الدِّقة، فإنك تجدُ الصورة المعمولة فيها، كلما كانت أجزاؤها أشدّ اختلافاً في الشكل والهيئة، ثم كان التلاؤمُ بينها مع ذلك أتمّ، والائتلافُ أبينَ، كان شأْنها أعجبَ، والحذقُ لمصوّرها أوجبَ.

> This is evident to you as you see it from the arts and all of the crafts which are related to precision, when you find the created image in them. Whenever an image had taken the place of another with a greater difference in form and appearance, the suitability of the comparison between the one image and the other was accomplished, the harmony between them was clear and its quality was pleasing, the proficiency of its creator was acknowledged (*Asrār*, 113).

Once established, the premise that the breadth of distance between the compared objects is especially relevant in the evaluation of instances of *tashbīh*. Al-Jurjānī emphasizes that when one encounters a well crafted expression one encounters a disparity and the intellect is pleased:

ولم يكن إعجابُ هذا التشبيه لك [...] لأن الشيئين مختلفان في الجنس أشدَّ الإختلاف فقط، بل لأنّ حَصلَ بإزاء الإختلاف اتفاقٌ كأحسن ما يكون وأَتمَّه، فبمجموع الأمرين شدّة أئتلافِ في شدّة اختلاف حلا وحسُن، و رَاقَ وفَتَن.

> There was no pleasure for you in this *tashbīh* […] merely because the two images are extremely different in species, but because as it happens with regard to the difference a harmony as lovely as can be has been achieved, and the combination of the two things,

> the strength of harmony in the strength of difference, is pleasant, beautiful, appealing and captivating (*Asrār,* 116).

The strength of harmony in the comparison between two dissimilar objects or concepts is evident in the attributes that constitute the basis for the comparison. An image will be determined to be of superior quality only when it succeeds in the combination of the strength of harmony and the strength of difference.

Al-Jurjānī cites instances of *tashbīh* ranging from simple comparisons between sensually perceptible images, to moderately complex correlations between intellectual concepts. Although instances of *tashbīh* make up the most basic form of comparison in poetic imagery, their relative complexity in a given expression is scrutinized with regard to the level of requisite *ta'awwul* (interpretive effort) necessary to recognize an affinity between images. Put simply, there are straightforward *tashbīh* understood without the need for deep interpretation, and there are others which have meanings acquired by use of a relatively more focused interpretive effort. Regardless of complexity, the meaning of an instance of *tashbīh* must be apparent without reference to external factors beyond the explicit expression.

Among relatively simple instances of *tashbīh*, al-Jurjānī explains that comparisons are drawn between two things with easily perceptible similar attributes: "like comparing the cheeks with the rose" or "like comparing the man's body with the spear and the thin physique with the twig" (*Asrār*, 69-70).[7] None of these examples requires too much thought to discern meaning. None of them require reference to broader contextual information beyond the explicit expression,

[7] كتشبيه الخدود بالورد [...] كتشبيه قامة الرَّجل بالرمح، والقَدِّ اللطيف بالغصن.

and the similarities drawn between them are physical or sensual in nature. The cheek and the rose are red, and the man's body is upright and firm, or thin and fragile.

Among his more complex, and thus more pleasing examples of *tashbīh*, al-Jurjānī refers to comparisons involving both sensual and intellectual attributes. For instance, al-Jurjānī cites the effort to describe a man's fluent use of language in the following expressions: "his words are smooth like water" or "gentle like the breeze" or "sweet like honey" (*Asrār*, 71).[8] In each of these expressions, the *tashbīh* is apparent in the comparison between an intellectual concept, eloquent speech, and sensual images like flowing water, a gentle breeze, and sweet honey. Although a slightly deeper cognitive analysis is necessary to discern meaning in this example, true to the form of a successful *tashbīh* the connection between the images is still relatively easy to understand without reflecting on the particular contextual moment in which the expression appears.

One example al-Jurjānī returns to regularly, to demonstrate how the question of form applies to the difference between *tashbīh* and *isti^{c}ārah* is a comparison between Zayd and the lion. Depending on how the expression explicitly appears, in its context, word choice and word order, it is classified as either an instance of *isti^{c}ārah* or *tashbīh*. For example, in the sentence "I saw a lion" (*ra'aytu asadan*) which constitutes an instance of *isti^{c}ārah*, the context indicates a reference to a man. In contrast, the sentence "Zayd is like the lion" (*Zayd ka-l-asad*) constitutes an instance of *tashbīh* because of the presence of both the referent and the borrowed term. Whether an *isti^{c}ārah* or *tashbīh*, the example is relatively straightforward in al-Jurjānī's analysis, and the comparison is clear because "the characteristic shared between the two [Zayd and the

[8] ألفاظه كالماء في السلاسة، وكالنسيم في الرِّقة، وكالعسل في الحلاوة.

lion] is courage, and in reality it exists [both in lions and] in humans" (*Asrār*, 52).[9] The fundamental difference between these two examples is the presence of the borrowed term, "lion," and the referent, "Zayd," in the *tashbīh* and the absence of the referent in the *istiᶜārah*. In order to form an instance of *istiᶜārah*, only the borrowed term may explicitly appear in the expression. This is a simple distinction but it is operative in several of al-Jurjānī's elucidations on the nature of the potential for the presence of both simple and complex subtleties that differentiate these two comparative forms of expression.

This example evokes another point of similarity between the Arab tradition of reading comparative imagery and its Western counterpart. Max Black humorously laments "the somewhat unfortunate example, 'Richard is a lion,' which modern writers have discussed with boring insistence" (Black, 33). This example, as will be shown below in several subsequent references, perhaps to Black's chagrin, is actually helpful in drawing at least one similarity between these otherwise broadly disparate traditions. Interestingly, contributors to both traditions often draw upon arguably mundane examples in order to demonstrate essential principles of language. This simple but particular image is a representative example of a fundamental difference between these two critical traditions. In the West, and specifically in Black's analysis, the juxtaposition of "Richard and the lion" is considered an example of metaphor while in the Arabic tradition the explicit inclusion of both terms in the "double unit" of meaning in the expression renders the combination an example of simile.

Regardless of the varying levels of complexity apparent in these particular examples, al-Jurjānī considers *tashbīh* to be fundamental to the creation of poetic imagery. In this regard, al-Jurjānī writes that "*tashbīh* is like the root for *istiᶜārah, istiᶜārah* being like a branch of *tashbīh*"

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[9] فالوصف الجامعُ بينهما هو الشجاعة، وهي على حقيقتها موجودة في الإنسان.

(*Asrār*, 30).[10] While it is only the first step towards a comprehensive understanding of al-Jurjānī's methodology for the study of figurative language in Arabic, the essential principles of *tashbīh* serve as the foundation for the creation of comparative imagery evident in instances of *tamthīl* and *istiʿārah*.

1b: Tamthīl

In this second stage of the examination of al-Jurjānī's theoretical approach to the analysis of comparative imagery, *tamthīl* is defined as a more complex form of simile. Less of a general category in and of itself, *tamthīl* is more appropriately classified as a branch of *tashbīh*. The primary difference in these two principle forms of comparison is that in *tamthīl*, understanding the meaning of the image requires a deeper reflection upon specific factors of composition beyond the expression itself. These factors include word choice and order apparent in the expression in addition to the broader literary and cultural contexts in which the image appears. This principle is, in part, related to the pretext that meaning in *tamthīl* is only comprehensible through a focused reflection on the context of "a sentence of discourse, or [perhaps] two or more sentences" (*Asrār*, 81)[11] and is not immediately apparent in the explicit expression alone.

With *tamthīl*, similar to *tashbīh*, the strength of the image in its power to move, excite or provoke the reader exists in discovering similarity between the widely dissimilar. The wider the gap between the compared images, the more powerful the impact upon the intellect and the more appealing the image is in the mind of the recipient. According to al-Jurjānī, the impact and

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10 والتشبيه كالأصل في الاستعارة، وهي شَبِيهٌ بالفرع له.

11 [...] من جملة من الكلام أو جملتين أو أكثر [...]

effect of *tamthīl* on both the poet and the recipient becomes apparent when one encounters an obscure meaning which leads to an understanding of an expression's explicit meaning. Explaining this process al-Jurjānī writes:

> تنقُلها عن العقل إلى الإحساس، وعما يُعلَم بالفكر إلى ما يُعلم بالاضطرار والطبع، لأن العلم المستفادَ من طرق الحواسِّ أو المركوز فيها من جهة الطبع وعلى حدِّ الضرورة، يفضلُ المستفاد من جهة النَّظر والفكر [...] كما قالوا << ليس الخَبرُ كالمُعاينة >>، و<< لا الظنُّ كاليقين >>.

> You transfer [the meaning] from the intellect to sense perception, and from what is known through thought to what is known by innate nature, because acquired knowledge by way of the senses or founded upon them through concentration with respect to innate nature is better than that acquired through contemplation and thought […] as it is said, '[receiving] a report is not like seeing' and 'doubt is not like certainty' (*Asrār*, 93).

The two relatively concise examples of *tamthīl* at the end of this explanation state how observation and examination provide a better path to acquiring knowledge than mere communication, and the certitude of certainty often masks a profound sense of doubt. In the former example, it is necessary to be aware of the context relating to the notion that communication is not like observation as it is applied to an intellectual trajectory toward acquiring knowledge. In this framework, personal experience gained through observation is more valuable than knowledge gained merely through communication, or being told about something is not like experiencing it for oneself. In the latter example, when considered in reference to religious belief specifically, it may be said that conspicuous outward pretense of certainty regarding the veracity of faith is more appropriately identified as evidence of doubt. With respect to the distance between or the remoteness of meaning in this example, nothing

could be farther from certainty than doubt, yet when properly contextualized with reference to religion in particular, the *tamthīl* is more profoundly apropos.

Part of the process of creating meaning through *tamthīl* requires arriving at an image whose validity is substantiated by previous knowledge while at the same time its appearance in the linguistic expression is novel in the mind of the recipient. The *tamthīl* is successful if it has simulated the recipient's desire for discovery. The recipient earns an enhanced sense of accomplishment at having arrived at an understanding of a meaning that took deliberate, focused effort to comprehend. Al-Jurjānī suggests that in *tamthīl*, the compared image is appreciated by the recipient if the entities which constitute a synthesis within the image were

> ونُقِلت عن صُوَرها الأصلية إلى صورته، كساها أُبَّهةً، كَسَبها مَنْقَبةً، ورفع من أقدارها [...] وضاعف قُواها في تحريك النُّفوس لها، ودعا القُلوب إليها، واستثار لها من أقاصي الأفئدة صبابةً وكَلَفاً، وقَسَر الطِّباع على أن تُعطيها محبّة وشَغَفاً.

> transferred from their original images to another image, they were covered in grandeur, acquired excellence, and their value was raised; […] The image's strength increased in awakening the souls, it invited hearts [closer] to it, the remoteness [of the original images] aroused ardent love in the mind, and its natural qualities compelled you to give it love and affection (*Asrār*, 85).

Furthermore, according to this rubric, a *tamthīl* expression is successful when the examination of the image leads the recipient to appreciate its creativity in part because it is more difficult to understand but also because the mind craves an understanding of meaning and feels a sense of reward in its discovery. If this is the case, in the mind of the recipient the *tamthīl* is superior in quality "if [the meaning] is acquired through effort after searching or longing for it, and in

enduring this longing, its acquisition is more pleasant to attain, its excellence more worthy, and its position in the soul nobler and more pleasant" (*Asrār*, 106).[12] Thus, the reward for the rigor required to understand the *tamthīl* expression contributes to the recipient's appreciation of its quality.

According to al-Jurjānī, the subtle and vague nature of comparison in *tamthīl* and the thrill the recipient encounters at the discovery of the similar in widely dissimilar images establishes a necessity to create images which belong to divergent categories or species. He suggests that the thrill that follows an understanding of harmony in the remoteness between compared entities in *tamthīl* is not possible "except with [meaning] that proceeds from the establishment of a comparison between different things, because things that share the same nature are congruent in kind and you are satisfied with the validity of the comparison between them" (*Asrār*, 113).[13] When little effort is involved in determining the intention of the compared image, the recipient feels no sense of accomplishment in having arrived at the meaning. It is only when an artist successfully combines images which are "disharmonious and conflicting" (*mutanāfirāt wa mutabāyināt*) in the creation of a successful *tamthīl* expression that this achievement in craftsmanship has proven the capacity to have "summoned the existence of talent and skill" (*Asrār*, 113).[14]

In order to elucidate the necessity to reference both "units" being compared in *tamthīl*, al-Jurjānī scrutinizes the verse by the pre-Islamic poet al-Nābighah al-Dhubyānī (c. 535-604), who said: "you are like the night, which is aware of me, yet I imagine that I am at a great distance

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[12] إذا نيل بعد الطلب له أو الاشتياق اليه، ومعاناة الحنين نحوه، كان نَيله أحلَى، وبالمزِيّة أولى، فكان موقعه من النفس أجلّ وألطف

[13] إلا بما تقدم من تقرير الشَّبه بين الأشياء المختلفة، فإنّ الأشياء المشتركة في الجنس، المتفقةَ في النوع، تستغني بثبوت الشَّبه بينها

[14] الصّنعة تستدعي وجود القريحة والحِذْق

from you" (*Asrār*, 107).[15] Al-Jurjānī's analysis emphasizes the necessity to recognize the broader context in which this verse appears: the presence of both the borrowed term, "night," in addition to the intended reference, "you" meaning the "king," are required because without both terms explicitly apparent, the expression would be meaningless. With regards to this citation, al-Jurjānī writes that in *tamthīl*

لا سبيل إلى معرفة المقصود من الشبه فيه إلا بعد ذكر الجُمَل التي يعقد بها التمثيل [...] فلو حاولتَ في قوله:

فإنَّك كالليلِ الَّذِي هو مُدْرِكِي

أن تُعامل الليلَ معاملةَ الأسد في قولك << رأيت أسداً >> أعني أن تُسقط ذكر الممدوح من البَيْن [...] ولا صادفت طريقةً تُوَصِّلك إليه.

> there is no way to know what is intended from the comparison except after referring to [several] sentences which are joined in *tamthīl*, […] Regarding his words, 'you are like the night, which overtakes me.' If you tried to treat the night as the lion is treated in saying, 'I saw a lion,' [by that] I mean you omit mentioning the one praised from the expression, […] you will not find a way which would bring you to him [i.e. bring your thoughts to the one praised] (*Asrār*, 177-178).

The differentiation between *tamthīl* and *istiʿārah* in the two examples cited here distinguishes that in *tamthīl* the recipient's ability to comprehend the meaning of the expression relies on contextual information, and the expression itself requires the explicit presence of both the borrowed term and the intended referent. Al-Jurjānī continues by saying if "you omit the characteristic and it is limited to referring to the night only and you say, 'I escaped yet the night overshadowed me,' this is preposterous, because the meaning is not [found] in the night as a key

[15] فإنَّك كاللَّيل الَّذِي هو مُدْرِكي وإنْ خِلْتُ أنّ المُنْتَأى عَنْكَ وَاسِعُ

to the clever expression" (*Asrār*, 178).[16] After al-Jurjānī rewrites the expression it would appear the speaker is merely afraid of the dark. Contextually, however, in the original expression the speaker is fearfully lamenting the notion that despite the distance he travels he will not succeed in eluding the power of the king. Therefore, the intention of the line is to suggest that the speaker cannot escape because of "the sting of [the ruler's] dominion and the power of his hand," for "he has a governor in every distant region and a commander of a faithful army, and on obeying his orders who returns the fugitive to him and hands him over" (*Asrār*, 178).[17] Al-Jurjānī eventually concludes that the operative point of comparison intended in this example is "the authority which [the ruler] possesses, through its spreading to distant regions, and the impossibility for a person to come to a place where the night does not overtake him" (*Asrār*, 180).[18] In essence, he has shown that there is no way to create meaning in an instance of *tamthīl* without relying on the explicit presence of both the borrowed term and the referent in the expression.

As the preceding commentary has established, *tamthīl* is distinguished as a more complex form of comparison than *tashbīh*. In addition, it is distinct from *istiʿārah* because *tamthīl* requires the presence of both terms in the comparison, and the recipient requires contextual information beyond the explicit expression in order to determine its meaning. In the following portion of this chapter, the third approach to the creation of comparative imagery, *istiʿārah*, is shown to be unique but also intrinsically related to the creation of comparative imagery based in *tashbīh* and *tamthīl*.

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16 تحذفَ الصفةَ وتقتصر على ذكر الليل مجرّداً فتقول << إن فررتُ أظلّني اللَّيل >> وهذا محال، لأنه ليس في الليل دليل على النكتة

17 لسعة مُلكه وطول يده، وأنّ له في جميع الآفاق عاملاً وصاحبَ جيش ومُطيعاً لأوامره يردُّ الهارب عليه ويسوقه إليه

18 وإنّما قُصد الحكمُ الذي له، من تعميمه الآفاق، وامتناعِ أن يصير الإنسان إلى مكان لا يُدركه الليلُ فيه.

1c: Isticārah

As the foundation of the comparative act that leads to both *tamthīl* and *isticārah*, al-Jurjānī explains that "as for *isticārah*, it is a type of *tashbīh*, and a form of *tamthīl*, *tashbīh* being analogy, and analogy acting in conformity with that of which hearts are aware, which minds comprehend, and for which the council of perceptive faculties and minds are sought, not the faculties of hearing nor ears" (*Asrār*, 25).[19] Depending on the context of its construction, in *isticārah*, "a single word can be borrowed in two different ways, carried through analogy (*qiyās*) and *tashbīh* by two routes, one leading to that which eyes comprehend, and the other alluding to what supposition visualizes" (*Asrār*, 56).[20] Therefore, beyond identifying the three distinctive methods of creating comparative imagery *tashbīh*, *tamthīl* and *isticārah*, al-Jurjānī outlines two generalized types of *isticārah*: the meaning of the borrowed word is derived, on the one hand, from what is presented to the eyes (*tashbīh*), and on the other, the meaning is understood through contemplation (*tamthīl*).

An *isticārī* (metaphorical) comparison based on *tashbīh* occurs when a one-to-one relationship is drawn between the two images, and the similarity found actually exists in both images and is perceptible. For instance, in his often revisited example of Zayd and the lion in the expression "I saw a lion" (*ra'aytu asadan*), the intended meaning is a man who shares the quality of courage perceptible in both species, yet in the actual expression, only the borrowed term is present. This example of *isticārah* is based in *tashbīh*. While a rudimentary level of contextual

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19 أما الاستعارة فهي ضربٌ من التشبيه، ونَمَطٌ من التمثيل، والتشبيه قياس، والقياس يجري فيما تعيه القلوب، وتُدركه العقول، تُسْتَفتَى فيه الأفهامُ والأذهان، لا الأسماع والآذان.

20 أنّ اللفظة الواحدة تستعار على طريقين مختلفين، ويُذْهَب بها في القياس والتشبيه مذهبين، أحدهما يُفضِي إلى ما تناله العيون، والآخر يُومِئُ إلى ما تُمثِّله الظنون.

information is necessary here to grasp the meaning, the intention of the comparison is still relatively straight forward without a broader reference to the literary or cultural context. To understand this example it is necessary to know that Zayd is a man that exists and whom the poet considers to be courageous, so much so that he should be justifiably compared to a lion. This image recalls an essential principle of the comparative process in *isti^{c}ārah* that the original meaning of both terms is retained in the final expression. Although the word "lion" is borrowed to mean "Zayd" in the expression, it retains its original meaning as an animal of a particular species known for its courage. In the same manner, Zayd, the courageous recipient of praise (*al-mamdūḥ*) in the image, must be remembered in the expression although his name is omitted from it. While this expression constitutes a relatively simple example of al-Jurjānī's principle, it applies to all attempts to achieve meaning in *isti^{c}ārah*.

An *isti^{c}ārī* comparison based on *tamthīl* occurs when the similarity drawn between two images is an attribute only perceptible to the intellect and not rooted in a sensual attribute recognizable in the borrowed term. As with *tamthīl* expressions, in order to determine meaning in this method of *isti^{c}ārah*, the recipient requires a deeper reflection upon word choice and context. Al-Jurjānī cites the following example of *isti^{c}ārah* based in *tamthīl*: When "you say 'the stars of guidance' [and] you mean the companions of the Prophet – may God bless him and keep him and may God be pleased with him – the *isti^{c}ārah* is necessarily based on an intellectual comparison, because the meaning is that humankind after the Prophet – may God bless and him and keep him – was guided by them in religion just like travelers in the night are guided by the stars" (*Asrār*, 57).[21] In this case, for al-Jurjānī the fundamental difference between simile (*tashbīh* and *tamthīl*) and metaphor (*isti^{c}ārah*) is that in *isti^{c}ārah*, only one term signifying the

[21] قولك: << نجوم الهُدَى >>، تعني أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ورضي عنهم، فإنه استعارةٌ توجب شَبَهاً عقليّاً، لأن المعنى أنّ الخلق بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اهتدوا بهم في الدين كما يهتدي السارون بالنجوم.

"double-unit" of meaning within the comparison is explicitly apparent in the expression. This distinction is required and observable in examples of *isti^{c}ārah* based on either *tashbīh* or *tamthīl*. As has been previously shown, the term *tamthīl* is loosely related to David Punter's description of "extended metaphor" in *Metaphor* as he explains, "here a metaphor might extend itself beyond a single point of comparison and run through an entire passage of text, or an entire poem" (Punter, 27). In the Arabic tradition however, as long as both units of comparison are present in the expression, this type of comparison is not a metaphor. Even examples of *isti^{c}ārah* based in *tamthīl* are unique in the Arabic tradition because of the insistence that only one unit of comparison is explicitly stated in the expression.

When discerning the comparison drawn between two images, or sets of images, in the creation of an *isti^{c}ārī* expression, the similarity, or similarities, should still be comprehensible, regardless of the requirement that one term in the expression is absent. As seen in the case of Zayd and the lion, it is essential to the process of creating such an image that the referent, in spite of its absence in the expression, cannot be forgotten in the final image because "you cannot imagine that the meaning can occur in the branch [present] term [*al-far^{c}*] without relating it back to the root [original] term [*al-aṣl*]" (*Asrār*, 283).[22] Thus, with respect to the notion of transference in *isti^{c}ārah*, transferring the name of one thing for another cannot be successful unless the meaning of both terms is retained in the meaning of the explicit *isti^{c}ārah* itself; otherwise the comparison would be meaningless. Discussing the view that in metaphor words are by necessity given new, "extended" meanings, in *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, Donald Davidson implies that in many traditional Western theories of metaphor, "what has been left out is any appeal to the original meaning of the words. Whether or not metaphor depends on

[22] لأنك لا تستطيع أن تتصوَّر جَرْيَ الاسم على الفَرْع من غير أن تُحوِجَه إلى الأصل.

new or extended meanings, it certainly depends in some way on the original meanings; an adequate account of metaphor must allow that the primary or original meanings of words remain active in their metaphorical setting" (Donaldson, 249). By contrast to Donaldson's rhetorically critical tone, in al-Jurjānī's analysis, the fact that both terms in a metaphorical comparison retain their original meanings by necessity is by no means a novel idea up for debate. Transference in this sense occurs in neither *tashbīh* nor *tamthīl*, making it the primary difference between these forms and *istiᶜārah*.

In *Metaphor*, Punter outlines an essential, albeit simplistic, aspect of the difference between simile and metaphor in the Western tradition. He explains that the most straightforward form of metaphoric expression is evident in, "simile, where the comparison, the 'transference' (*metapherein*) between the two entities, is explicitly signaled by the word 'like' (or sometimes 'as')" (Punter, 12). He continues by explaining, "what causes metaphors which are not cast in the linguistic form of the simile to have greater power is precisely the omission of the 'like,' an omission which brings the two compared entities far closer to each other in a way that challenges the reader or hearer to make sense of the assumed or alleged comparison rather than having it spelt out. The point here, however, is that the reader is expected to gain some additional understanding from the analogies presented" (Punter, 12-13). This traditional distinction between simile and metaphor in the Western tradition is rejected in the Arabic tradition as inadequate. In al-Jurjānī's analysis, transference does not occur in simile because both terms are explicitly present in the expression. Furthermore, in the Arabic tradition a simile does not require the explicit presence of the terms "like" or "as" because it is sufficient to simply include both terms of the "double unit" of meaning in the expression to distinguish examples of *tashbīh* and *tamthīl* from *istiᶜārah*. In fact, Punter's suggestion that the challenge to the recipient is

enhanced in metaphor because the analogy is not as explicitly stated as it is in a simile, is also undermined in the Arabic tradition by the requirement that in metaphor only one "unit" of the comparison can be explicitly apparent in the expression. By necessity, in the Arabic tradition, this distinction enhances the challenge and potential cognitive "reward" of interpretation beyond what traditional western models of metaphor demand. Al-Jurjānī concludes that, "if it has been established that an [*isti^{c}ārah*] is not *tashbīh* in its true sense, likewise neither would *tamthīl* occur in a true sense, because *tamthīl* is a special [kind of] *tashbīh*, every *tamthīl* being a *tashbīh*, without every *tashbīh* being a *tamthīl*" (Asrār, 174).[23] The key point of emphasis remains in this distinction. Namely, that an *isti^{c}ārah* based on *tashbīh* is relatively easy to discern in contrast to an *isti^{c}ārah* based on *tamthīl* which requires a deeper reflection and even reference to a broader contextual moment in order to determine meaning.

Additionally, al-Jurjānī believes that regardless of form (*tashbīh*, *tamthīl* or *isti^{c}ārah*), the successful comparative image relies upon the presence of an affinity between the borrowed term and the referent that exists in reality. He considers that the success of the poetic image is only possible "if the resemblance between two things is easily understood and within reach, and there is an immediate indication of [its meaning] as well as evidence of it within tradition, such that it is possible for the recipient – if you thrust the term upon him – to understand the import and to know what you intended" (*Asrār*, 177).[24] In each method of creating comparative imagery, and within the context of *isti^{c}ārah* specifically, if the borrowed term is substituted for the first and only the one term is apparent in the image, then the expression still needs to be comprehensible. This is not to say that such expressions must be easily understood. Rather, the point of emphasis

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[23] إذا ثبت أنها ليست التشبيهَ على الحقيقة، كذلك لا يكون التمثيل على الحقيقة، لأن التمثيلَ تشبيهٌ إلا أنه تشبيهٌ خاصٌّ، فكلُّ تمثيلٍ تشبيهٌ، وليس كلُّ تشبيهٍ تمثيلاً.

[24] إذا كان الشَّبه بين الشيئين مما يقرُب مأخذه ويَسْهُل متناوَلُه، ويكونُ في الحالِ دليلٌ عليه، وفي العُرف شاهدٌ له، حتى يُمكن المخاطَبَ إذا أطلقت له الاسم أن يعرف الغَرَضَ ويعلم ما أردت.

here is that the similarity intended in a compared image is accessible to the intellect, regardless of the relative interpretive effort required to discern it because the similarity exists in reality. Adūnīs explains that such meanings, "are subtle and delicate, obscure and unfamiliar, so that they can only be understood by a form of interpretation which relies on deep contemplation, refection and subtlety of thought" (*Poetics*, 48). While not meant to be easily understood, the ease with which meaning is determined largely will depend on the intellectual capacity, cultural background or knowledge, and interpretive effort of the recipient. In his study of medieval Arabic poetry, *The Neckveins of Winter*, Mansour Ajami adds that, "what is special and difficult to attain is the property of the elite and could only be comprehended through assiduous study, careful examination, analogy (*qiyās*) and discovery" (*Neckveins*, 57). Whether in reference to the poet or the reader, with this assertion Ajami acknowledges al-Jurjānī's premise that the ability to either compose or comprehend obscure and subtle meaning in poetic imagery is a skill worthy of praise.

Beyond this initial classification of *isti^{c}ārah* and the criterion distinguishing it from *tashbīh* and *tamthīl*, al-Jurjānī further divides the point of comparison in an *isti^{c}ārah* between the referent (*al-mushabbah*) and the borrowed term (*al-mushabbah bihi*) into three more specifically defined categories:

1) The shared attributes between two terms are derived from the same category or genus, the point of similarity is one of intensity and the essential meaning exists in both terms. As examples of this kind of comparison, al-Jurjānī offers the following images which share the category of swift movement:

ومثاله استعارةُ الطيران لغير ذي الجناح، إذا أردت السرعة، وانقضاض الكواكب للفرس إذا أسرع في حركته من علوّ، والسباحةَ له إذا عدَا عدواً كان حاله فيه شبيها بحالة السابح في الماء. ومعلومٌ أن الطيران والانقضاضَ والسباحةَ والعدوَ كلها جنس واحد من حيث الحركة على الإطلاق، إلا أنهم نظروا إلى خصائص الأجسام في حركتها، فأفردوا حركةَ كل نوع منها باسم، ثم إنهم إذا وجدوا في الشيء في بعض الأحوال شبها من حركةِ غير جنسه، استعاروا له العبارة من ذلك الجنس، فقالوا في غير ذي الجناح << طار >>.

> And an example of it is flight borrowed for something without wings, if you intend speed, and stars falling from on high [borrowed] for a horse if he is quick in his movement; [another example being] swimming [borrowed] for the horse as well, if when running he runs in a way similar to a swimmer in water. It is known that flying, falling, swimming, and running are all, without exception, [drawn] from one category in terms of movement in the absolute sense. However, [people] have looked at the characteristics of [animate] bodies in terms of their movement, singling out each type of movement by a name; then if they found in one body something comparable to another body of a different type with regard to given qualities, they borrowed the expression pertaining to that second body, saying [for example] of something without wings 'it flew' (*Asrār*, 47).

In another example of the same principle, quoting a line by the ᶜAbbāsid era poet al-Buḥturī (821-897), al-Jurjānī suggests the verb "to flood" (*fāḍ*) is appropriate "for the movement of the water in particular, inasmuch as it leaves its place in a single thrust and spreads out. Then this [verb] has been borrowed for the dawn, as in [the poet's] words, 'as the dawn flooded over the stars of the dark,' because the dawn spreads out in a way similar to the spreading of water and its movement as it floods" (*Asrār*, 48).[25] In each of these examples the compared attribute,

[25] لحركة الماء على وجه مخصوص، وذلك أن يفارق مكانهُ دَفْعَةً فينبسط، ثم إنه استعير للفجر، كقوله: << كالفَجْرِ فَاضَ نُجُوم الغَيْهبِ >> لأن للفجر انبساطاً وحالةً شبيهة بانبساط الماء وحركته في فَيْضِهِ.

movement, is a quality inherent in each of the referents (i.e. in a horse, swimmer, flood, or the dawn), and the point of emphasis is the intensity of the quality of movement as in the swift horse described as swimming or flying, or the dawn described as flooding the darkness of the night sky.

2) The two terms are derived from separate categories or species, but they share similar qualities or characteristics. Al-Jurjānī's case of Zayd and the lion in the expression, "I saw a lion," (*ra'aytu asadan*) where the borrowed term "lion" (*al-mushabbah bihi*) appears in reference to a courageous man Zayd (*al-mushabbah*), is a clear example of this category and should not require further exploration here.

3) The similarity between two terms derives from a comparison between two intellectual forms. Al-Jurjānī compares the analysis of the dominant trait in type three with the first two types by contrasting the example of movement considered above with the borrowing of the term "light" to mean evidence of religious truth. He suggests that this third type

> هو الصَّميم الخالص من الاستعارة. وحدُّه أن يكون الشَبَهُ مأخوذاً من الصُّور العقلية، وذلك كاستعارة النور للبيان والحجة الكاشفة عن الحق، المزِيلة للشكّ النافية للرَّيْب، كما جاء في التَّنزيل من نحو قوله عزّ وجلّ: << واتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذي أُنْزِلَ مَعَهُ >> وكاستعارة الصراط للدِّين في قوله تعالى: << اهْدِنا الصِّراطَ المُسْتَقِيمَ >>، و<< وإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إلى صِراطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ >>، فإنك لا تشُكُّ في أنه ليس بين النور والحجة ما بين << طيران الطائر >> و<< جرى الفرس >> من الاشتراك في عموم الجنس، لأن << النور >> صفة من صفات الأجسام محسوسةٌ، والحجة كلامٌ وكذا ليس بينهما ما بين << الرجل >> و<< الأسد >> من الاشتراك في طبيعةٍ معلومةٍ تكون في الحيوان كالشجاعة. فليس الشبه الحاصل من << النور >> في البيان والحجة ونحوهما، إلّا أنّ القلب إذا وردت عليه الحجَّة صار في حالة شبيهة بحال البصر إذا صادف النور [...] وهذا كما تعلم شَبَهٌ لستَ تحصل منه على جنس [...] ولا على هيئة وصورة تدخل في الخِلقة، وإنما هو صورة عقلية.

> is the genuine and pure form of *isti^{c}ārah*. And its limitation is that the comparison be taken from intellectual images, like the borrowing of 'light' for the Qur'ān[26] (*al-bayān*) and evidence (*al-ḥujja*) revealing the truth, eliminating doubt, denying uncertainty, just as there appeared in the Revelation as in the words of God – All powerful and Majestic: 'follow the light which was sent down with him' and as in the borrowing of the 'path' for religion in the words of God – may he be exalted: 'guide us along the straight path,' and 'you show the way to a righteous path.' And for you there is no doubt that the comparison between light and the evidence of truth is not the same as the comparison between the bird's flight and the horse's running in terms of sharing [attributes] common in species or category. Because light is a quality [found] among characteristics of perceptible forms and evidence of truth is discourse. And the comparison between these is not the same as the comparison between the man and the lion in terms of sharing [an attribute], known to exist in the nature of animals such as courage. There is no comparison occurring from light as the Qur'ān or evidence of truth except as the heart arrives upon the meaning of such evidence occurring in the form of a comparison with the state of one's vision encountering light. […] And this as you know is a comparison not originating from a single category […] and it is not a form or image taken from nature, but it is an intellectual image (*Asrār*, 54).

This category, considered by al-Jurjānī to be pure metaphor, is further classified into three precisely defined principles which, by nature of their intrinsic commonalities as related branches of *majāz*, are also relevant in the analysis of examples of *tashbīh* and *tamthīl*:

[26] The term "Qur'ān" translated here for *al-bayān* is an editorial choice based on the intent to render a particular reading of this passage as it pertains to this project. In *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery*, Kamal Abu Deeb appropriately translates the term *al-bayān* as both "eloquence" and "argument" (Abu Deeb, 212). As it pertains to the current citation, the broader context of al-Jurjānī's comments here implies a connection between the "Qur'ān" as a "light" revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, prior to the point when Abu Deeb draws his citation.

a) The comparison is manifest between what is known or sensually perceptible and an intellectual concept. The case cited above comparing the sensual nature of light, in its ability to illuminate darkness, with the Qur'ān in reference to the text as evidence of revealed truth is an example of this type of comparison. In one case, the term "light" (*nūr*) appears to refer to the notion that the Qur'ān (*al-bayān*) illuminates the recipient with sacred knowledge. Or with the other term, "proof" (*ḥujja*), a believer's possession of proof or evidence of revealed truth refers to the notion that the darkness of ignorance has been illuminated by revelation. Finally, the term "path" (*ṣirāṭ*) is borrowed for the Qur'ān in reference to the text's role as the path to righteousness. Thus, the Qur'ān in this citation can be read as compared to light (*nūr*), eloquence (*bayān*), evidence of revealed truth (*ḥujja*), and the path of righteousness (*al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*).

b) The comparison is drawn between two sensually perceptible entities where the similarity apparent between the two is intellectual in nature. For an example of this type of comparison, al-Jurjānī cites a saying of the Prophet Muhammad in his advice to, "beware of the green on dung" (*Asrār,* 55).[27] About this expression, al-Jurjānī writes:

الشبه مأخوذ للمرأة من النبات كما لا يخفى وكلاهما جسمٌ، إلا أنه لم يُقصَد بالتشبيه لونُ النبات وخُضرته، ولا طعمه ولا رائحته، ولا شكله وصورته [...] ولا شيءٌ من هذا الباب بل القصدُ شَبَهٌ عقليٌّ بين المرأة الحسناءِ في المنبت السوء، وبين تلك النابتة على الدِّمنة، وهو حُسْنُ الظاهر في رأى العين مع فساد الباطن وطيبُ الفَرع مع خُبث الأصلَ.

> the comparison derived from plants [referring to] a woman is apparent, both of them being objects, although what is not meant is to compare is the color of the plant and its greenness, nor its taste or smell, or its shape or appearance […] and nothing of this sort,

[27] << إياكم وخَضْراء الدِّمَن >>

> rather the intention is an intellectual comparison between the beautiful woman born of an evil origin and the plant growing on dung, being beautiful in its exterior appearance as perceived by the eye with a corrupted core and a good offspring with an evil origin (*Asrār*, 55-56).

In this comparison, a green plant growing in dung is beautiful as it represents vibrant life, but it is contaminated, reviled, like a beautiful woman of base origin. If one knows enough to avoid the plant grown in contaminated soil, one knows enough to avoid the crafty woman from the wrong side of the tracks. Thus, the comparison drawn between these two sensually perceptible entities, a woman and a green plant, is not sensual, but intellectual.

c) The comparison is drawn between two intellectual forms. As an example of this type of comparison, al-Jurjānī uses the concept that an ignorant person experiences life in a state similar to death. Additionally, he explains that when sleeping the individual is similarly experiencing a state akin to death. Thus, the comparison is between two concepts perceptible only to the intellect. Al-Jurjānī suggests:

> أنك وصفت الجاهل بأنه ميّتٌ، وجعلت الجهل كأنه موتٌ على معنى أن فائدة الحياة والمقصود منها هو العلم والإحساس، فمتى عَدِمَهما الحيُّ فكأنه قد خرج عن حُكم الحيّ، ولذلك جُعل النَّوم موتاً إذ كان النائم لا يشعر بما بحضرته كما لا يشعر الميِّت.

> Your description of the ignorant man as being dead, and your deeming ignorance as if it were death [conveys] the meaning that the benefit and purpose of life is having knowledge and consciousness and that when the living being lacks these two characteristics it is as if he has excluded himself from this principle of the living. And in

> this way, sleep is represented as death when one sleeping does not feel what is in his presence, just as the deceased does not feel (*Asrār*, 60).

Al-Jurjānī goes further to explain that in the comparison of two intellectual forms, "it is not a matter of reducing existence to the realm of the non-existent, but rather a consideration of an intellectual characteristic, the existence of which is imagined with the opposite of that which its word was borrowed [as in the expression] 'He met with death' [by which] they mean 'he encountered a more intensely difficult affair for which his hatred for it in his soul was similar to [his hatred] for death'" (*Asrār*, 63).[28] In these examples, "death" is borrowed to mean "ignorance," "sleep," or a "difficult task," through the combination of similar intellectually comprehensible attributes shared within the meaning of each term. In one example, death as ignorance is rendered as a state of living in denial of knowledge, the purpose of life. In the other examples, death is akin to the inability to feel or sense one's surroundings when sleeping, and the difficult task rivals death in terms of the living mind's hatred for it.

1d: Tafṣīl

Analyzing examples from each of the three forms of comparative imagery, *tashbīh*, *tamthīl*, and *istiᶜārah*, al-Jurjānī scrutinizes the shared attributes between compared images according to the principles of particularization, or *tafṣīl*. This concept of *tafṣīl* when applied to each of the three levels of comparison provides a basis for analyzing and determining meaning in a particular image or set of images and involves evaluating the points of comparison between images on what may be considered a "spectrum of dissimilarity." The term *tafṣīl* specifically

[28] أن لا يكون على تنزيل الوُجود منزلة العدم ولكن على اعتبار صفة معقولةٍ يُتصوَّر وُجودها مع ضِدّ ما استعرتَ اسمه [...] << لَقِيَ الموت >> يريدون لَقَي الأمر الأشدَّ الصعب الذي هو في كراهة النَّفس له كالموت.

refers to the process of evaluating details within a comparison not readily apparent to the eye. Evaluating an image and determining that it is either unique and nuanced, or uninspiring and banal, requires a consideration of such details. The process of evaluating aspects of particularization (*tafṣīl*) is similar to what many contemporary critics label "mapping." For example, Zoltán Kövecses in *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* describes the basis for the mapping of "systematic correspondences between the source and the target in the sense that constituent conceptual elements of B correspond to constituent elements of A" (Kövecses, 6). In this framework, "mapping" occurs in the evaluation of images in order to arrive at an adequate interpretation of meaning in metaphorical expressions.

In his approach to the analysis of *tafṣīl* which parallels the method of "mapping" Kövecses employs, al-Jurjānī explains that when an image is derived from a clearly visible attribute or form

> فالتشبيه المعقود عليه نازل مُبتذَل، وما كان بالضدّ من هذا وفي الغاية القُصْوَى من مخالفته، فالتشبيه المردُود إليه غريبٌ نادرٌ بديع، ثم تتفاضل التشبيهات التي تجيء واسطةً لهذين الطَّرَفين، بحسب حالها منهما، فما كان منها إلى الطَّرَف الأول أقرب، فهو أدنى وأنزل، وما كان إلى الطَّرَف الثاني أذهب، فهو أعلى وأفضل، وبوصف الغريبِ أجدر.

> the comparison made is trite and banal; yet as for what is diametrically opposed to that and different from it to the farthest extent, the *tashbīh* attributed to it is strange, rare and original. Moreover, instances of *tashbīh* which come between these two extremes [of the spectrum of dissimilarity] vie with one another for precedence; and in accordance with their [relative] positions between these extremes, those nearest the first extreme are inferior and diminished [in quality], whereas those nearing the second extreme are loftier

and superior, more worthy through the description of that which is unfamiliar (*Asrār*, 124).

Images that lack nuanced, particularized meanings are deemed ordinary and inferior. By contrast, images are superior when their meanings are only accessible with reference to a deeper reflection upon the shared attribute between compared objects.

In order to demonstrate the difference between a well crafted comparison and a banal or ordinary one, al-Jurjānī illustrates a reflection on the concept of *tafṣīl* in reference to a contrast between the line by the poet al-Nābighah quoted earlier[29] and the following example of *tamthīl* composed by the poet ᶜAbbās Ibn al-Aḥnaf (750-809): "Kindness is like the sun when it rises; its radiance spreads in every region" (*Asrār*, 185).[30] Al-Jurjānī explains that the intent of this verse,

نفس ما قصده النابغة في تعميم الأقطار، والوصول إلى كل مكان، إلّا أن النعمة لما كانت تَسُرُّ وتُؤنِس، أخذ المثلَ لها من الشمس. ولو أنه ضرب المثل لوصول النعمة إلى أقاصي البلاد، وانتشارِها في العباد، بالليل ووصوله إلى كل بَلَدٍ، وبُلوغه كلَّ أحد، لكان قد أخطأ خطأً فاحشاً، إلّا أن هذا وإن كان يجيء مستوياً في الموازنة، ففرقٌ بين ما يُكرَهُ من الشَّبه وما يُحَبُّ، لأن الصفةَ المحبوبة إذا اتصلت بالغَرَض من التشبيه، نالت من العناية بها والمحافظة عليها قريباً مما يناله الغَرَض نفسه. وأمّا ما ليس بمحبوب، فَيَحْسُن أن يعْرض عنها صفحاً، ويدَع الفكر فيها.

is the same as what al-Nābighah meant in terms of the spreading out [of darkness] across regions, reaching every place; however, with respect to that kindness – inasmuch as it gladdens and delights – the [poet ᶜAbbās Ibn al-Aḥnaf] compared it to the sun. Had he compared the outspreading of kindness (in its outspreading as far as the farthest reaches of the country and its dissemination among the people) to the night (as it reaches out to every country, reaching every person), he would have committed a monstrous mistake.

[29] Op. Cit., 107.

[30] نعمةٌ كالشَّمْس لمَّا طَلعَتْْ بَثَّتِ الإشراقَ في كلِّ بَلَدْ

> [Considering these two comparisons], even though parallel [in one sense], [we note] that there is a difference between a comparison that is disliked and that which is desired, inasmuch as a desirable characteristic, whenever coordinated with the goal of the comparison – through the meaning [inherent] within it – is able to uphold [that meaning] parallel to that which the goal itself upholds; whereas as for the [characteristic] that is not desired, it is best that [the poet] completely avoid it and desist from thinking about (*Asrār*, 185).

Based upon an evaluation of *tafṣīl* in each line, in this distinction al-Jurjānī determines that darkness is more suited to the poet lamenting his inability to escape the authority of the king, and that the light of the sun is better suited in reference to kindness. Darkness in this case is associated with a negative, foreboding sense that the king's authority should be feared; thus, the contrast is appropriate between al-Nābighah's choice of darkness and al-Aḥnaf's choice of sunlight. Each comparison is suitable because it is "balanced" in the synthesis of particular attributes. The converse equation is an image that is disliked and should be ignored. In the current citation it is absurd to suggest that the king's authoritarian power should conjure the radiance of the sun any more than kindness evokes a sense of dark, melancholic gloom.

Judging the appropriateness of a particular comparison based on its position within a spectrum of dissimilarity also brings to mind the necessity to draw comparisons between images comprehensible to the intellect. Al-Jurjānī provides his own image to explain:

> ولم أُرد بقولي إنّ الحذق في إيجاد الائتلاف بين المختلفات في الأجناس، أنك تقدر أن تُحدِث هناك مشابهةً ليس لها أصل في العقل، وإنما المعنى أنّ هناك مشابهات خَفِيّة يدقُّ المسلك إليها، فإذا تغلغَل فكرُك فأدركها فقد استحققتَ الفضل. ولذلك يُشَبَّه المدقِّق في المعاني بالغائص على الدُر [...].

> And I did not mean by saying that being skillful in the creation of harmony between things different in species that you are able to create a similarity that does not have an origin in the intellect. Rather, what is meant is that there are hidden similarities to which the path is narrow; and if you mind is penetrating and reaches them, you deserve credit. Therefore, whoever closely scrutinizes meanings is compared to the one who dives for pearls (*Asrār*, 115).

Like the pearl diver, the examiner of an image discovers meaning only after careful, deliberate inspection, and the reward for success in comprehending the meaning of an image is as tangible to the intellect as a pearl in the diver's hand. Again, al-Jurjānī emphasizes the complex active process of cognition: satisfaction in the discovery of meaning is only tangible to the intellect after a careful, deliberate examination of the specific details of the shared attributes between two objects or concepts.

However, according to al-Jurjānī, complexity can be troublesome when it requires an inordinate amount of interpretive effort to the extent that understanding the intended meaning of a poorly composed comparison is only possible by way of misleading analytical methods. He quotes a line by the poet al-Mutanabbī (916-955) to illustrate this point:

> وأما التعقيد، فإنما كان مذموماً لأجل أن اللفظ لم يرتَّب الترتيبَ الذي بمثله تحصُل الدَّلالة على الغرض، حتى احتاج السامع إلى أن يطلبَ المعنى بالحِيلة، ويسعى إليه من غير الطريق، كقوله:
>
> و لذا اسمُ أغطية العيون جفونُها من أنّها عَمَلَ السيوفِ عواملُ
>
> وإنما ذُمَّ هذا الجنس لأنه أحوجك إلى فكر زائد على المقدار الذي يجب في مثله، وكَدَّكَ بسوء الدَّلالة وأودع لك في قالب غير مستوٍ ولا مُمَلَّس، بل خشِنٍ مُضرّس [...] مُشوَّهَ الصورة ناقصَ الحُسن.

> As for complexity, it is objectionable by reason of an expression not being arranged in such a way that the meaning leads to the goal [of the comparison], with the listener having to search for the meaning in a tricky way, endeavoring to reach it without a path, as is the case with [the poet's verse]: 'Thus the name for the coverings of the eyes is sheaths (*jufūn*), because the eyes are used to do the work of swords.' This type [of comparison] is objectionable because it has compelled you to an amount of thought greater than should be necessary in such an instance, has exhausted you with a misconstrued meaning and consigned you to a last uneven and unsmooth, indeed rough and crude […] distorted in form, lacking in beauty. (*Asrār*, 109).

The example in this citation ends in confusion for the recipient because, according to al-Jurjānī, determining its meaning requires excessive thought which inevitably leads to misconceptions. The meaning of the image is rough, it lacks beauty, and there is no satisfaction for the recipient in the encounter. In defense of al-Mutanabbī we note that he is playing here with the coincidence that the common word for eyelids (*jufūn*) can also in a much less common usage refer to the sheaths of swords.

By contrast with the previously cited passage, images which al-Jurjānī classifies within his various categories of *istiᶜārah* are meant to be accessible to the intellect because they are drawn from realistically plausible human experience as opposed to the realm of fantasy, and are thus determined to reveal a "truth" otherwise impossible to articulate in the literal use of language. This is the opposite view of the problematic tendency in Western philosophy that Lakoff and Johnson describe in *Metaphors We Live By*. They point out that when uttered in the service of asserting an objective, absolute truth, many philosophers conclude "that metaphors cannot directly state truths, and, if they can state truths at all, it is only indirectly, via some non-

metaphorical 'literal' paraphrase" (*Metaphors*, 159). Lakoff and Johnson reject this traditional view with the conclusion: "The fact that we understand the world, think, and function in metaphorical terms, and the fact that metaphors can not merely be understood but can be meaningful and true as well – these facts all suggest that an adequate account of meaning and truth can only be based on understanding" (*Metaphors*, 184). In their acknowledgement of the possibility for truth in metaphor, however, it will be shown below that Lakoff and Johnson differ with al-Jurjani with regard to their rejection of the existence of objective, absolute truth.

Although the differentiation between reality and fantasy is an important distinction in the analysis of comparative imagery al-Jurjānī classifies using the term *isticārah*, it does not rule out the possibility of creating poetic imagery based in fantasy. For al-Jurjānī, these are simply different categories of *majāz* altogether. While an *isticārah* must be drawn from reality, the term *takhyīl* refers to a category of poetic imagery drawn from the fantastic. The focus of the current study is the language of *isticārah*, and examples scrutinized in the following chapters will be evaluated in part based upon the requirement that they be accessible to the intellect in this way. However, considering the primary difference between the language of *isticārah* and *takhyīl* as al-Jurjānī defines it enlightens this study in that it clarifies the necessity that instances of *isticārah* must be plausible and analytically comprehensible:

واعلم أن الاستعارة لا تدخل في قبيل التخييل لأن المستعير لا يقصد إلى إثبات معنى اللفظةِ المستعارة، وإنما يعمد إلى إثبات شَبَهٍ هناك، فلا يكون مَخْبَرُهُ على خلاف خَبَره. [...] وكذا قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: << اياكم وخَضْراءَ الدِّمَن >> معلوم ان ليس القصدُ إثباتَ معنى ظاهر اللفظين، ولكن الشَّبهُ الحاصل من مجموعهما، وذلك حُسن الظاهر مع خُبْثِ الاصل.

> Know that *isti^{c}ārah* is not included as a type of *takhyīl* because the borrower does not seek to establish the meaning of the borrowed word but rather endeavors to establish a similtude, the word's intrinsic meaning not in opposition to its surface meaning. […] Thus as in the words of [the Prophet], may God bless him and keep him, 'beware of the [woman] green of dung,' it is known that the intention is not to establish the literal meaning of the two terms but rather the comparison obtained by bringing them together – that is to say, beauty in appearance [in conjunction] with a despicable origin (*Asrār*, 197).

The possibility for fantasy (*takhyīl*) and hyperbole (*ighrāq*) in poetic imagery is not rejected in al-Jurjānī's analysis. Instead, he distinguishes these forms of expression as separate from the category of *isti^{c}ārah*. Al-Jurjānī contends that with *isti^{c}ārah* the creator of an image is not restrained from exploring a wide variety of meanings despite the requirement that the comparison be true in reality and accessible to the intellect. Indeed, he suggests: "it is also clear that notwithstanding the necessity for veracity and the adherence to pure truth, you have [available to you] a wide scope and broad field [of possibilities], this not being the case in the thinking of the defender of hyperbole and fantasy" (*Asrār*, 198).[31] When it comes to fantasy, the potential for beautiful poetic imagery is abundant, but such imagery is outside the realm of *isti^{c}ārah* because meaning in the fantastic is only possible "if it is extended beyond the restraint of [truthful] claims, if that which is not truthful is claimed, and if that which is denied and rejected by the intellect is confirmed" (*Asrār*, 198).[32] Additionally, al-Jurjānī suggests:

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31 بانَ منه ايضاً أنّ لك مع لُزوم الصدق، والثبوت على محض الحقّ، الميدانَ الفسيح والمجالَ الواسع، وأنْ ليس الأمر على ما ظنَّه ناصر الإغراق والتخييل.

32 إذا بُسِط من عنان الدعوى، فادُّعى ما لا يصحّ دعواه، وأثبت ما ينفيه العقل ويَأباه.

وجملة الحديث ان الذي أريده بالتخييل ها هنا، ما يُثبت فيه الشاعر امراً هو غير ثابت اصلاً، ويدَّعى دعوَى لا طريقَ إلى تحصيلها، ويقولُ قولاً يخدع فيه نفسه ويُريها ما لا ترى. فاما الاستعارة، فإن سبيلَها سبيلُ الكلام المحذوف، في أنك إذا رجعت إلى أصله، وجدتَ قائله وهو يُثبت امراً عقليّاً صحيحاً، ويدّعي دعوَى لها سِنْخٌ في العقل.

> In brief, that which I mean by *takhyīl* here, is that what the poet establishes as a fact is in reality not so, for he makes a claim for something which cannot be realized. He speaks in such a way that he misleads his "soul," showing to his soul that which his soul does not see. And as for *isticārah*, its path is the path of the omitted word. So that if you trace its origin you find that the narrator has established something rational and correct and that he has made a claim which has an origin in the intellect (*Asrār*, 198).

In evaluating examples of *isticārah* the process of tracing a "path to the omitted word" must lead the recipient to an image based on a plausible, intellectually accessible comparison.

In referencing the difference between producing *isticārah* or *takhyīl* expressions, Ajami reads al-Jurjānī's use of the term *ṣancah* as "fine craftsmanship" (*Neckveins*, 51) and contends that the term is meant to apply to the creation of "imaginative" meanings and not to "intellectual" meanings. He suggests that the term *ṣancah*

> was equivalent to creation, it could function or be detected only in a supra-intellectual realm, that of the imagination. […] Intellectual meanings mirrored only what was truthful: that which could be attested to by the mind and validated by reason. These meanings were true for all people and all generations and could be found in their proverbs and aphorisms. Truth could not be reinvented or remodeled; it could only be ascertained. Therefore, *ṣancah*, the inventive power of the poet, could not occur in the intellectual meanings […] *ṣancah* transcends mere factual truth or untruth, but is rather

> the application of all the poet's intellectual and imaginative faculties. It is, in short, thinking in imagery (*Neckveins,* 58-60).

This distinction seems to be an unnecessary limitation to exclude the "power" of *ṣanᶜah* from the realm of the "intellectual" (*ᶜaqlī*) meaning. Al-Jurjānī has explained that the realm of *istiᶜārah* is outside the imaginative process of *takhyīl*, yet he emphasizes the vast potential for metaphoric expression embodied by meanings that can be confirmed in the intellect as actually existing. The term *ṣanᶜah*, rendered as "fine craftsmanship" or "artistic skill" should not be perceived as exclusively related to "imaginative" meaning in al-Jurjānī's discourse as he distinctly acknowledges and analyses the capacity of *ṣanᶜah* to render unique and beautiful images in *istiᶜārah*. Rather, *ṣanᶜah* is manifest in both forms of imagery, *takhyīl* and *istiᶜārah*, through two different applications of comparative poetic imagery. Although *takhyīl* is the vehicle for creating imaginative imagery drawn from the imagination and *istiᶜārah* is the vehicle for creating imagery with an origin in reality, fine craftsmanship and artistic skill are required in both categories.

In addition to his consideration of the creative power of the poet to "think in imagery," in his book entitled *The Alchemy of Glory* Ajami further explores the suggestion that truthfulness in poetry imposes limitations upon the poet:

> Arguments and assertions of poetic limitations and lack of originality, individual creativity, and diversity can be utilized by the proponents of 'imagination' (*takhyīl*) to embrace untruthfulness and to give it precedence over truthfulness. However, al-Jurjānī acknowledged that the human mind gives pre-eminence to truthfulness in poetic expression, and glorifies its worth. Whatever is defended by reason (*ᶜaql*) and objective reality is incontestable and unapproachable (*Alchemy,* 94).

However, Ajami places al-Jurjānī in an "intermediate" position, acknowledging the legitimacy of both truthfulness and untruthfulness in poetry. He points out that al-Jurjānī, "decisively excluded metaphor from the realm of imagination (*takhyīl*) and assigned it a role in the domain of the intellect and truthfulness" (*Alchemy*, 95). Additionally, Ajami confirms al-Jurjānī's assertion that *isti^{c}ārah* is excluded from the domain of imaginative meanings because it,

> is an intellectual process that has no place in the imagination. However, the operation of such a procedure can be detected only by the critic or the recipient, and it is highly improbable that the poet, in the moment of creation, would deliberately and consciously undertake such a rational process. The poet's fundamental concern at that stage is the imaginative production of a metaphorical expression, and not the subtle workings of the elements of such metaphor (*Alchemy*, 95).

Ajami naturally draws on his own experience as a poet to come to the conclusion that in the moment of composition the poet's concern is the image itself and not necessarily the question of truthfulness. As he says, the process for determining truthfulness includes the interpretive conclusion of the critic or recipient in classifying the image into a category such as *isti^{c}ārah* or *takhyīl*.

Beyond linguistic characteristics that distinguish how intellectual and imaginative meanings are composed and interpreted, Ajami also identifies a religious sensibility linked with the necessity that an *isti^{c}ārah* expression is drawn from reality:

> An obvious inferential explanation for al-Jurjānī's exclusion of metaphor from the realm of the imagination derives primarily from the theological concept of the Qur'ānic 'miraculous uniqueness.' Despite the Qur'ān's literary perfection and stylistic

> inimitability, it is not poetry, a fact repeatedly pronounced by the Prophet in Qur'ānic utterances and by universal religious tradition and *iᶜjāz* literature. Metaphors occurred abundantly in the Qur'ān, and to include them in the realm of the imagination would be to grant them and the Qur'ān in general utterly unacceptable and intolerable poeticity. It is therefore 'safer' to relegate them to the domain of the intellect, or of truthfulness, as al-Jurjānī's reasoning and samples demonstrate (*Alchemy*, 96).

Thus, according to Ajami, al-Jurjānī has taken the "safer" route by insisting on this distinction between *istiᶜārah* and *takhyīl*, between intellectual and imaginative meanings. It is offensive to traditional Islamic sensibilities to regard the Qur'ān as a work of literature because of the implication that men write literature, and God authored the Qur'ān. Yet al-Jurjānī's contribution to Arabic literary theory represents of another tradition evolving from the dutiful religious obligation to better understand the Qur'ān by attempting to identify and appreciate the nuanced qualities of its composition. It is both "safer" and necessary in this context to regard examples of *istiᶜārah* to be truthful specifically because they are prominently featured in the Qur'ān.

At least three significant points of departure are apparent between the contemporary Western and classical Arabic traditions regarding acknowledgements of the existence of truth in metaphor. Lakoff and Johnson explicitly reject the existence of an objective, absolute truth (*Metaphors*, 159) in favor of truth based on "understanding" the context of the individual and the collective experience. Lakoff and Johnson also diminish the relevance of truth in metaphor: "We should stress again that issues of truth are among the least relevant and interesting issues that arise in the study of metaphor" (*Metaphors*, 175). This is a position rejected by the theological sensibilities evident in al-Jurjānī's theory of metaphor. By contrast, al-Jurjānī stresses the relevance of truth in metaphoric language because of the objectivist nature of his religious beliefs

which renders the existence of such truth to be a fundamental distinguishing characteristic of his theory of metaphor.

Elsewhere, in *Philosophy in the Flesh*, Lakoff and Johnson reiterate their rejection of the notion of objective truth writing, "In the objectivist theory, since all meaning is held to be literal, a metaphor does not have a capacity to express truth claims. It can only make truth claims if it does so indirectly by expressing some other literal meaning" (*Philosophy*, 121). Al-Jurjānī, does not frame this perspective in reference to a possible rejection of objective truth. Instead, as a theologian, his belief in the absolute truth and validity of the Qur'ān makes it impossible for him to accept anything other than objective truth in metaphor. This issue poses admittedly little trouble for the secular minded critic, but as will be evident below, there are ample prerequisite principles beyond those rooted in theological discourse for the preference of truth over hyperbole and exaggeration in the Arabic literary tradition.[33]

To Expand on previous commentary about the truthfulness of *isti^{c}ārah*, we can look to Adūnīs who points out that al-Jurjānī participated in the inauguration of a method of reading the Qur'ān based more heavily on evaluating the quality of its written composition rather than

[33] There is palpable anxiety for both the secular and the religious scholar inherent in the process of reading the Qur'ān as a literary text. The notion of inimitability (*i^{c}jāz*) is a consistent theme in theological studies of the Qur'ān. In this case, it is not necessary to take the leap into this controversial topic by suggesting that the Qur'ān should be classified as an historical or literary phenomenon. It can simply be accepted, in this instance, that within the tradition of Arabic literature, the Qur'ān, with its specific approach to metaphoric imagery, has served as a consistent influence in the writing of Arab scholars and artists. This is not a radical suggestion as such a conclusion should be obvious to even the most uninformed reader of Islamic tradition, and does not necessarily merit a comprehensive treatment of the problematic nature of a literary approach to the Qur'ān here. For the purpose of this project, the Qur'ān serves as the anchor for subsequent artistic inspiration in addition to its relevance to al-Jurjānī's theory of comparative imagery. This has been further explored, by artists and critics, in the legacy of Arabic literature from the classical period through the contemporary age. Nasr Abu-Zayd describes both the potential insight as well as the problems associated with such an approach to Qur'ānic study in his essay, "The Dilemma of the Literary Approach to the Qur'ān," from the perspective of a Muslim intellectual. Likewise, from a Western intellectual's perspective, A. Rippin considers this type of approach to the Qur'ān in his "The Qur'ān as Literature: Perils, Pitfalls, and Prospects."

relying on the standards of the oral tradition predominant in the appreciation of pre-Islamic poetry. He explains that this method

> paved the way for the transition from pre-Islamic poetic orality to a poetics of writing, whose principles were formulated in al-Jurjānī's theory of the composition of the Qur'ān. […] Thus we can say that the Qur'ān, which was regarded as constituting some sort of a rejection of poetry, led indirectly to the opening up of unlimited horizons in poetry and to the establishing of a genuine literary criticism (*Poetics*, 42).

The "dilemma" here is peculiar. The tradition of reading the Qur'ān as a "rejection of poetry" gave rise to a variety of fundamental principles of Arabic literary criticism. As has been demonstrated already, these principles include the notion that meaning in *isti^{c}ārah* must be truthful. However, Adūnīs also suggests that metaphor is capable of transcending any potential limitation that this requirement might impose because, "just as the language of metaphor goes beyond itself to something less accessible, so it goes beyond the reality which it is talking about and enters less accessible areas. It is as if in its very nature metaphor is an act of rejection of existing reality and a search for an alternative" (*Poetics*, 71). This implies that Adūnīs would also be occupying the "intermediate" position that Ajami has assigned to al-Jurjānī.[34] Inherent in the composition of truthful, intellectual meanings or fantastic, imaginative meanings is an imperative to "reject" existing reality in search of alternative perceptions of human experience. Adūnīs continues by saying, "But from the perspective of poetic, that is metaphoric knowledge, the world is by contrast open and infinite, because it is possibility, a continuing process of search and discovery" (*Poetics*, 72). This innate process of search and discovery allows for unique and original ways to express reality because poetic or metaphoric knowledge is infinite.

[34] Op. Cit., 94.

Although this principle suggests that an infinite number of possibilities to describe reality exists in the use of metaphoric language, in her text, *Al-Mutanabbī, Voice of the ᶜAbbasid Poetic Ideal*, Margaret Larkin explains that in the classical Arabic literary tradition, "The critics specifically rejected the use of hyperbole in that it led to conceits based on the impossible or the nonexistent – in other words, the fantastic. They generally did not like the components of metaphors to stray too far from their ontological moorings, thus denying the limits of reality" (*Voice,* 106). She adds that it was not until al-Jurjānī, "discussed the fantastic in a manner that retained its palatability from a theological point of view did Arabic criticism find a way to accommodate hyperbole and paradox somewhat more comfortably" (*Voice,* 106). This is another of al-Jurjānī's contributions to the development of Arabic literary criticism. He acknowledged the legitimacy of hyperbole and exaggeration (*ighrāq*) in poetic composition, while maintaining that such forms of literary expression are outside the realm of metaphor. Larkin goes on to identify al-Jurjānī's reasoning for insisting that meaning in *istiᶜārah* is linked with reality as opposed to the fantastic in *takhyīl*. She explains that for al-Jurjānī,

> it was his and every Muslim's belief that the Qur'ān, as the word of God, is entirely and objectively truthful. This meant that the treatment of figurative language was circumscribed by the need ultimately not to suggest that it was in any way false or suspect. We have seen that it was partly this need that was at the origin of his logically rigorous exclusion of *istiᶜārah* from the category known as *takhyīl*. […] The essences of things in reality, like the truths about the natural order of things that are known to man, are not up for debate or negotiation. They are not matters that can be freely controverted in linguistic expression. This is especially clear since God uses metaphor abundantly in

> the Qur'ān, and it is inconceivable that He would confuse reality in this manner (*Theology*, 168).

The theological motivation for this distinction between the language of *istiᶜārah* and *takhyīl* obliges the critic to acknowledge that God cannot possibly "confuse" reality, but it also provides the critic with a legitimate method to analyze the composition of the Qur'ān without upsetting religious sensibilities.

In reference to the Western tradition, Donaldson represents a divergent perspective of truth in metaphor which al-Jurjānī would reject when he suggests that "metaphor makes us see one thing as another by making some literal statement that inspires or prompts the insight. Since in most cases what the metaphor prompts or inspires is not entirely, or even at all, recognition of some truth or fact, the attempt to give literal expression to the content of the metaphor is simply misguided" (Donaldson, 263). Beyond the unacceptable insistence that what a metaphor reveals can be false, in this citation Donaldson undermines al-Jurjānī's entire process for the examination of meaning in metaphorical expression. He goes on to suggest, "the theorist who tries to explain a metaphor by appealing to a hidden message, like the critic who attempts to state the message, is then fundamentally confused. No explanation or statement can be forthcoming because no such message exists" (Donaldson, 263-264). Since al-Jurjani believes metaphor must reveal some inherent truth accessible to the inquiring intellect, efforts to interpret a literal, truthful meaning in a metaphor is an extension of a true believer's religious obligation and certainly not a frivolous exercise in futility. The point in his analysis is not to determine some "hidden" meaning in metaphorical language as Donaldson frames the issue. Instead al-Jurjānī endeavors to determine the actual meaning of the expression with respect to either the poet's intention or the reader's comprehension of deliberately ambiguous poetic language.

Although the Qur'ān influences al-Jurjani's insistence that examples of *isti^{c}ārah* are accessible to the intellect, the belief that meaning in *isti^{c}ārah* is drawn from realistic comparisons also has deep roots in the pre-Islamic Arabic literary tradition. In his introduction to the 1954 edition of *Asrār al-Balāghah*, Hellmut Ritter writes, "The ancient Arabians had little taste for fiction. The object of Arabic poetry as well as their prose is to relate facts and actual, not fictitious, events. It may happen that the subject matter of the poetry or narrative is not real, but if so, the poet or narrator nevertheless always intends to relate real occurrences" (Ritter, 2). As opposed to a restrictive limitation upon the creative possibilities within the category of *isti^{c}ārah*, the necessity of "truthfulness" elicits the creation of inventive poetic imagery and returns this discussion to the notion of *tafṣīl*. Ritter explains, "The description of details which escape the ordinary eye is called *tafṣīl* 'particularizing,' the comparison with strange things *gharīb*. *Tafṣīl* and *gharāba* are two elements on which the aesthetic value of a great many figurative expressions is based" (Ritter, 18). The inventiveness of an *isti^{c}ārah* image is dependent upon considerations of the particular attributes being compared: the original images "harmonize" on a scale of remoteness in category or species, the intensity of the comparison, and how the original images come together as one. Strange, inventive, nuanced meanings are worthy of thoughtful consideration.

In regards to the concept of *tafṣīl*, the evaluation of the particular attributes being compared in an image and the remoteness of the point of similarity between them, Abu Deeb explains:

> The remoteness of an attribute and the need for intellectual effort and deep consideration to comprehend it vary according to its nature in relation to the entirety and details of an object. The greater its share of particularization is, the greater the need for

> contemplation, careful thinking and recollection to comprehend it. The principle of the comprehension of details does not apply to sense-perceptions only, but to intuitive and emotional, and to imaginative and intellectual comprehension (Abu Deeb, 110-111).

Evaluating *tafṣīl* in an image, thus reflecting upon the details of particularization between the two entities being compared, occurs as a necessary step towards interpreting meaning. As has been previously shown, the amount of interpretive effort required to comprehend a given image is determined by its "share of particularization" and nuanced, particularized images demand a conscious effort to understand and also evoke a more satisfying sense of accomplishment in the discovery of meaning.

Al-Jurjānī himself offers some words of advice on the task of analyzing *tafṣīl* in poetic images based on his framework:

> واعلم أني ذكرتُ لك في تمثيل هذه الأصول الواضحَ الظاهرَ القريبَ المتناوَلِ الكائنَ من قَبِيل المتعارف في كل لسان [...] ولم أذكر ما يدِقُّ ويغمُض، ويلطُف ويَغْرُب، وما هو من الأسرار التي أَثارتْها الصنعة [...] لأن القصد إذا كان لتمهيد الأساس، ووضع قواعد القياس، كان الأوْلى أن يُعْمَدَ إلى ما هو أظهر وأجلى من الأمثلة، لتكون الحجةُ بها [...] حتى إذا تمّهدَت القواعد [...] حينئذ في تتبُّع ما اخترعته القرائح، وعُمِد إلى حل المشكلات عن ثِقَةٍ بأنْ هُيِّئَت المفاتح.

> Know that in the representation of these principles, I have mentioned to you the explicit, the obvious, the easily understood [examples] taken from what exists as a matter of tradition in every language […] and I have not mentioned the subtle and obscure, the delicate and difficult to understand, and what are among the secrets inspired by artistry […] because the intention in arranging this groundwork [for the study of *isti^{c}ārah*], and establishing the principles of analogy, among the initial examples were those which are intended to be clearer and more obvious, for which evidence exists. […] Then, if these

> principles have been put in order […] at that time [it is possible] to pursue meaning created by the artistically gifted, and the solution to problems [in meaning] are approached confidently with the keys having been prepared (*Asrār*, 69).

Al-Jurjānī provides the framework for further analysis of the composition of metaphoric language by showing his readers how these principles operate in images that are accessible to a broader audience. Having defined the "keys" of analysis, al-Jurjānī demonstrates how the critic can successfully and confidently approach the meaning of more subtle, obscure images which would presumably be too difficult to comprehend without his rubric.

1e: naẓm

This final point of emphasis in the opening chapter emanates from a point of contention between contemporary critics and their readings of al-Jurjānī's theory of poetic composition (*naẓm*) as it pertains to the concept of "organic unity." In the current study the point will not be to assess in the arguments of different scholars, but to draw on the various interpretations of al-Jurjānī's concept in the attempt to evaluate the concept of the "unity" or "unities" of specific images in each of the novels and how such unity applies to the work as a whole.

In his doctoral dissertation, *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Naẓm (Discourse Arrangement): A Linguistic Perspective*, Ahmad Sweity explains that as the primary focus of al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm*, *kalām* (discourse) differs from *lughah* (language) because "factors of *lughah* such as vocables and meanings are irrelevant for eloquence, while factors of *kalām* such as grammatical meanings, context, interrelationships between meaningful words, and the intention of the speaker are relevant to eloquence" (Sweity, 83). Of course, language is the basis for discourse, but the

derivation is that without the structures of discourse language consists only of words. Eloquence is evaluated as a reflection on how writers provide language with particular meanings within the boundaries set by specifically defined principles of discourse. Sweity goes on to point out that al-Jurjānī,

> does not come with these remarks as part of a comprehensive theory of language; he mentions them accidentally without dwelling on them too much in order to reveal the differences between language and discourse, and between single words and discourse. His main concern is not with these elements, but with the processes of bringing them together and joining them together to form discourse. […] Thus, the difference between the word and discourse is that the first is composed of meaningless units which are only differentiated by their acoustic, auditory or articulatory properties, where the latter is composed of meaningful units that are not only differentiated on the basis of their sounds but also on the basis of their meanings (Sweity, 89).

This initial premise is the basis for al-Jurjānī's more comprehensive vision of *naẓm*, now more broadly defined as discourse arrangement, phraseology, or language composition involving individual units of language combining to create meaningful discourse. Sweity explains:

> It can be concluded from al-Jurjānī's views that there is another difference between language and discourse. Language elements have no meanings except what they have by convention, or by agreement. The speaker may not change them, or add to them on his own. As for discourse, it contains, in addition to the conventional meanings of its words, the relations the speaker creates between discourse elements (Sweity, 93).

The meanings of individual words are defined through convention or agreement emanating from within specific cultural and historical contexts. The meaning of words may evolve, but only as much as is tolerated generationally by cultural convention. Discourse relies upon the meaning of individual words but is successfully achieved when words are organized creatively within the boundaries of specific grammatical structures. Al-Jurjānī regards discourse as a fine art, and according to Sweity it is through analogy that he

> manages to place *naẓm* among the class of other fine arts and fine crafts such as weaving, formation, sculpture, engraving, forging and other arts and crafts that require mastery and skill. The similarity between these arts and the art of composing discourse does not lie only in the process of joining the parts together to produce a unified final product, but also lies in their psychological effects (Sweity, 107).

In essence, *naẓm* is the central process for arranging the elements of language into discourse capable of stimulating human emotion and broadening human perception. Sweity explains that al-Jurjānī uses the terms *naẓm* (composition), *taᶜlīq* (interrelationship) and *maᶜānī al-naḥw* (grammatical meanings) not as synonyms but as component parts to an overarching definition of discourse arrangement. Sweity suggests,

> This means that the concept of meaning, which al-Jurjānī made as the core of *naẓm*, refers to the image of meaning rather than to the meaning itself. In other words, the meaning, which is the essence of any text and to which the excellence of *naẓm* is attributed, is not the raw and unmarked meaning, but it is the meaning that takes special form in the psyche; it is the image of meaning and not the meanings without the image (Sweity, 126).

When the excellence of *naẓm* is achieved, the composer of discourse has created something special. Whether in the form of an individual image or in reference to an entire text, successfully organized discourse produces new meaning that stimulates the psyche. In such discourse, the meanings of individual words are only relevant as they pertain to the meaning of a unified image or images within the context of an entire text. Sweity concludes that for al-Jurjānī,

> *naẓm* refers to the process of composing a literary text. It involves establishing *taʿlīq* (interrelationships) between words and meanings according to grammatical meanings and grammatical rules. Since eloquence is more than mere correct grammaticality, it requires consideration of such non-linguistic factors as the intention of the speaker or writer, the psychological state of the listener or reader, the shared or unshared knowledge between discourse participants, and the larger context of discourse (Sweity, 231-232).

Naẓm is a term meant to acknowledge that several factors culminate in the composition of a text. In the composition of poetry, the poet's education and mastery of the principles of grammar, the poet's knowledge and appreciation for poetry and rhetoric, and the poet's psychological state as it pertains to inspiration are all relevant to al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm*. Furthermore, the intellectual capacity, cultural knowledge, and even emotional state of the recipient are also relevant to determinations of meaning because they naturally influence interpretation. Finally, in *naẓm* additional factors play a part in the suitability of a text's composition. According to Sweity,

> these factors encompass all the elements of the wider context of the discourse within the communication process. […] the two participants (the speaker and the listener), their psychological, cultural and social make-up, the nature of the subject of discourse, the

> degree of shared or unshared knowledge between the two participants, the degree of importance of the subject of discourse for the participants, and the purpose of discourse (Sweity, 234).

In this framework, meaning, as related to the level of discourse springs initially from the specific organization of language elements to form an expression that is further defined by the composer and the recipient and whether they are moved or perhaps repulsed by their own abilities to comprehend the expression.

In reference to how this concept of *naẓm* contributes to the notion of the "organic unity" of an image or even an entire text, Abu Deeb inaugurates a fierce debate among contemporary readers of al-Jurjānī when he writes, "The creative process is said to consist not of isolated units which are then joined together, but of a finished construction in which the single units are simultaneously thought of in relation to each other, thus forming a syntactic pattern" (Abu Deeb, 37). This relatively straightforward assertion leads Abu Deeb to the conclusion that al-Jurjānī envisioned a sense of "organic unity" whether in regards to an individual expression or in reference to a text as a whole. For example, Abu Deeb suggests that unity is apparent where the meaning of a single word is "united" with the meaning of another word creating a meaningful comparative image, and in reference to a text as a whole where several images are drawn together in the effort to "unite" the text under a single narrative umbrella or motif. According to Abu Deeb, "The expressive power of the word, then, is derived from the relations and interaction between the word and its immediate context, on the one hand, and the wider situational context, on the other. The context does not *add* to the beauty and eloquence of the word, it *creates* these elements in it" (Abu Deeb, 42). An individual expression, in this rendering, is important intrinsically in and of itself without broader reference to the "text," but also has relevance to the

meaning of text in which it appears as a whole. In this case it is important to recognize that an individual expression may lack meaning without reference to a broader thematic occurrence apparent only within the context of the entire text. Abu Deeb concludes that it is possible that, "A word may have more than one meaning according to the number of contexts in which it may be used. But in a given construction, the context selects the meaning which is most suitable to that construction" (Abu Deeb, 45). The suggestion that textual context, as defined of course by the text itself, "selects" the meaning of words and expressions leads to the conclusion that the poet makes an intentional effort to unite a text both at the level of the individual expression and with reference to the composition as a whole.

Additionally Abu Deeb explains that while the meaning of a particular expression is determined extrinsically by its relationship to other expressions within a text, it is also determined by the cultural background and knowledge of both the poet and the recipient. According to Abu Deeb,

> It has been clearly demonstrated that the meaning-function of the image is achieved through the participation of the hearer with his intimate knowledge of the linguistic context on the one hand, and the wider cultural context on the other. It is through the associations evoked by these two contexts, and through their interaction, that the image conveys its meaning (Abu Deeb, 78).

This assertion suggests that a certain level of "unity" between the expression, the text, and the cultural competence of the poet and recipient is necessary in order to determine meaning.

In response to Abu Deeb's assertion, in *Beyond the Line: Classical Arabic Literary Critics on the Coherence and Unity of the Poem*, C.J.H. Van Gelder argues that when al-Jurjānī

shows an interest in "organic unity," he is discussing particular lines or the collection of several lines that contribute to a unified meaning, "But nowhere does he hint at the possibility, or the desirability, of conceiving of the whole poem, or a theme in a poem, as a unity" (Van Gelder, 132). He goes on to suggest that, "When ᶜAbd al-Qāhir is said to quote whole poems more than once [by Abu Deeb] it should be kept in mind that they are usually very short; moreover, they are not discussed as wholes" (Van Gelder 133). In these citations Van Gelder introduces a disagreement among modern scholars as to how al-Jurjānī envisioned the potential for "unity" as applied to individual images or to a text in its entirety.

In al-Jurjānī's discussion of examples of *tamthīl* and *istiᶜārah* expressions based in *tamthīl*, it is necessary to unify several sentences to create meaningful comparisons. Al-Jurjānī comments on

التشبيه الذي هو الأوْلَى بأن يسمَّى تمثيلا لبُعده عن التشبيه الظاهر الصريح، ما تجدُه لا يحصل لك إلا من جملة من الكلام أو جملتين أو أكثر [...] و هي و إن كان قد دخل بعضُها في بَعْضٍ حتى كأنها جملةٌ واحدة، فإن ذلك لا يمنعُ من أن تكون صُور الجملة معنا حاصلة تشير إليها واحدةً واحدةً. ثم إنّ الشَبَه مُنْتَزع من مجموعها، من غير أن يمكن فَصْلُ بعضها عن بعض، و إفرادُ شطر من شطر، حتى إنك لو حذفت منها جملة واحدة من أيّ موضع كان، أخلَّ ذلك بالمغزى من التشبيه.

> Comparison (*tashbīh*) which is more appropriately named *tamthīl* for its remoteness from the visibly explicit *tashbīh*. What you find in the comparison does not reach you except through a passage or two sentences or more. […] As it happens the sentences are mutually interlocking as if they were one sentence, and indeed that does not prevent the images of each sentence coming together in aggregate to point to a single [meaning]. Then, the comparison is extracted from the sentences as a whole, without it being

> possible to separate one sentence from the other, or to single out one line from another, so that if you omitted one sentence from its place anywhere in the expression, the meaning of the comparison would be broken (*Asrār*, 81).

This particular citation appears to support, at least in part, Abu Deeb's assertions about the concept of unity. The criteria differentiating *tamthīl* from *tashbīh*, namely that comprehension of *tamthīl* expressions requires a deeper reflection upon the context in which they appear, implies that the several sentences contributing to the meaning of the expression must be unified. Van Gelder agrees with this point to a limited extent, but is careful to identify that for al-Jurjānī,

> His main concern was a new appraisal of the relation between 'form' and 'content' or *lafẓ* and *maʿnā*, whether from a syntactical viewpoint, with the sentence as a basic unit, or as regards figurative speech, with the 'image' as a basic unit – the two approaches are never completely detached. The integration of *lafẓ* and *maʿnā* in his theory of *naẓm*, 'composition,' is such that there is good reason to see in ʿAbd al-Qāhir an advocate of some form of organic unity – at least when 'the whole' is taken to be the sentence or the image (Van Gelder, 130).

This concession allows for the consideration of "unity" with regard to the sentence or the image, but Van Gelder rejects the implication that al-Jurjānī has identified the necessity for a more broadly defined sense of textual unity. Explicitly conflicting with Abu Deeb's claim that al-Jurjānī regards the poem as a unified entity, Van Gelder concludes that,

> Abu Deeb concentrates his discussion on single images, or at most on the unity of the single image with its immediate context; hardly on the relationships between all the images in a poem. Abu Deeb is aware of that himself. It is true that the Coleridgean

> concept of organic creation is not exclusively concerned with whole poems, but I fail to see how it can be claimed that al-Jurjānī conceives of the poem as a unified whole. (Van Gelder 130-131).

Van Gelder is not alone in suggesting that Abu Deeb is mistaken in his assertion that al-Jurjānī was interested in textual unity beyond the image. In *The Theology of Meaning: ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's Theory of Discourse*, Margaret Larkin suggests that Abu Deeb's scholarship on al-Jurjānī is an example of, "a tendency on the part of some modern critics studying the scholarship of ᶜAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī to treat the body of his work quite apart not only from the intellectual context in which he thrived, but also as unique in the chain of literary scholars whose work he inherited" (*Theology*, 10). Without trying to diminish his contribution to studies of al-Jurjānī, she adds that Abu Deeb's work is indicative of critics that have interpreted al-Jurjānī's, "thinking through the single, predetermined – and forcedly modern – lens of one discipline. This approach is one that inevitably masks the depth of ᶜAbd al-Qāhir's scholarship" (*Theology*, 22). She makes this reference to identify that to al-Jurjānī, "theology, on the one hand, and grammar and rhetoric, on the other, were organically interrelated" (*Theology*, 22). In the current study, the narrow focus on the literary application of al-Jurjānī's work is intended to isolate specific aspects of his theory of poetic imagery and to apply his principles to readings of contemporary literature in Arabic and thus not to elucidate more broadly on al-Jurjānī's various other contributions to the Arabic cultural heritage.[35]

[35] Both Margaret Larkin in, *The Theology of Meaning*, and Ahmad Sweity in *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Naẓm*, provide impressive contemporary analyses of al-Jurjānī's various theological and linguistic influences in addition to identifying his continued relevance in Arabic literary theory.

Larkin does, however, open the door slightly toward validating considerations of textual unity based on al-Jurjānī's framework. She refers to al-Jurjānī's approach to evaluating form (*ṣūra*) as it applies to an image suggesting,

> There is no doubt, therefore, that al-Jurjānī's concept of *ṣūra*, in its emphasis on its uniquely individual nature, as well as its consciously bounded quality, does to some degree invite a comparison with what are in fact quite modern notions of organic unity in discourse. It is a comparison, however, that has been overemphasized by writers such as Kamal Abu Deeb (*Theology*, 121).

Larkin warns of the pitfalls of overemphasizing what she considers to be a more modern reading of al-Jurjānī's theory of composition, but in this case she does not entirely rule out the potential to apply al-Jurjānī's theory to arguments supporting the notion of textual unity. She explains that, "Abu Deeb's reasoning departs from firm ground with his elucidation of al-Jurjānī's concept of *naẓm*, which he translates throughout as 'construction,' though this translation is only sometimes appropriate" (*Theology*, 122). Larkin writes that Abu Deeb is overreaching in his analysis because of, "the fact that al-Jurjānī offers no description of anything we might conceive of as literary 'unit' or 'whole'" (*Theology*, 122). The core of this objection to Abu Deeb is that he has ascribed to a textual whole a method of reading that al-Jurjānī only applies to readings of specific, individual images. Larkin explains,

> what Abu Deeb fails to point out is that the examples that al-Jurjānī provides of this discourse […] consist of the following: three examples consisting of single lines of poetry; three examples of two verses each, and one example consisting of three consecutive verses. Furthermore, in each instance it is either the syntax or the working of

> a particular rhetorical figure that dictates this unity of formulation. […] all of these examples are dictated by syntax or rhetoric that hold the lines together. They yield at least a kind of symmetry or balance and, at most, some degree of irony. Each of the complete 'units' represents a complete thought and is, in that sense, a self-contained whole. A single, complete thought, however, is not what is suggested by Abu Deeb's 'literary expression.' (*Theology*, 123-125)

As opposed to what she sees as Abu Deeb's overreaching, Larkin identifies an appropriate method of evaluating an individual image as a balanced, complete, and self-contained whole based on al-Jurjānī's framework. Her criticism of Abu Deeb is that he is guilty of applying this framework to the question of textual unity in a way that is unjustified by al-Jurjānī's theory. While acknowledging his important contribution to contemporary scholarship on al-Jurjānī, Larkin concludes that Abu Deeb offers "a case of a twentieth-century critic projecting a modern term onto an eleventh century scholar" (*Theology*, 127). Larkin further suggests that "while it is a noble attempt to integrate al-Jurjānī into a broader world of literary criticism than his own tradition, one has to wonder whether the Shaykh, as presented by Abu Deeb, would be recognizable to his eleventh century scholarly colleagues" (*Theology*, 127). Larkin's objection to Abu Deeb is unambiguous and accurate on its merits. She identifies the fact that while al-Jurjānī's approach to reading images does explicitly allow for a discussion of "unity" as it applies to the notion of balance or harmony between elements of discourse, al-Jurjānī did not necessarily concern himself with a more broadly defined textual unity.

Larkin's reading is also more closely aligned with the Arabic literary tradition that al-Jurjānī would have known. Helmut Ritter explains that in the classical tradition individual images were not read as functions of a unified textual whole. According to Ritter, this is because

> the literary interest of an Arab is short lived: he has not the patience to waste much time on one subject, to listen to long stories. The Arabian *adab* author fears nothing so much as to tire the listener or reader by dwelling too long on one subject. For this reason Arabian literature sometimes makes a rather kaleidoscopic impression. Writers do not deal at any length with a single theme, but pass on quickly to another; and all narratives are rather short, hardly more than anecdotes. In poems the interest lies not so much in the whole poetic structure as in the beauty of single verses (Ritter, 2).

However, as it applies to the current study, both Larkin and Abu Deeb provide an appropriate framework for analyzing the potential for unity within a given image and to further explore how individual images contribute to a unified textual whole. It is entirely justifiable to acknowledge that al-Jurjānī is not necessarily interested in textual unity while also endeavoring to apply his rubric for the analysis of images to readings of how those images can potentially be regarded as being united within a text. In, *Al-Mutanabbī, Voice of the ᶜAbbasid Poetic Ideal*, Larkin explicitly acknowledges that "through his concept of *ṣūra* (form), [al-Jurjānī provides] the basis for evaluating the role of a unit of discourse within a textual whole (*Voice*, 109). The question of form, in this case, re-introduces al-Jurjānī's more broadly defined concept of *naẓm*.

As it applies to images, form is an element of discourse reliant upon the unity of certain elements of language such as word choice, order, and grammatical structure. In his article, "Inside the Speaker's Mind: Speaker's Awareness as Arbiter of Usage in Arab Grammatical Theory," Ramzi Baalbaki, suggests that al-Jurjānī zealously appeals, "for placing meaning at the center stage of grammatical analysis and repeatedly argues that *naẓm* – whose narrow sense corresponds to word order, but which more generally refers to the complex relations among the constituents of a structure – is nothing other than the proper adherence to the discipline of

grammar" (Baalbaki, 11). Baalbaki explains that within the rules of grammar a speaker can be acutely precise in an utterance because its form appears first in the mind and the final expression is the result of a deliberate, mental effort to create new meaning based in established syntactical relationships:

> Based on the conviction that the arrangement of meanings is prior to the arrangement of words, and that form is subsidiary to meaning, it follows that any change in syntax is necessarily accompanied by a change in meaning. The speaker's awareness of the intricacies of syntactic relations hence acts as a virtual arbiter in his choice of the *naẓm*, which best expresses the intended meaning (Baalbaki, 11-12).

A variety of "choices" are made as a result of the speaker's mental process for creating an utterance. Such choices or decisions accumulate and are finally manifest in the final expression. Arranging discourse elements in the service of meaning is not an arbitrary process. Adūnīs suggests that al-Jurjānī

> considers that composition (*naẓm*) is the essential element in revealing the poetical quality of a written text. […] By this he does not mean joining one thing to another haphazardly but arranging the words in accordance with the arrangement of the meanings in the soul, so that the meanings are harmonized and fit together as demanded by the intellect (Adūnīs, 44).

The assertion that meaning in a particular image is not "haphazardly" arranged combined with the idea that "meanings are harmonized" by the method of composition allows for the potential to consider how images work together, "unified," within the broader context of the entire

composition while avoiding the suggestion that al-Jurjānī was in any way interested in textual unity. Adūnīs continues his development of meaning by suggesting that for al-Jurjānī,

> a word is not ugly or beautiful in itself: its ugliness or beauty depends upon its context and the way it is made to relate to the other words around it. Similarly, eloquence does not lie in the individual words which are used, but in the particular ways they are woven together and the artistic and semantic relationships constructed by this fabric of words (Adūnīs, 52).

With his reference to a "fabric of words" Adūnīs implies a reflection on how particular images "(inter)act" within a narrative and whether or not they can be regarded in aggregate with reference to a sense of a broader compositional unity. Therefore, analyzing such unity should not necessitate making assertions about al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm* unsupported by his work, but should still offer the space to evaluate how examples of imagery can be analyzed with respect to their impact on an entire piece of writing. From this perspective it is entirely reasonable to utilize al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm* in the effort to identify points of unity between compared images in an expression. It is also valuable to evaluate how several images can unify within the context of an entire piece of writing in the effort to determine how compositional unity contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the text as a whole. The following chapters will include reflections of how the repetitive deployment of specific images do in fact contribute to a sense of textual unity and how the effect of such unities of composition contribute to the overall quality of the narrative.

1f: Applying the Rubric

Conducive to proceeding in this analysis, it should be helpful to briefly review al-Jurjānī's rubric for the identification, classification, and analysis of comparative imagery in order to better facilitate the application of this rubric to the novels that make up the focus of chapters two through four. Initially, examples will be identified and classified within one of the three primary categories of comparative imagery: *tashbīh*, *tamthīl*, or *isti^{c}ārah*. Regardless of category, it will subsequently be necessary to identify whether the basis of comparison is found in a comparison between sensual or intellectual (analytical) attributes. Examples of *tashbīh* and *tamthīl* will be distinguished based on whether or not the expression necessitates a broader reflection upon contextual information in order to determine meaning. Examples of *isti^{c}ārah* will be initially classified with reference to whether they are based either in a *tashbīh* comparison comprehensible without reference to broad contextual information or in *tamthīl* where a reflection upon context is necessary to determine meaning. Additionally, because each primary category is intrinsically linked, examples of *tashbīh*, *tamthīl* and *isti^{c}ārah* will be further classified with reference to al-Jurjānī's three specifically defined categories based on an evaluation of the point of comparison drawn between disparate images.

For example, it will be necessary to determine whether the point of comparison is (1) established between two terms derived from the same category or genus where the point of similarity is one of intensity and the essential meaning exists in both terms, (2) drawn between two terms derived from separate categories or species which share similar qualities or characteristics, or (3) is established between two intellectual concepts. In the case of the third distinction, a further determination will be required in order to specify whether the point of comparison is (a) manifest between what is known or sensually perceptible and an intellectual concept, (b) is drawn between two sensually perceptible entities where the similarity apparent

between the two is intellectual, or (c) drawn between two intellectual forms. These determinations will be based on an evaluation of the details of particularization (*tafṣīl*) apparent in the shared attributes identified in each example.

Finally, in each of the following chapters, the preceding discussion of al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm* will be recalled in reference to the unity of individual images and in reference to how those images potentially contribute to an understanding of textual unity. The process of analyzing the details of particularization will allow for evaluating both the unity of individual comparisons, and examining how disparate images or concepts are harmonized on the scale of dissimilarity. This will be done in reference to how specific images come together in the development of primary motifs and are harmonized across each narrative as a whole.

Chapter Two

Another Setback for the Flying Dutchman:

Ḥalīm Barakāt's *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir ʻilá al-Baḥr*

عودة الطائر إلى البحر

Return of the Flying Dutchman to the Sea

"And the Arab saw all that he had done, and it was very bad." (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 10)[36]

2a: The Power of the Written Word

Ḥalīm Barakāt has enjoyed a long and prolific career as a novelist, sociologist, and academic which stretches back over the last half century. In dozens of publications, he has offered his commentary and insight into the myriad of dilemmas that have defined the Arab world in the aftermath of the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. His novels, in particular, are widely read and respected for their sensitive, vivid, and often bitingly critical treatment of questions surrounding both the potential for Arab unity and the failures of such initiatives during the second half of the twentieth century. As it pertains to the current study, his novel *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr* is perfectly suited for an exploration of comparative imagery. Although most of his fiction mirrors the realist nature of his non-fiction, his literary accomplishment in this novel can be witnessed specifically in his masterful deployment of figurative language. By comparison, in his earlier novel *Sittat Ayyām* (*Six Days*) Barakāt does not rely on extensive use of comparative imagery but favors a more linear form of literary realism. In *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr*, Barakāt develops several major and minor themes through the use of comparative imagery in the effort to provide a vividly realistic depiction of the June War of 1967. Barakāt's images can be scrutinized effectively when utilizing the principles al-Jurjānī espouses. With respect to the notion of truth and the degree to which the images provide unity in the service of developing the primary motifs, Barakāt offers images which vary in intensity and in impact on the major themes. Among the primary motifs is a comparison between the Palestinian people

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[36] ورأى العربي كل ما فعله فإذا هو سيء جدا.

and their aspirations for an independent homeland with the ship's captain and crew in Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, perpetually wandering the sea in search of salvation. Through this image, Barakāt scrutinizes prospects for the future of effective leadership in the Arab world and questions the potential for Arab unity. Barakāt develops his images to explore what Edward Said calls the "Question of Palestine," and in perhaps the most controversial of the novel's images, he likens the Israelis to Nazis with specific reference to man's inhumanity to his fellow man in times of war.

Beyond these primary motifs, which rely on the presence and repetition of specific images to form a complete whole or unity as defined in al-Jurjānī's principles of *naẓm*, Barakāt infuses his text with several minor themes based on comparisons that are worthy of examination for their value as examples of *tashbīh*, *tamthīl*, and *istiᶜārah*. For example, he is highly critical of foreign intervention, particularly from the United States, in the affairs of Arab nations; he specifically draws comparisons between American intervention in the Middle East in the past half century and the war in Viet Nam. In a twist on this relatively negative perspective of the United States, Barakāt introduces a highly sympathetic American character, Pamela, who provides a vehicle for considering several of the central themes of the novel. Developing Pamela's character also provides Barakāt with the opportunity to *re-imagine* the traditional Orientalist notion of the exotic eastern woman as an object on display for the pleasure of the Western male gaze.

The object of this chapter is to consider how these images are tied together to unify meaning relative to the primary motifs within the narrative. Each of al-Jurjānī's three levels of comparison, *tashbīh*, *tamthīl*, and *istiᶜārah*, are apparent in the novel, and they work in concert to provide a unified reading of the novel's various themes. Applying al-Jurjānī's specific rubric for

the analysis of these images provides an efficient approach to interpreting and determining meaning within the realist frame Barakāt maintains throughout the narrative. Ramzī Ṣafadī, Barakāt's primary protagonist, actually offers what may be read as a definition of the power of the written word:

لا سلاح نجيده غير الكلام. بيوتنا من كلام. قصورنا من أحلام. أحلامنا من كلام. صادراتنا كلام. علاقاتنا مع كلماتنا غريبة. نخترعها غير أنها في المدى البعيد تسيطر علينا وتخلقنا كما تشاء. المخلوق يصبح خالقاً، والخالق مخلوقاً. مع الزمن ننسى أن كلماتنا ألفاظ. نعتبرها حقائق. نصدق ما نقول ونسمع. كل يخدع نفسه ويخدع الآخرين. نتحول إلى جنود ونسلم قيادتنا للكلمات. نأكل الكلام. ونشرب الكلام. ونقطن الكلام. وننتحر في الكلام.

> There is no weapon we use as well as words. Our homes are of words. Our castles are of dreams. Our dreams are of words. Our exports are words. Our relationships with words are strange. We create them, but in the long run they take control over us and they mold us as they please. The created becomes creator, and the creator, created. With time we forget that our words are expressions. We consider them truths. We believe what we say and hear. Everyone deceives himself and deceives others. We become soldiers and we submit to words. We eat words. We drink words. We live words. We kill ourselves in words (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 134).

Words in this citation are likened to weapons beyond the control of their creators. The first sentence read in isolation is an example of a *tashbīh* comparison between a sensually perceptible object, a weapon, and an intellectual concept, words. The synthesis between points of comparison in this image relies on the understanding that weapons and words share a similar attribute of having the power to cause harm. Deceptive words bear down upon Barakāt's characters and breed self doubt and apathy in the same way that more conventional weapons do.

However, when juxtaposed with the sentences that follow, Barakāt introduces this comparison emphasizing the power of words to cause harm in his development of a *tamthīl* comparison between two intellectual concepts, words and gods, comprehensible within the broader context of the novel's reflection upon the June War. Within the narrative, this reflection on the power of words is indicative of Ramzī's frustration with the lack of progress in the effort to reclaim a Palestinian homeland. What he hears from his fellow Arabs are only words lacking the requisite action to provide them with meaning. This citation also includes the notion that although people "create" words, eventually the "created becomes creator." In this portion of the citation specifically, the reference to words as having divine authority over people is an example of *istiʿārah* based in the previously established *tamthīl*. In this case, the comparison is manifest between two intellectual concepts, a god and words, where Barakāt implies a shared attribute between them with respect to their authority over humanity. If the premise that a god created people is accepted on its surface, eventually humans become the creator of words which subsequently create meaning on their own, and it is appropriate in each case to suggest that the "created becomes the creator."

In another instance where the power of words is the focus of consideration, in a lecture Ramzī explains to his students:

في البدء كانت الكلمة. الإنسان هو الذي خلق الرموز، لكنها هي بدورها تخلقه. هو يعطي الأشياء معناها ولكنها تكتسب قوة ذاتية فتستقل عنه إلى حد بعيد وتسيطر عليه بقدر ما يسيطر عليها. الإنسان، مثلاً، يرفض أن يتساهل بحقوقه، ومع الزمن يتحول رفضه إلى رمز والرمز إلى قضية كبرى تستقطب كل إمكاناته. وباسم هذا الرمز يخوض الحرب إذا كان ذلك ضرورياً.

> In the beginning there was the word. Man created symbols, but it is symbols in turn that shape man. Man gave things their meaning but they acquire strength of their own and become independent from him to a large extent, and they control him as much as he controls them. Man, for example, refuses to compromise his rights, but with time his refusal becomes a symbol and the symbol becomes a great cause rallying all of his abilities. And in the name of this symbol he will rush into war if necessary (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 22-23).

In each of these citations, people create words and assign them meaning, but eventually the words begin to create their own meanings. Thus, in these examples the words are like gods creating meaning and exerting power over humanity. In the protection of words, as it is with the protection of a "great cause," men will fight and die. After the outbreak of hostilities Ramzī laments that he failed to tell his students, "Man created war, but war in its role becomes independent from his will and it shapes him into the form it wants and appoints him sovereign over the ruins of his soul" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 23).[37] This expression builds upon the previous suggestion by introducing another *istiʿārah* focusing on the term "war" (الحرب). Like words in the previous frame which possess divine authority, war becomes a god commanding sovereign authority over those who initiate conflict. Each of these citations includes examples of what al-Jurjānī considers "pure" metaphor (إستعارة خالصة) in their juxtaposition of the intellectual concepts of words, war, and god in which the point of comparison is an intellectual reflection upon their respective authority to influence human actions.

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[37] الإنسان هو الذي خلق الحرب، ولكنها هي بدورها تستقل عن إرادته وتخلقه على الشاكلة التي تريد وتنصِّبه ملكاً على أنقاض نفسه.

This general idea in relation to the suggestion that words are weapons and like gods possess a power independent of their origins is among the novel's more provocative recurring themes. Barakāt develops the notion that the Arab peoples have deceived themselves and are regularly and deliberately being deceived by their leaders. As applied to this literary analysis of Barakāt's novel, Ramzī's lamentation on the power and impact of words reminds us that while we have the power to create words for meaningful effect, this is a limited agency for the writer and audience. The writer creates meaning within the limits set by the language and must approach the audience with an understanding of those limits. Although presumably any audience may have access to a given narrative, the impact of words and the images they represent are only meaningful within the specific historical and cultural contexts in which they appear.

2b: Palestine as the Flying Dutchman

It is certainly not uncommon to create a character that is meant to embody the ambitions, histories, affiliations, hardships, conflicts, and thus the unity of the "nation" or the "people." In *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr*, Ramzī Ṣafadī assumes this role as a prototypical everyman Arab. Considering Barakāt's own experiences living in Lebanon during the 1967 war with Israel, Ramzī provides a semi-autobiographical link between the author and his otherwise fictional narrative. Ramzī is a Palestinian professor living and teaching in exile in Beirut, and he is riddled with angst because of his inability to offer an effective contribution to the Palestinian cause. Barakāt develops this character to acknowledge several difficult aspects of his own encounter with and response to the crisis of the June War as an Arab intellectual.

In the first reference connecting the plight of the Palestinian people with Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, the everyman Arab Ramzī is imagined as a ship's captain: "He felt like he was a captain of a small ship preparing to cross an ocean no one had ever crossed before. And he was confused when it occurred to him that he was a ship's captain, but he had no authority and did not know the location of the helm, or how to control it" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 21).[38] In the first sentence of this description, the comparison between Ramzī and a ship's captain is an example of *tashbīh* juxtaposing two terms derived from the same category; both are humans, thus the point of comparison suggests that they are both embarking upon a journey into the unknown. Ramzī commands a "small ship," and this increases the danger he faces in confronting what lies ahead. Not only is he unqualified for his command, his ship appears poorly suited for the potential peril of navigating unknown waters. The term "ocean" (محيط) in this sentence is an example of *istiʿārah* based in *tamthīl* because it is necessary to refer to the context in which Ramzī is reflecting on the task of challenging the status quo within the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict leading into the June War. The point of comparison between the ocean and the June War, two entities drawn from separate categories, is an intellectual comparison focusing on the idea that at the beginning stages of the voyage, or the war, the future is unknown and the potential for danger is acutely understood. Within the frame of the two sentences that complete the citation, the comparison between Ramzī, the exiled Palestinian intellectual, and the captain of a ship is a relatively simple *tamthīl* that forms the foundation for the broader comparison between the nation of Palestine and Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*. In this example, the basis of comparison is manifest in the similarity drawn between an inexperienced captain of a ship and Ramzī, the educated man unable to assert his traditionally recognized authority because he does

[38] أحس كأنه ربان سفينة صغيرة تستعد لعبور محيط لم يعبره أحد من قبل. واضطرب عندما خطر له أنه ربان سفينة، فهو لا يملك سلطة ولا يعرف مكان الدفة ولا من يسيطر عليها.

not know how. The captain, unaware of the structure of authority on board or even the location of the helm, is like Ramzī who seems to hold the potential of leadership but lacks the basic knowledge of how to effectively direct the course of the nation. Ramzī feels obligated to participate in the advancement of his people and their aspirations, but is hampered and continually frustrated by his inability to effectively steer the ship. The intended point of comparison between Ramzī and the ship's captain is effectively rooted in their respective social roles. Ramzī is an intellectual; his education and stature give him the potential to lead, but he lacks authority and does not know how to either control or influence structures of power. He is like a captain unaware of the very mechanisms designed to steer his ship and unable to assert authority over his crew. As a symbol of the Palestinian in exile, Ramzī is cast from his homeland into an unknown sea, lacking the knowledge and wherewithal to effectively navigate through the present and powerless to chart out his own future.

After establishing the premise comparing Ramzī with a ship's captain, Barakāt deliberately draws the connection between the plight of the Palestinian people and the doomed sailors in Wagner's opera: "Suddenly it occurred to him that his country is a *Flying Dutchman*. The students' shouts are like the sailors' shouts when they saw land. Yesterday he was listening to the opera Wagner derived from a legend having to do with a bewitched ship that cannot reach port, still sailing since time immemorial" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 33).[39] In this developing motif and in this citation specifically, there are several "layers" of comparison adding to the complexity of the broader *tamthīl*. Initially, the comparison is drawn between the nation of Palestine, arguably an abstraction, and the ship itself. These two entities are derived from separate categories, a ship

[39] فجأة يتداعى إلى ذهنه أن بلاده هولندي طائر. أصوات الطلاب تشبه أصوات البحارة عندما رأوا البر. أمس كان يصغي لهذه الأوبرا التي استوحاها فاغنر من أسطورة تدور حول سفينة مسحورة لا يمكنها الوصول إلى ميناء، وهي لا تزال تبحر منذ الأزل.

and a nation, but they are compared as vessels. The ship carries its beleaguered crew hoping for salvation, and Palestine, or at least the idea of Palestine as a sovereign nation, "carries" the cumulative hopes and aspirations of the Palestinian people. Secondly, a comparison is drawn between the shouting students Ramzī observes from his office window and the sailors' exuberant cries of joy upon spotting land. In this case, both the students and the sailors come from the same category or species, but the point of comparison connects the two groups in terms of the intensity of their state of euphoria initiated by the hope of salvation. Additionally, this comparison imagines both the students and the sailors as linked by the idea that salvation for either group is a goal perpetually beyond reach.

The introduction of this comparison includes a quick synopsis of the Flying Dutchman's travails in order to situate the comparative link to the Palestinian people and the history of partition in the wake of the creation of the nation of Israel in 1948. An act of hubris on the part of the Flying Dutchman's captain compels the gods to punish him along with his crew to eternally sail the seas save every seven years when he has the chance to find true love. In the absence of true love, the captain and crew are doomed to return to the sea and wander aimlessly without control over their own destinies.[40] Like the Dutchman, "Ramzī thinks that his country is a ship sailing for a long time without a goal over seas of fear, terror, and ignorance, unable to reach the shore. The waves toss the ship about and shake its rotten planks. And its crew,

[40] In his essay, "Flying Thoughts on the Dutchman," Robert Donington suggests that, "the Dutchman of this legend represents a typically ambiguous potentiality emerging intermittently (at seven-year intervals, the legend tells us) in or from the unconscious. One face is hateful, and insatiably demanding. The other face is purposeful and urgently challenging. If we can take him the right way round, the Dutchman may stand for our own most deep and dark-seeming purpose in life which can only achieve actuality in so far as we can recognize it and commit ourselves to it, cost what it may" (Donington, 596). This reading is similar to Barakāt's framework for defining a purpose in life for the Palestinian peoples and the necessity to devote themselves to initiatives directed toward self-determination and the establishment of an independent state whatever the cost.

ignorant of navigation, cry out from the depths" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 33).[41] The first sentence of this citation can be understood as an example of *tashbīh* because it makes sense that a country can face troubles like a ship unable to reach the shore without knowledge of contextual information beyond the expression, but the reference has already been linked to the overarching *tamthīl* framed along with the *Flying Dutchman* analogy. The reflected image of the Palestinian living in exile is abundantly clear here as well as Barakāt's bleak recognition that his people lack a productive, knowledgeable cadre of leaders capable of reversing the trend of humiliation and defeat that characterizes modern Palestinian history. Beyond the comparison between the ship and the nation of Palestine, this citation includes a reference to the waves crashing against the ship's rotten planks. Isolated within the longer citation, the term "waves" (الأمواج) and the term "ship" (سفينة) which is referenced only by the third person singular feminine pronoun "it" in the second sentence, and the "crew" (بحّارة) in the final sentence are examples of *istiʿārah* rooted in *tamthīl* because without the first sentence there is no way to connect the terms in the second and third sentences with the original comparison. The waves are a sensually perceptible entity compared with the forces arrayed against the intellectual concept of the Palestinian people faced with opposition in their search for self-determination. The ship, as has already been demonstrated, is a physical entity compared to the intellectual concept of Palestine as an independent nation, and the crew is a comparison between the sailors adrift and the Palestinian people lacking a sense of place. In the first two terms, the comparison is between entities drawn from separate categories which are compared with an intellectual concept. In the third case, the sailors and Palestinians are drawn from the same category and compared on the basis of the intensity of their plight.

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[41] يفكر رمزي في أن بلاده سفينة تبحر منذ زمن بعيد بلا هدف فوق بحار الخوف والرعب والجهل ويستحيل عليها الوصول إلى شاطئ ما. الأمواج تتقاذفها وتزلزل أخشابها العفنة. وبحّارتها الذين يجهلون الملاحة يصرخون من الأعماق.

Of particular interest is the concept that although they are sailors, the men charged with operating the ship lack any meaningful knowledge of seamanship. This seems to be contradictory perhaps, but the purpose of the comparison is to liken these sailors to the exiled population of the Palestinians. Like the sailors, the Palestinians find themselves living in a state of exile, but they lack the knowledge of just how to confront that particular dispensation. They are aimless, fearful, ignorant of the proper course of action, and susceptible to the pressure of outside forces beyond their control.

In Wagner's opera, the captain is punished for an act of hubris, pledging to sail on in spite of the dangerous natural elements confronting his ship and his crew. Ramzī ponders that the Palestinians' collective act of hubris was their refusal to simply put up with the status quo:

متى يجد بلاده؟ متى تجده بلاده؟ هو ضال، وبلاده ضالة. الإبن ضال والأب ضال. إلى متى يسافر في الهواء دون هدف؟ ليستغفر الآلهة. لا، لن يستغفر الآلهة. تريده أن يعود ذليلاً ويقبّل قدميها. الصمود هدفه الوحيد. ليس عنيداً. إنه يعرف قيمة الحرية. [...] حاول من قبل أن يعود إلى بلاده. فشل. [...] سيفشل ولكنه لن يستسلم. أن يعلن بأنه لن يستسلم للواقع تجديف بالنسبة إلى الآلهة. ستغضب عندما تسمع ذلك. ستقسم أن ترميه للأبد فوق البحار، فيتجول دون انتصار أو سلم. ستظل بلاده ملعونة طالما لا تستغفر الآلهة وتتخلى عن ولعها بالحرية.

> When would he find his country? When would his country find him? He was lost, and his country was lost. The son lost, the father lost. How long will he travel in the wind without a goal? Let him ask the gods for forgiveness. No, he will not ask the gods for forgiveness. They wanted him to return submissively and to kiss their feet. Resistance is his only goal. He was not stubborn. He knew the value of freedom. […] He had previously tried to return to his country. He failed. […] He will fail but he will not surrender. To announce that he will not surrender to reality is blasphemy to the gods.

> They will be furious when they hear that. They will swear an oath to cast him forever over the seas, and he will wander without victory or peace. His country will continue to be cursed as long as it does not ask the gods for forgiveness and abandon its love of freedom (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 73-74).

This is an interesting point in the development of the *tamthīl* comparison between Palestine and the *Flying Dutchman* and is actually a common point Barakāt emphasizes in his fiction and non-fiction. The defenders of the status quo would have the Palestinian people living forever in exile regardless of their suffering and the consequences of their stateless existence. The term "gods" (الآلهة) in this case appears as an example of an instance of *istiʿārah* based in *tamthīl* because without referring back to the underlying theme, the comparative imagery lacks a source image. If we understand the "gods" in this passage as an allusion to the various authorities perpetuating the status quo in Palestinian, then this is an example of "pure metaphor" (إستعارة خالصة) as the comparison is between two intellectual concepts and there is no reference to *al-mushabbah*. In the context of the broader *tamthīl*, these "gods" include western governments, ineffective Arab leaders, and of course, Israel. In *A Brief Introduction to Modern Arabic Literature*, David Tresilian suggests that although Barakāt is highly critical of Israel and the West, "Nevertheless, the novel also makes bitter criticisms of Arab society. […] Barakāt's work suggests that the failure of Palestinian and Arab society to modernize has left it open to attack" (Tresilian, 100-101). The failure of Arab governments to modernize undermines societal aspirations for self determination. In this case, Barakāt appropriately includes Arab leaders among the "gods," lording over the people and contributing to their depravity. As an extension of this image, the citation ends with an instance of *istiʿārah* involving a comparison between Palestine and the *Flying Dutchman*. Although there is no direct reference to Wagner's cursed ship, it is clear that

like the ship, Palestine has been cursed by the gods and cast upon the sea to wander without peace for eternity.

Barakāt establishes a basis for the development of the comparison between Palestine and the *Flying Dutchman* earlier in the novel. He introduces the notion that as a consequence of ineffective leadership, Palestine has no clear direction, and in the following expression, the country is like a ship without a rudder:

يحس أن بلاده يرفضها الموت بقدر ما ترفضها الحياة. بلاده سفينة بلا دفة، ويؤلمه أن معظم سكان بلاده يحسبون أن لها دفة. ويردد في نفسه أن بلاده بلا دفة، بلا دفة، بلا دفة، ولكنها ليست بلا غضب. هنا مستقبلها وهنا معناها. إنما ستظل آلامها عميقة كالبحار التي يسافرون فوقها حتى تجد من ينقذها.

> He feels that death rejects his country as much as life does. His country is a ship without a rudder, and it hurts him that most of its inhabitants assume that it does have a rudder. And he repeated to himself that his country is without a rudder, without a rudder, without a rudder, but it is not without rage. Here is its future and here is its significance. But his country's suffering will continue, deep as the seas upon which they travel, until it finds who will rescue it (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 34).

The comparison between Palestine and a ship with no rudder is an example of *tashbīh*. The image is clear enough without a contextual referent that like a ship with no rudder, the country lacks the necessary "equipment" to direct its own course. In this case the ship is a sensually perceptible entity and the country, as has been shown, is an abstract intellectual concept. In the continued development of the primary *tamthīl*, the difficulty is not simply that the captain is ignorant of the location of the rudder, but that the rudder is missing all together. The lack of the rudder constitues an effective image in relating the frustration of the Arab peoples at large and

their various responses to a series of defeats dating from the creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948, including and exacerbated by the June War of 1967. A ship on the sea may have a difficult time navigating tough waters even with a properly functioning rudder. However, in the absence of this most basic and essential part of its construction, a ship without a rudder is incapable of navigating any waterway effectively and is susceptible to every change in current whether fortuitous or disastrous. Like a crippled ship with rotting planks shaken by the waves, the Palestinian people lack direction and even the ability to direct themselves.[42] They are vulnerable and imminently threatened by volatile currents of the complex geo-political forces arrayed against their struggle for independence. Additionally, there is an instance of *tashbīh* at the end of the previous citation suggesting that the suffering felt by Palestinians is as "deep as the seas upon which they travel." In this case both units of comparison, suffering and the depth of the sea, are sensually perceptible. They are drawn from different categories, emotional pain and a geographic reality, but they share a common attribute linking the depth of the sea with a profound "depth" of suffering. The shared attribute in this instance is the extension of time and space with the duration of suffering linked to the depth of the sea. Both are limits that cannot be ascertained.

In another effective development of his underlying *tamthīl*, Barakāt repeatedly compares reactions of university students in Beirut at the onset of the 1967 war with the sailors of the *Flying Dutchman* reacting to the sight of land.

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[42] The term *sukkān* (سُكّان) is rendered here as a plural for the term *sākin* (ساكِن) "dweller, inhabitant, resident, occupant." Although it may not have been deliberate and does not fit syntactically, it is interesting to note that the term *sukkān* (سُكّان) also means "rudder," making it particularly well suited for this passage. In this case, the term would constitute an instance of *istiʿārah* imbedded in the otherwise straightforward *tashbīh*. The inference here would be that the Palestinian people are in fact the masters of their own destinies; *they* should be acting as the rudder.

الحرب أعلنت الآن. الهولندي الطائر يرى البر. مرة أخرى يشرق الأمل. صخور شاهقة ترتفع من بعيد. يبدو أن السفينة تستطيع أن ترسو بأمان. أصوات البحارة تشق المساء. أصوات طلاب الجامعة في بيروت أمواج صاخبة تتلاطم وتتعالى مهللة للعودة. الأصوات تتعالى في جميع أنحاء الدول العربية.

> The war was declared now. The *Flying Dutchman* sees land. Once again hope rises. Towering rocks rise up from afar. It appears that the ship can anchor in safety. The voices of the sailors break the evening [like the dawn]. The voices of the university students in Beirut are roaring waves colliding and rising to a shout of joy for the return. The voices rise in all parts of the Arab countries (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 35).

At this point in the development of the *tamthīl* comparison, the university students become the sailors overwhelmed with excitement at the prospect that their struggles may finally be over. The comparison is between entities of the same category, humans, but the shared attribute is based on the intense emotion of the sailors and the students responding to the potential for salvation. The war is compared with land, as both represent the goals and aspirations of either the students or the sailors. A sense of euphoria spreads among the sailors of the *Flying Dutchman* upon their initial glimpses of land and the potential for salvation. Similarly, the students Ramzī observes celebrating the outbreak of war are caught up in the excitement of the moment, still unaware of the future, but encouraged by even the slightest indication of progress. In the expression suggesting that the sailors "break" the evening with their voices the verb *shaqq* (شقّ) meaning "to break" or "to cleave" implies "breaking dawn" in an *istiᶜārah* comparison between the dawn and the sailors' voices, two sensually perceptible entities drawn from different categories in an intellectual comparison. The term "dawn" is not present in the expression; in fact the phrase *shaqqa al-ṣubḥ* (شَقَّ الصُّبْحُ) which literally means "morning broke" is the opposite of the literal translation "evening broke" in the phrase *shaqqa al-masā'* (شَقَّ المَساءُ). In the

citation the comparison is apparent between the dawn breaking the darkness of night in conjunction with the voices of the sailors breaking the "darkness" of their aimless wandering. This reading is further supported as an instance of *isti^{c}ārah* based in *tamthīl* because of the previous sentence, "once again hope rises" (مرة أخرى يشرق الأمل). The verb *yashruq* (يشرق), meaning "to rise" or "to shine" like the sun, establishes a basis for the sailors' voices beginning to rise as a sign of their hope and to break or cleave the darkness. In the context of the current study, this is an appropriate comparison evocative of al-Jurjānī's discussion of the harmonious comparison between kindness and sunlight.[43] The sailors' voices are happy, and like the dawn, they break the darkness to introduce a new day full of opportunity. When out to sea, the sailors are shrouded in the darkness of their predicament, and hope only radiates when land is in sight.

Finally, in this citation the students' voices are rising like waves in a shout of joy indicating their readiness to push for the return to Palestine in a *tashbīh* comparison juxtaposing two sensually perceptible entities. The shared attribute is based on the intensity of the voices as compared to drops of water in the sea, unified, roaring, and poised to crash upon the shore that is a Palestinian homeland. The final reference to voices spreading across the Arab world is indicative of a sense of Arab unity as well as the Palestinian Diaspora coming together in the effort to bring this wave to the Israelis.

Barakāt continues to create complexity within this primary motif as he considers that the fate of the Palestinians, like that of the sailors of the *Flying Dutchman*, is tied to the competence of their leadership. Developing his character Ramzī as the embodiment of the nation, Barakāt uncovers his protagonist's self doubt: "The voices of the Arab students in the universities in Beirut blend with Arab voices in Jerusalem and with the crew of the *Flying Dutchman*. He

[43] Op. Cit., 185.

wished, if only his voice could ring out loud like these other voices. He feels a chill through his body" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 37).[44] In this example, the continued development of the underlying *tamthīl* comparison between the students and the crew of the *Flying Dutchman* is easily discerned. In the final sentence, the term *badan* (بدن) translated here as "body," also means "trunk", "torso", "hull", or "body (of a ship)." In this sentence the choice of this term indicates an example of *istiʿārah*, and Barakāt once again imagines Ramzī as the ship lacking a rudder. He is Palestine, but he feels uncertain and afraid as a chill shudders through his hull of rotting planks. The comparison is between two entities drawn from separate categories, Ramzī and the ship, and the shared attribute is an intellectual concept that measures their capacity to effectively "carry" their passengers to salvation. The underlying questions of Palestinian statehood have yet to be answered by anyone, and certainly not by intellectuals like Ramzī. This is evidence of Barakāt's lament for the failure of Arab unity to manifest in any meaningful way capable of confronting the unique challenges facing Arab civilization in the twentieth century.

For Barakāt, the consequences for this failure are grave:

فلسطين لم تعد قضية العرب فحسب، بل مقياس تقدمهم ومقدرتهم على الاستجابة للتحديات. أمام الامتحان يجدر به أن يتصلب ويجابه. النتائج مهمة، أما الموقف فأهم. المهم أن يواجه الامتحان، أن يخوض المعركة، أن يخترق الغابات، أن يتعرض للريح. إذا ما تردَّدت بلاده في مواجهة الامتحان اليوم بحجة أنها قد تكون ضعيفة أو غير قادرة، لن تواجهه في المستقبل.

> Palestine is no longer considered only an issue for the Arabs; rather it is the measure of their progress and their capacity to respond to the challenges. Facing the test he had better be uncompromising and defiant. The results are important, but the attitude is more important. It is important that he face the test, rush into battle, break through the forests,

[44] وتختلط أصوات الطلاب العرب في الجامعة في بيروت بأصوات العرب في القدس وبأصوات بحارة الهولندي الطائر. يود لو يرتفع صوته عالياً مثل بقية الأصوات. ويشعر بقشعريرة في بدنه.

> and face the wind. If his country hesitates in confronting the test today, under the pretense that it is weak or incapable, it will not face the test in the future (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir,* 37).

In this example of a *tashbīh* comparison between an intellectual concept and a perceptible entity, Palestine is the "measure" (مقياس) of progress for Arab civilization in the modern era. There is difficulty in this comparison because Palestine, especially in the aftermath of the June War, remains an abstraction based on loosely defined aspirations for statehood. Beyond its significance to Palestinians in the occupied territories and those in exile, Palestinian statehood represents an assortment of aspirations across the Arab world, not all of which emanate from a sense of empathy for the plight of the Palestinian people. The failure of these aspirations is where the lament for effective Arab leadership in Barakāt's novel is particularly acute. According to the citation, the answer to the test facing Arab civilization must include a vigorous effort to break through the forests and face the wind. The term "test" (الامتحان) is borrowed for the war itself in an *istiᶜārah* comparison between two sensually perceptible entities where the point of comparison is intellectual. The Arab people must not only uncompromisingly face the test that is the impending war, but also face the future from a position of strength. In the fourth sentence, the "forests" (الغابات) and the "wind" (ريح) are both examples of *istiᶜārah* in which these sensually perceptible terms are borrowed in this expression for intellectual concepts manifest in the obstacles standing in the way of Palestinian statehood. Among these obstacles Barakāt includes "Western" governments, Israel, and inadequate, corrupt Arab leaders.

In his essay, "Arabic Prose and Prose Fiction After 1948," in *Reflections on Exile*, Edward Said explains that in his novel Barakāt,

> examines responses in Beirut to an Arab political calamity which ought to be understood in terms of failure, not in those of an enemy's victory. […] In Barakāt's novel sentiment is employed to heighten the human poignancy of the disaster. For Barakāt disappointment and dislocation can always be made intelligible if they are commented on with reference to justificatory passion. The images of sea and fire, as well as the sequences using the *Flying Dutchman* figure, are instruments of clarification employed to increase the disaster's universality, and its tragic shades (*Reflections*, 58-59).

For both the sailors on the *Flying Dutchman* spotting land and the Arab people initiating a proactive attack on the status quo, their moment is now. An urgency is felt with the anticipation of finding land in both cases. The journey is not complete, but there is hope in the potential for salvation. In both cases this euphoria is short lived; the sailors return to sea, and Arab peoples return to the aimlessness and the "tragic shades" of the status quo.

Ramzī, a cynical and even pessimistic character, recognizes and laments these developments:

> بلاده وحيدة مثل الهولندي الطائر. مرَّة أخرى أعطى لها فرصة للوصول إلى هدفها. يبدو الآن أن الهدف يبتعد وقد يكون عليها أن تعود مرة أخرى إلى البحر لتعيش مع أمواجه دون أمل بالموت أو بالحياة. الهولندي الطائر مهدد بالعودة إلى البحر. لم يجد منقذاً يحبه حتى الموت. كان البحر قد رماه إلى الشاطئ، إنما يبدو أنه سيستعيده مرة أخرى. لا نافذة عنده على الحياة.

> His country is all alone like the *Flying Dutchman*. Once again it is given a chance to reach its goal. But it appears now that the goal is becoming more distant, and it might have to return once again to the sea to live among its waves without hope for death or life. The *Flying Dutchman* is threatened by the return to the sea. The captain did not find

> a savior to love him until death. The sea threw him upon the shore, although it appears the sea will reclaim him once again. For him there is no window onto life (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 71-72).

Again, the comparison between Palestine and the *Flying Dutchman* is explicitly stated, but in this example the point of comparison emanates from the similar consequences faced by the Palestinian people in light of the failure of the June War and the sailors forced to return to the sea in light of their captain's most recent failure to find true love. Near the end of the expression, Barakāt evokes his previous *istiʿārah* reference to a wave, but this time he compares the ship's coming to land and the inevitability of its return to the sea. The comparison is between two perceptible entities drawn from separate categories, both of which share the same inevitable movement to and from the land. Like a wave driven to the shore, eventually the waters recede, and the *Flying Dutchman* must return to the open water. The previous jubilation of the sailors and students is but a fleeting moment, quickly fading as the reality of life returns to the collective conscience.

In his novel, Barakāt introduces Pamela, Ramzī's American girlfriend to further complicate his narrative of the *Flying Dutchman*. Pamela tells Ramzī that the June War is only the latest humiliating defeat for the Arab nations in their confrontation with Israel: "As I recall, the *Flying Dutchman* was given a chance every seven years to search for a woman to love him until death and in that he would find his salvation. […] There must be another chance. […] Perhaps the gods will tire of the greed of their illegitimate child and his fanaticism" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 105).[45] This is another example of *istiʿārah* where Barakāt borrows the term "gods" for

[45] كما أذكر، يُعطى الهولندي الطائر فرصة كل سبع سنوات للبحث عن امرأة تحبه حتى الموت فيكون بذلك خلاصه. [...] لا بد من فرصة. [...] قد تتعب الآلهة من شراهة ابنها غير الشرعي وعصبيته.

the Western powers. This construction represents the sentiment that countries like the United States have a divine influence on the daily lives of individuals across the Arab world. In the final sentence of this expression there is an additional reference to the "illegitimate child" (ابنها غير الشرعي) of the gods, which is clearly Israel. With this example of *isti^{c}ārah*, comparing the state of Israel with an illegitimate child, Barakāt has identified a specific traditional criticism of the history leading up to the creation of the modern state of Israel. The comparison in this case is centered on two entities drawn from different categories, a country and a child, where the shared attribute is Barakāt's perception that the creation of Israel was an illegitimate act perpetrated by the West. Specifically he concludes that Israel was illegitimately established, and this was done at the expense of any claims to sovereignty on behalf of the Palestinian people by the Allied powers following World War II. Putting this opinion in the mouth of his only developed American "voice," Barakāt adds to the impact of this comparison as Pamela provides a vehicle for self critical analysis of American influence in the Arab world.[46]

This example also provides for a return to al-Jurjānī as it meets a fundamental measure of "pure" metaphor (إستعارة خالصة). The double unit of meaning is present without the necessity of mentioning both units. The absence of the referent in this image is in accordance with al-Jurjānī's suggestion that *isti^{c}ārah* is only effective when the meaning is accessible to the recipient. Barakāt has developed the overarching *tamthīl* comparison between Palestine and the

[46] In another specific correlation with traditional readings of Wagner's opera, Pamela is like Senta, because as Donington suggests, "she is not meant to be regarded as other women are, domestic and a candidate for ordinary married life, much though Erik in his uncomprehending enthusiasm would like her to be. So soon as she sings her transparently beautiful Ballad about the legend of the Flying Dutchman, we realize that she somehow knows that she is going to live that very legend and to take part in that, and not in ordinary married life. In other words, she is not enacting for us, in the opera, outer womanhood but inner femininity. And in that legendary role, it is her function to recognize and commit herself to the darkest stirrings urging us on to the next stage in life: always a painful transition which may feel like death, but is yet desirable if we are to grow out of childish things and into a relatively mature state of conscious responsibility" (Donington, 596). From her interaction with Ramzī, her estranged husband's ignorance, and her position in Barakāt's narrative as a facilitator of Ramzī's "painful transition" in overcoming his childish ways and facilitating his adoption of a conscious responsibility, Barakāt effectively situates Pamela as filling the role of Senta.

Flying Dutchman to the point where this particular *istiʿārah* becomes possible. Clearly the gods Pamela refers to are the Allied powers with their overbearing influence on the region, and Israel is the illegitimate creation of those same meddling foreign powers. The context of the development of the framing *tamthīl* makes this *istiʿārah* meaningful.

Later on in the novel Pamela's voice allows Barakāt to challenge his original comparison between the Palestinians and the crew of the *Flying Dutchman* cast upon the sea with no direction or leadership. She argues, "'The Arab is no *Flying Dutchman*. He does not lose hope. […] The enemy may be experienced in war, but he cannot see beyond his nose. He assumes that the more the wounds increase the more the Arab's despair intensifies, and that he will surrender. The assumption is false'" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 171).[47] Returning to the initial *tamthīl* comparison, Pamela seems to contradict the comparison while also confirming the point of similarity apparent between the captain and his crew of the *Flying Dutchman* and the Arab peoples who are all imagined as unwilling to abandon their cause regardless of adversity.[48] Although they may despair at the prospect of having to return to the sea, the sailors still endeavor to return for another opportunity for salvation. Similarly, the Palestinians will walk away from the most recent defeat willing to pursue the next.

Finally, with the last explicit reference to the comparison between Wagner's ship and the Palestinian in exile, Barakāt writes, "The *Flying Dutchman* returned to the sea. But he felt an overwhelming desire for land. He could not continue living exiled without roots" (*ʿAwdat al-*

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[47] العربي ليس هولندياً طائراً. إنه لم يقنط. [...] قد يكون العدو شاطراً في الحرب، ولكنه لا يرى أبعد من أنفه. يفترض أنه كلما ازدادت جراح العربي ازداد يأساً، وبذلك يستسلم. الافتراض خاطئ.

[48] In another connection between Pamela and Senta, in "Back to the Future: Hermeneutic Fantasies in 'Der flignende Hollander,'" Arthur Groos suggests, "the heroine's central role as naïve spectator who becomes the agent of the hero's redemption reflects a particular form of folk myth that Wagner sees in the Flying Dutchman legend" (Groos, 198). Barakāt also appears to cast Pamela as the naïve spectator and agent of change in Ramzī's redemption.

Ṭā'ir, 194).[49] In this example, arguably both units of comparison are still present within the immediate context of several sentences. Barakāt has developed this primary *tamthīl* to the point of *istiᶜārah* where in these three sentences only the one image of this double unit manifests itself, the *Flying Dutchman*, but the comparison to the Palestinian in exile remains clear. The Palestinian has returned to the sea, dejected, still homesick and humiliated, clinging to the possibility that his exile will eventually come to an end.

Central to the *Flying Dutchman* comparison with the Palestinians in Barakāt's novel is the author's evident disenchantment with the development of adequate leadership in the Arab world. Like the crew on a ship where the captain is unaware of the location of the helm, the Arab people lack competent leadership. Among the Arab leaders facing the challenge of the 1967 war are some who deceive the people about the true nature of their opposition to Israel and the West and are more interested in maintaining their own positions within the status quo:

القادة لا يريدون غير موافقة الجماهير، والجماهير يطيب لها أن تتكل وأن توافق. الذين يريدون أن يفكروا ويبحثوا ويتحاوروا مكبوتون ومحاصَرون. يكره أن يرى بلاده تستسلم للأحلام وأن تضع كل آمالها في شخص قائد منتظر ينتشلها من قرارات يأسها. بلاده يحب أن تنتشل نفسها، أن تتفتح كالورد من ضمن نفسها، أن تخلق قادتها وتتمخض عنهم في حقول مختلفة، أن تنقذ نفسها بأن تكون مخلصة لنفسها حتى الموت.

> The leaders did not want anything other than the consent of the masses, and the masses are happy with dependence and conformity. Those that want to reason, and to inquire, and to debate are repressed and restricted. He hates to see his country surrender to dreams and to place all its hopes in an awaited individual leader who will rescue it from the depths of its despair. He would like for his country to rescue itself, to open like the

[49] لقد عاد الهولندي الطائر إلى البحر. غير أنه يحس بحنين جارف للبر. لا يمكنه أن يظل منفياً وبلا أصول.

> flower from within itself, to create its own leaders and to produce them in diverse fields, to save itself by being devoted to itself until death (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 34).

The *tashbīh* apparent near the end of this quote which compares Palestine to a blooming flower juxtaposes the abstraction that constitutes the nation of Palestine in the aftermath of the most recent defeat with the sensually perceptible blooming flower. The key to this point of comparison is Barakāt's suggestion that like a flower Palestine possesses an inner beauty that will emerge when it is ready to bloom. Barakāt is calling for a new leadership devoted first and foremost to improving the conditions of life for the Arab people and not simply content to impose the status quo. This leadership must come from within the masses in a process likened to a flower in bloom. Like the beauty of the flower, the new leadership must emerge from within the ranks of the masses. This is Barakāt attaching himself to the potential of the people to shape their own futures. Like the follower, Barakāt sees beauty emerging from within Arab society.[50] Although frustrated by the inadequacies of the various regimes across the Arab world, Barakāt seems to be deeply committed to the idea that the potential exists for progressive democratic reform in the Arab world and that this kind of reform will be integral to the formation of a legitimate sense of Arab unity.

[50] This image is similar to his previous use of the term, *sukkān* (سُكّان), which means both "inhabitants" and "rudder" and the suggestion is that the people are the masters of their own destinies and should be rightfully in charge of the direction of the nation.

2c: Ramzī as Palestine

As an example of a potential leader emerging from the masses, Ramzī is the author's prototypical Arab everyman living under, adapting to, and surviving the conditions of exile and war. He has the potential to lead, but he is constantly second guessing himself and struggles to find the confidence to take the initiative. He is an intellectual (a college professor) and a secularly minded Palestinian refugee eagerly looking to make a positive impact in the lives of his fellow exiles. He is not, however, necessarily the ideal example of Barakāt's blossoming flower sent to lead his people to salvation. Ramzī makes regular self critical estimations of his potential to have an impact. Although he acknowledges his own tremendously flawed character, he never does much to change his ways until the end of the novel when he finally takes some initiative to help distribute aid in the refugee camps after the war is over. Ramzī's delayed action should be read as indicative of the inability of the Arab masses to rise up against both their tangential and immediate oppressors, not because of a lack of desire for freedom, but as a result of apathy forged in the everyman Arab's sense of complacency and powerlessness. To this end Barakāt writes that Ramzī felt,

بلاده مجموعة من الجروح في قلبه. بلاده تكدسات. إنه جزء من هذه التكدسات. هو نفسه كأنه مجموعة من الحجارة تتكدس. زلزال يحدث في أعماقه. تتهدم الحجارة، تتساقط و تتناثر. في حياته لم يشعر أنه عاجز إلى هذا الحد. لا يسيطر على مصيره. لا يسيطر على نفسه. ليس له صميم. إنه مجموعة من أجزاء تتقاتل بدل أن تلتحم.

> His country was a collection of wounds in his heart. His country is in piles. He is part of one of those piles. He, himself, is like a collection of stones piled together. A quake occurred deep inside him. It demolishes the stones, they fall and are scattered. In his life he had never felt so weak. He had no control over his fate. He had no control over

himself. He had no core. He is a collection of parts fighting one another instead of uniting (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 57).

In this example, several points of comparison are evident. All three levels of figurative comparison are relevant in this passage. In the first sentence a physical or sensuous *tashbīh* comparison is established between Palestine and the wounds in his heart. This is a relatively complex *tashbīh* comparison between two abstract concepts, Palestine and emotional pain, but the comparison is still comprehensible without a broader understanding of context. A wound is sensually accessible, it is painful, and is difficult to look at or treat. In this expression, however, the term is used in reference to the emotional pain Ramzī suffers as a consequence of the recent history of his country.

Continuing in the passage, in the next few sentences Palestine as a nation is compared with piles of rubble; the country is merely stones haphazardly piled together, crumbling and scattered. This portrait is a reference to the Palestinian Diaspora. The Palestinian people are stones piled across the Arab world and beyond. They have endured disasters and setbacks originating in the "quake" (زلزال) that separated the Palestinian people from their homeland in 1948. In his use of this term, Barakāt provides an effective *istiʿārah* comparison between a sensually perceptible geological phenomenon and the historical event that began the Palestinian Diaspora. The point of comparison centers on the similar outcome of the dispersal of the Palestinian people as if they are rubble dislodged and scattered in an earthquake. Returning to the first sentence, the image of Palestine as a mass of wounds in Ramzī's heart can now be read as a more complex *tamthīl* which opens up the possibility of an *istiʿārah* apparent at the end of the citation. As a mass of wounds in his heart, Palestine is suffering and that suffering is internalized within the hearts of all Palestinians. The bridge to the *istiʿārah* that this image

provides is the suggestion that Ramzī is Palestine. By the end of the citation Ramzī appears self reflexive by describing himself as if he were his country. He is powerless and has no control over his own destiny. He has no core. As "Palestine," and by extension as a representative of the Arab peoples, Ramzī is a collection of disjointed parts fighting amongst themselves instead of unifying to confront a common challenge.

Although Barakāt develops Ramzī as his central narrative persona, there are limitations inherent in the suggestion that the everyman Palestinian should be appropriately described as an exiled, disaffected professional intellectual. While clearly linked to his own experience during the June War, including his presence in the refugee camps in its aftermath, Barakāt's auto-biographical voice is obvious throughout the text beyond the limited voice Ramzī provides. The inclusion of several vivid perspectives of the fighting, which are beyond Ramzī's limited point of reference by the nature of his seclusion in Beirut, serve as reminders that any allusion to a singular "Palestinian experience" rests on tenuous ground. However, in this novel consisting of many voices, Roger Allen suggests that, "Ramzī joins all the other Palestinians in a single experience, and Barakāt's narrative technique is a major element in the attempt to portray such a feeling of unity" (Allen, 156). The unity in question here is certainly not a unity of objective experience. For example, it should be obvious that the Palestinian in exile, whether in Beirut, Europe or elsewhere, experienced the June War in ways that dramatically contrasted with Palestinians in East Jerusalem. The unity that Ramzī identifies as the central narrative "voice" is more theoretical. Ramzī reflects a singular Palestinian identity within the range of emotions he embodies from his initial apathy up through his eventual initiative to collect and provide relief items for the refugee camps. In addition to his apathy and initiative, his characteristic dualities also include fear and courage, cynicism and hope, sorrow and joy. Thus, Ramzī is Palestine in

theory. He suffers because of the distinct consequences of living without a universally recognized national identity, but he maintains a bold optimism that his aspirations for a homeland will come to fruition.

2d: The June War as Setback

Returning to his more critical theme regarding the societal failure of leadership from the ranks of the Arab elites Barakāt offers the following image: "Ramzī feels that his country is a tattered body. The eyes are detached from the face. The hands are separated from the chest. The brains have departed. The feet reign" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 53).[51] This is an image of disunity. The first sentence establishes a *tashbīh* comparison between two entities drawn from separate categories, a country and a dismembered, "tattered" body. In isolation the image is comprehensible. Barakāt previously establishes Palestine as an abstraction, and thus an intellectual notion with respect that it only exists as a conceptual aspiration of a dispersed population. The dismembered body provides an effective image of the country split into constituent parts. The following sentences connect this image with the previously established theme of disunity, once again making reference to the Palestinian Diaspora; however, the final two sentences provide the key to the overall meaning and appear as examples of *istiʿārah* based in a broader *tamthīl*. These last two expressions are examples of "pure" metaphor because in each the comparison is drawn from two sensually perceptible forms and the similarity is an intellectual attribute. The expression, "the brains have departed," is meaningful in reference to a character like Ramzī, but also as a biting criticism of traditional leadership. The term "brains"

[51] يشعر رمزي أن بلاده جسد مُمَزَّق. العيون مفصولة عن الوجوه. الأيدي مفصولة عن الصدور. الأدمغة مسافرة. الأقدام تحكم.

(الأدمغة) is a borrowed for the Arab intellectual. For example, as an exiled intellectual contributing to the "brain drain" effect within the occupied territories, figures like Ramzī struggle to find relevance and are often rendered powerless within the structures of authority across the Arab world. The contrasting implication is that the established leaders of the status quo are brainless while those who know are distant and even unavailable as a consequence of their exile. Therefore, the intellectuals with the theoretical capacity to provide effective direction, the "brains," have departed. In the final sentence of the citation, the consequence of brainless leadership upon an already "tattered" body politic becomes apparent. With the departure of the brains, "the feet reign." In this case, the term "feet" (الأقدام) is borrowed for perceived leaders of the status quo. These feet may have the ability to move forward, backward or sideways, but when they "reign" the implication is that they are aimless, simply moving without thinking.

In his non-fiction, Barakāt also stresses the problematic nature of disunity among Arab populations. In *The Arab World*, he writes: "The Arab world in its present circumstances does not constitute a single coherent system or civil society as much as a multiplicity of societies" (*The Arab World*, 46). More broadly as it pertains to the question of the failure of leadership, Barakāt's criticism is not directed solely at the elites of the establishment. Although Ramzī admires the idealism and enthusiasm of the both his colleagues and students reacting to the outbreak of war, he laments the perception that much of their rhetoric is empty without action. Ramzī himself is included in this camp of Arabs separated from the actual fighting, incapacitated by their own lack of participatory resolve.

In another image, Barakāt further develops the conclusion that the inadequacies of Arab leadership stem from the failures of the people to empower themselves. Ramzī reflects on how

the Arab peoples have deceived themselves, likening them to actors playing a role staged in tragedy:

العالم العربي كله كان قد تحول إلى مسرح كبير. ولعب كل عربي دوراً ما. كان يمثل مع الممثلين الآخرين على مسرح بلاده. مأساته أنه لم يكن يدري أنه يمثل. كل عربي تقمَّص دوره [...] الدور الذي يلعبه أصبح حياته، و حياته أصبحت دوراً. لقد خدع نفسه وخدع غيره. واشتركت الحكومات عن طريق الإذاعة والجرائد والمجلات والتلفزيون في عملية الخداع هذه.

> The entire Arab world was transformed into a large stage, and every Arab played a role. He appeared with the other actors on the country's stage. His tragedy is that he did not know that he was acting. Every Arab identified with his role. […] The role he plays became his life, and his life became a role. He deceived himself and he deceived others. The governments through radio, newspapers, magazines, and television, collaborate in the operation of this deception (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 114-115).

In this image the Arab is merely an actor on a grand stage, participating in a self deception reinforced by societal institutions. In the initial *tashbīh* comparison between the Arab world and a stage, the emphasis is on the nature of tragedy in a theatrical production where all Arab peoples are playing a part. Like a play where actors portray a vision of reality defined by an author, the Arab world is a fiction simultaneously defined by contrasting traditional renderings of history and the cacophony of contemporary "authors" of theoretical Arab identity, including Barakāt himself. The comparison is drawn between separate categories, the collection of Arab nations and a stage, with the similarity evident in the frame of a performance. The performance of a play on stage is witnessed by the audience just like the Arab response to the repeated failures within the lingering conflict with Israel is witnessed by the international community. According to

Barakāt, his failure, and the failure of the Arab peoples in the defeat of 1967, along with a myriad of other circumstances past, present (and future) comes down to a self deception which has crippled the potential prospects for redressing Palestinian grievances and advancing Arab civilization in the modern era.

Barakāt defines the problem of inadequate leadership as an internal struggle as consequential to the future of the Arab world as the overarching conflict with Israel and the question of Palestinian statehood. This internal struggle manifests in the novel in several instances where Barakāt's characters find themselves bitterly complaining about the efforts of their fellow countrymen. In one such instance, confronted by aggressive and potentially violent protestors in the streets of Beirut, Ramzī wonders why more of them are not serving in the military:

> لا يلومهم بقدر ما يلوم بلاده وحكوماتها. إمكانات مهدورة. لا شيء في بلاده أكثر من الإمكانات المهدورة. كأن البلاد العربية سلة مهملات. لتوضع الإمكانات المهدورة في المتاحف، وليقبل سواح العالم للتفرج. الناس في بلاده مواد خام مطمورة تحت التراب أو مرمية كُوَماً على جوانب الشوارع. يرى الناس حوله مواد خاماً. لا يرى الرؤوس. تختفي الوجوه. كتل من المواد الخام تزحف. لونها يستحيل إلى أسود قاتم تماماً مثل أكوام الفحم الحجري التي كان يراها أمام المصانع الكبرى في الغرب.

> He does not blame them, as much as he blames his country and its government. Wasted potential, there is nothing in his country greater than wasted potential. It is as if the Arab countries were waste baskets. This wasted potential should be put in museums to delight the world's tourists coming to see. His countrymen were raw materials buried under the ground or thrown in heaps on the side of the street. He saw the people around him as raw material. He didn't see the leaders. The faces disappear. These masses of raw material

> are crawling in. Their color changes completely to a coal-black like the stony heaps of coal that he saw in front of the great factories in the West (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 160).

The overarching image, a *tamthīl* comparison between the Arab people and raw materials or trash, suggests that all of these entities consist of "wasted potential." The expression, "the Arab countries are waste baskets," initializes the broader comparison between two entities derived from separate categories where the shared similarity rests on the idea that each is a container for refuse. Ramzī pictures Palestine as a waste basket where one discards unwanted or wasted materials. The comparison between the Arab people and wasted raw materials is linked through the similarity between entities denied their full potential. At best, in this expression the Arab peoples are undeveloped natural resources or "raw materials buried under the ground," and at worst, they are trash discarded in the streets. Finally, at the conclusion of this citation, Barakāt introduces a new interpretive angle in the comparison between the Arab masses and raw material. The potential of the Arab peoples to function as natural resources transforms them into a benefit for the West and not for the Arab world. Arab potential is cast as a resource, like coal, to be exploited by foreign powers or discarded like trash.

In another example demonstrative of the novel's cynicism regarding the resolve of the Arab peoples to acknowledge and effectively confront their inadequacies and failures, Barakāt introduces a popular reference to the June War as the "setback" (النكسة). When Ramzī notices the presence of army tanks and armored police vehicles responding to the growing angry crowd, he seems relieved to see that the war was finally tangible in Beirut: "The war is headed to Beirut. The crowds of tourists have stopped. The summer holiday season has ended before it even

started. And voices will scream for a resolution to the setback (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 161).[52] In this example, Barakāt borrows the term "setback" (النكسة) implying a meaning which, as it pertains to the novel, is culturally and historically defined within the context of the Arab response to the June War. In regards to the use of the term setback in the aftermath of the June War, Roger Allen explains:

> The June War of 1967 has clearly been a defining moment in the modern history of the Arab nations. The Arabic term used to describe it is *al-naksah*, meaning, 'setback' (in itself, a typically creative use of the language's own potential for verbal puns, in that the earlier 1948 war was termed *al-nakbah*, 'the disaster'). But as a large number of anguished studies of the event and its implications were to point out, it was in fact a devastatingly terminal blow to the pretensions carefully nurtured by the political sector during the early years of independence and revolution (Allen, 59).

In Barakāt's expression the term "setback" is an explicit, cynical reference to the disappointment the people in Beirut in particular feel about the diminished tourist season and the subsequent loss of revenue that will come as a consequence of the violence. In the novel, this expression operates as an example of *istiᶜārah* which relies on the culturally defined use of the term "setback" to refer to the Arab defeat in the June War. In the expression, the defeat is not explicitly mentioned, but this meaning of the term "setback" remains. The comparison is between two intellectual forms with respect to the failure of the tourist season and to the failure of the June War. Through this comparison Barakāt continues his lament for the causes and

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[52] الحرب تنتقل إلى بيروت. تتوقف أفواج السياح. موسم الاصطياف ينتهي قبل أن يبدأ. لتصرخ الأصوات أن تحل النكسة عنا.

consequences of the setback as he cynically criticizes what he obviously regards as the misaligned priorities of the masses.

2e: Sister Marie Therese and the Israelis as Nazis

In order to develop one of his most provocative images, Barakāt introduces Sister Marie Therese and various other distinct characters who ride out the war in and around a hospital in East Jerusalem. Marie Therese appears mid-way through the novel, and in his development of her character, Barakāt explicitly draws a comparison between the Israelis and the Nazis. Her first appearance coincides with the story of ʿAzmī ʿAbd al-Qādir losing his family under the rubble of his collapsed house. After a frantic search through the debris, his wife and children are all found dead. Marie Therese reaches out to comfort him:

> يضع وجهه بين يديها ويبكي. دموعه تحرق كفيها. تتذكر أيام الحرب العالمية الثانية عندما عملت في أحدى المستشفيات على الحدود السويسرية. يعود إلى مخيلتها وجه رجل يهودي فقد أطفاله. تدمع عيناها على الرغم منها. تصلي ليسوع طالبة منه أن يمد عزمي عبد القادر بالقوة على مواجهة الحياة.
>
> He places his face between her hands and cries. His tears burn her palm. She remembers the days of the Second World War when she worked in one of the hospitals on the Swiss border. She imagined the face of a Jewish man who had lost his children. Her eyes filled with tears without her being able to control it. She prays to Jesus begging him to provide ʿAzmī ʿAbd al-Qādir with the strength to cope with life (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 63).

This citation includes an example of *istiʿārah* rooted in the comparison of tears to another sensual referent, fire, with the shared similarity based in an intellectual notion that refers to

emotional pain. ᶜAzmī's tears are evidence of his pain, and his pain burns Marie Therese's hand. In this comparison, a tear as a liquid is the opposite of a flame but both deliver the same impact upon her palm. Feeling his pain, Marie Therese recalls her experience as a nurse serving Nazi victims on the Swiss border. In her mind, ᶜAzmī is like a Jewish man who has also lost his children. On the surface these two men are compared based on their mutual suffering, but the intended point of comparison in the context of the overarching *tamthīl* is between Israel and Nazi Germany. With this reference, Barakāt offers an explicitly stated comparison between entities derived from the same category, they are both nations, and the implication is that they share similar attributes related to their conduct during war time.

In another instance, Marie Therese is unable to sleep. After a difficult day, "She cries passionately. Her tears are rain on the River Jordan. She cries passionately. She feels a sense of serenity spreading over her. Her nerves dissipate like a cloud over the Alps" (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 128).[53] Although she is weeping passionately, the first image is a relatively complex example of *tamthīl* comparing tears and rain. The essential comparison is between two sensually perceptible entities drawn from the same category as liquids, tears and rain, and the shared similarity is one of intensity. Her tears are like rain filling the river suggesting that she is crying profusely. The River Jordan is traditionally a physical symbol of geographical Palestine, and the rain that feeds it sustains the people. Marie Therese's tears fall in solidarity with the rain upon the River Jordan; her sympathy lies with the Palestinians. The River Jordan serves as a point of reference for the accelerated rate of the Arab failure to confront the Israeli military. Commenting on the anecdotal nature of Barakāt's description of the fighting, Allen writes:

[53] تبكي بحرارة. دموعها مطر فوق نهر الأردن. تبكي بحرارة. تشعر بالهدوء يغمرها. أعصابها تنبسط مثل غيمة فوق جبال الألب.

> These brief and realistic depictions of the futile attempts at organizing resistance on the West Bank, followed rapidly by the shattering realization of impotence and headlong flight towards the River Jordan, are rarely more than one or two pages in length; the speed at which the reader is transferred from one to the next helps to emphasize within the narrative the alarming rapidity with which the events themselves happened (Allen, 157).

Marie Therese's tears flow with the movement of refugees fleeing the violence, and the river itself becomes a line of demarcation emphasized in calls for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the post war era.

Returning to the previously cited image, a second expression suggests that as Marie Therese regains her composure, her nerves settle like a cloud over the Alps. The explicit expression in this image can be classified as an example of *tashbīh*. No external information is necessary beyond the stated idea that a nervous person calmed down. The comparison is between two sensually perceptible entities, the anxiety she feels and the vision of a cloud spreading over the Alps. However, the specific reference to the Alps is an important aspect of the expression because it draws attention to Marie Therese's ethnicity. This detail creates the basis for the intellectual comparison between Israelis and Nazis. As further evidence of the intellectual nature of the comparison, Barakāt develops another reference to her country of origin. Marie Therese confronts an Israeli officer asserting,

سويسرية. وإذا كنت تريد أن تعرف عني أكثر من ذلك، أخبرك انني بدأت حياتي في دير في سويسرا بمساعدة الذين نجوا من مراكز الاعتقالات النازية. كان بينهم عدد من اليهود كما تعلم. كنت أسهر عليهم كما أسهر على هؤلاء

العرب الآن. أنت في رأيي لا تختلف عن الضباط النازيين الذين كانوا يعملون في مراكز الاعتقال. هذا التصلب في وجهك كنت أراه في وجوههم.

> I'm Swiss. And if you wanted to know more about me than that, I'll inform you that I began my life in a convent in Switzerland helping those who survived the Nazi concentration camps. Among them were several Jews as you know. I looked after them just as I look after these Arabs now. In my opinion you are no different from the Nazi officers working in the concentration camps. The callousness in your face I also saw in their faces (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 141).

Again, in this citation the essential comparison is explicitly apparent. The Jewish victims of the Holocaust are like the Arab victims of Israel, and the Israeli officers resemble the Nazi officers in concentration camps. Beyond what this citation adds to Barakāt's development of the underlying *tamthīl* comparison, in each of the three previous citations the main point of emphasis is that he includes a reference to the Marie Therese as a Swiss national. Her nationality adds another dimension to the comparison between Israel and Nazi Germany, two entities derived from the same category as nations whose behavior is juxtaposed in this case with the inclusion of the inference that as a result of her Swiss nationality she is a non-biased, objective, neutral judge of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians with a status akin to the traditionally neutral position assumed by the Swiss in global conflict. Barakāt endeavors to legitimize his comparison with his emphasis on Marie Therese's neutrality.

In the following passage, Barakāt introduces the image of a military parade:

علمت الأخت ماري تريز أن رئيس الوزراء ووزير الدفاع والحاخام الأكبر مقبلون في موكب كبير يتجه نحو حائط المبكى، فأسرعت في وضع زوجة عزمي عبد القادر وأطفالها على العربة كما وجدوا تحت أنقاض بيتهم وغطتهم.

دفعت العربة نحو الطريق العام ووقفت تنتظر ريثما يقبل الموكب. انتظرت قليلاً، وعندما مر الأقطاب الثلاثة بمحاذاتها، رفعت الغطاء عن الأم وأطفالها، فجفل البعض إلى الوراء. غير أن جندياً مرافقاً اندفع نحوها وصوب رشاشه إليها صارخاً: غطيهم. غطيهم!

> Sister Marie Therese learned that the Prime Minister, and the Defense Minister and the elder Rabbi were coming in a large parade heading toward the Wailing Wall. She quickly placed ᶜAzmī ᶜAbd al-Qādir's wife and her children on a cart just as they were found beneath the rubble of their home and she covered them. She pushed the cart toward the public street and stopped, she waited for the parade to arrive. She only waited a short time, and when the three leaders passed by parallel to her she lifted the cover from the mother and her children. Some of them drew back. But one of the escort soldiers rushed toward her aiming his machine gun at her yelling: 'Cover them! Cover them!' (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 142)

Within the broader *tamthīl* comparison between the Israelis and the Nazis, the parade described in this image is an example of *istiᶜārah*. This citation contrasts with the previous examples because there is no explicit reference to Nazis. Only the parade involving the Israeli officials is explicitly present in the image. Marie Therese's presence as the narrative link, the children's burned corpses as evidence of callous brutality, and the immediate threat of violence to repress dissent are all bridges to the Nazi analogy, and the implication Barakāt overtly suggests is that as nations these two countries are linked by common acts of atrocity.

Finally, Barakāt offers an image to explain how the Israelis came to assume the role of the oppressor. In a refugee camp Ramzī witnesses an argument about the nature of inhumanity. The participants in this argument conclude that humans are like fish. Although it is true that the

big fish is aware of the pain it causes the little fish, it doesn't really care. This leads to the conclusion that, "The Jews were little fish, and they transformed into the likeness of a big fish. They forgot everything. It's true, they eat us ravenously and without mercy" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 185).[54] The comparison is clearly stated in this case between the entities drawn from separate categories where the similarity is based in Barakāt's perception that the two nations are each like fish, one big and one small. Israel is the big fish eating Palestine "ravenously and without mercy." The inclusion of the sentence "They forgot everything," implies that the Israelis have forgotten the conditions of their own oppression allowing them to perpetuate oppression upon the Palestinians without regret. One shortcoming of this comparison is that the fish is typically thinking about filling its stomach and will eat smaller creatures as necessary to survive. Humans are more likely to kill for less substantial reasons.

Regardless of audience or intention, comparing anyone with the Nazis is provocative. Although Nazi references are not unusual in contemporary Western culture, there exists a popular sentiment for the notion that the first person who evokes the Nazis in an argument has subsequently lost that argument. However, when this connection is drawn in popular culture, including in Barakāt's novel, the response of the recipient of the comparison is commonly determined by cultural conventions like ethnicity, class, and religion. Whether repulsed or attracted to an image, the recipient's cultural knowledge and background will invariably inform their reaction. In *The Question of Palestine*, Edward Said outlines the dilemma of offering this particular narrative in advocacy for the Palestinians:

> Here, then, is another complex irony: how the classic victims of years of anti-Semitic persecution and the Holocaust have in their new nation become the victimizers of another

[54] اليهود كانوا سمكة صغيرة، وتحولوا إلى شبه سمكة كبيرة. نسوا كل شيء. والله أكلونا بشراهة وبلا رحمة.

> people, who have become, therefore, the victims of the victims. […] No other movement in history has had so difficult an opponent: a people recognized as the classical victim of history (*Question,* xxi-xxii).

Said's comments follow the original 1969 publication of Barakāt's novel by over a decade. His sentiment is evidence of the tension informing efforts to effectively articulate a Palestinian perspective of the second half of the twentieth century. Said approaches what he calls the "complex irony" of the Palestinian being the victim of history's victims more diplomatically than Barakāt. He emphasizes the term "victim" to establish a point of comparison between the Israelis and the Palestinians as similar in terms of being victims of tyranny in the abstract. By contrast, Barakāt's comparison between Israelis and Nazis is explicit. The comparison is introduced and subsequently validated as a deliberate narrative choice.[55]

By developing this comparison, Barakāt invites a discussion of the term *ighrāq*, meaning hyperbole or exaggeration. For al-Jurjānī, the term *ighrāq* often applies to expressions drawn from fantasy (*takhyīl*) as an "exaggeration" of reality. It can also appear in references to exaggerations of reality including efforts at self aggrandizement, or overemphasizing prowess or generosity where the poet is guilty of indulgence, creating an image not supported by truth. In this case, Barakāt has created an image that is appropriately classified as *ighrāq* regardless of the cultural background of the recipient. An Israeli might reject Barakāt's comparison as offensive while a Palestinian might regard it as apropos. These two responses, however, are only a sampling of a wide spectrum of culturally determinative reactions to hyperbolic language. On

[55] Barakāt's overarching development of Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* also links the Nazis to his narrative. In *The Darker Side of Genius: Richard Wagner's Anti-Semitism*, Jacob Katz describes a post war Israeli tendency to avoid all things German. Although this tendency abated over time with respect to certain German cultural and industrial products, "The public performance of Wagner's music remains an exception. […] Apparently, a sector of the Israeli public has come to see his music, indeed even his name, as a symbol of the Hitler regime" (Katz, 130). Writing his novel, Barakāt is undoubtedly aware of this cultural phenomenon among Israelis who equate Wagner with the Nazis.

the opposite end of this spectrum, it could also be true that as a rhetorical strategy an Israeli citizen opposing a particular government initiative might embrace this comparison while a Palestinian might regard it as communicatively counterproductive. The provocative nature of this comparison is determined by the unique history of Palestinians in the second half of the twentieth century and their relationship with the unique history of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

2f: Radio/Propaganda

In the novel, the radio plays an important role in Barakāt's consideration of the impact of disseminating misleading propaganda in the midst of the crisis. It also provides Barakāt with a narrative device to introduce several comparative images. In the first reference to the presence of an "official" Arab voice on the radio, Barakāt writes: "The announcer said with enthusiasm: 'Cairo announced moments ago that 44 enemy planes have been shot down'" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 32).[56] Such reports contradict reality. By contrast, Barakāt describes civilians within the various combat zones as "spellbound," not prepared to defend themselves after being lulled into a false sense of security. By the third day the fact of Israel's dominance of the air is clear, and Barakāt offers an image of the planes descending upon civilian populations: "Squadrons of planes continued to circle successively and continuously. They bombed without mercy. Descending like a comb, the planes drop until they are almost touching the ground" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 86).[57] This expression is an example of *tashbīh* where the two entities come from different categories, a

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[56] ويقول المذيع بحماسة أن << القاهرة أعلنت منذ لحظات عن إسقاط 44 طائرة للعدو >>.

[57] الطائرات لا تزال تحلّق أسراباً متعاقبة وباستمرار. يقصفون دون رحمة. الطائرات تنخفض حتى تكاد تلامس الأرض، تهبط كالمشط.

comb and a squadron of warplanes, and they are linked in the image in terms of a similarity based on their appearance. Without reference to context, the comparison between the planes flying in formation and the teeth of a comb is easily understood. As it applies to the narrative, the planes in formation descend like a comb, systematically pushing refugees away from their homes, flattening the landscape. The teeth of the comb descend together, straighten the hair in a specific direction, circle around again and return until the hair comes to a rest in an aesthetically appropriate place. Under the surface of this otherwise straightforward image, the refugees fleeing the bombardment are like the hair, manipulated into a position they have not chosen for themselves and pushed into a specific direction by the tool of an all powerful hand.

The image of the planes descending like a comb actually comes from a Palestinian man interviewed in Barakāt's sociological study of the refugee camps, *River Without Bridges*. In *ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr*, the character Tāhā Kanᶜān loses two of his daughters in a napalm attack. This character is based on the experience of Sāmī ᶜUwayda who describes his sense of trepidation by saying, "the planes came in wave after wave, constantly. The bombs hit hard. The planes came in low, so low, like the teeth of a comb, combing the land." (*Bridges*, 41) As a decisive condition in the outcome of the June War, Israeli dominance of the air cannot be overstated. Barakāt explains, "Many of the refugees from the Jericho area had no contact with the Israeli soldiers. All they saw was a sky 'full of airplanes'…48% reported that they had seen and observed Israeli soldiers or civilians. About half of the sample, in other words, had had actual contact with the enemy forces." (*Bridges*, 43) Among the main reasons offered by refugees to explain why they abandoned their homes, most mentioned the fear of airplanes: "Over half the families (57%) said that they had left their homes to escape bombardment. They spoke of the sky being filled with airplanes, of the bombing, of consequent terror." (*Bridges*, 46)

Many of the refugee stories Barakāt collects in *River Without Bridges* appear in *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir ʻilá al-Baḥr*. In his non-fiction account he conducts interviews in an effort to gain a more vivid perspective of the actual conflict, a perspective to which he personally lacked access by virtue of being physically detached from the violence.[58]

Another example of Barakāt's auto-biographical presence in the novel appears through his protagonist Ramzī's bitter reaction to the evolving contradictions between reality and propaganda broadcast over the radio. Like Ramzī, Barakāt experienced the June War in only a peripheral sense: nearby, but outside the sphere of violence, and "following" events on the radio. In his novel Barakāt creates an image of the conflict as a boxing match with the radio playing a central role in the intensity of the comparison. With the Arab military effort deteriorating rapidly, by the fourth day, "Ramzī turned the radio off. There could be no doubt, the battle had ended. The announcer is raising Israel's hand in the boxing ring. The Arab's body is cast to the ground" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 109).[59] The boxing ring is an effective an image to describe the circumstances of the war between Israel and the Arab states. The broadcaster is compared to the ring announcer. This image is an example of an *istiʿārah* evoking a similarity between two entities from the same category, as they are both men, and the point of similarity is the intensity of the sound of enthusiasm in their voices. Although the reader understands that the voice on the radio is reporting the news, the nature of reportage has been replaced entirely by the image of a sporting event. At the beginning of a title bout, it is ideally assumed that the contest is a battle

[58] Ostensibly, the correlation between Barakāt's own experiences during the June War, and specifically his collection of first person narrative recollections of the fighting in interviews he conducted in the refugee camps is another narrative link to Wagner's opera. As Groos points out, "the opera originated in the composer's personal experience, powerfully evoking a legend that he confirmed, like contemporary folktale scholars, with on-site interviews" (Groos, 192). See also Joachim Kohler, *Richard Wagner: the Last of the Titans*, and Derek Watson's, *Richard Wagner: A Biography*, for descriptions of Wagner's flight from creditors in 1839 which nearly left him shipwrecked and subsequently inspired his opera (Kohler, 115-118, Watson 58-59).

[59] أغلق رمزي الراديو. لم يعد عنده شك. المعركة انتهت. المذيع يرفع يد إسرائيل في حلبة الملاكمة. جسد العربي مرمي على الأرض. هدوء مرعب يمتلك خلاياه.

between two theoretically equal opponents. In the ring the match can take several forms. It can end after an epic struggle between seasoned pugilists or finish quickly in the first round when the challenger is proven to be merely a pretender. In this context, Israel has won the fight efficiently, aggressively, and decisively, much like the victorious boxer in the ring after scoring a resounding knockout. The Arab in the image is "cast to the ground," utterly defeated like the discredited loser of a disappointing title bout on the way to the hospital and a long, painful recovery. Although the image of the opponents is vividly located in the center of a ring, in each case these are examples of *istiʿārah* because there is no mention of a boxer other than the use of the terms "Israel" (إسرائيل) and "the Arab" (العربي). An instance of *istiʿārah* occurs in both the comparison between the victorious boxer and Israel as well as between the defeated pretender and the Arab. As it appears in the expression, the term "Israel" specifically references the nation as a whole. This is arguably a comparison between separate categories, a man and a country, where the similarity is rooted in the victory itself and the hand of the nation is raised like the hand of the victor. As for the term "the Arab," Barakāt does not make a direct reference to a nation as a collective entity. This omission is perhaps a subtle distinction, but in his decision to juxtapose the collective nation of Israel as the victor with the individual Arab in defeat Barakāt emphasizes one of the novel's major themes. The Israelis fight effectively as a group unified in their cause while the Arabs in their disorganization and lack of a cohesive, unified strategy fight as individuals. Barakāt adds to the intensity of this image by associating it with the radio. One can imagine a ring announcer exuberantly declaring the victor in a title match shouting into his microphone with thousands of fans screaming in the background. With this detail Barakāt imagines the war not simply as an inconsequential sporting event, but one in which the entire world appears to be cheering for the loser's demise.

Barakāt develops his comparison between the boxing match and the war successfully in his novel to emphasize the sense of failure shared across the Arab world, and by Palestinians in particular, in the aftermath of a humiliating defeat. Roger Allen makes reference to Barakāt's depiction of the emotional highs and lows among his Arab characters during the conflict and suggests that in *ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir 'ilá al-Baḥr*

> the steady rise and abrupt crash of this corporate emotion during these six days is callously manipulated by the news media, a point which Barakāt underlines with unconcealed anger. […] Ramzī's description of or participation in the events in Beirut mentioned above provides us with a most effective picture of the way in which the impact of this defeat was felt by the Arabs. It was not merely a total defeat, but one which was inflicted on a people who were being led by their governments to believe right up to the very last moment that they were scoring a resounding victory. Worst of all, the instantaneous loss of the air battle and complete superiority of the Israeli air force made the June War for the Arabs a defeat without heroism (Allen, 155-156).

Barakāt's use of the boxing image and the image of the planes combing the land describe two dramatically different Palestinian experiences during the June War. Those who witness the bombing first hand face the direct consequences of the failure of Arab governments to mount any form of resistance while people like Ramzī sit and listen to a false, deliberately manipulated "reality" on the radio. Combining these two aspects of a more broadly defined "Palestinian" experience, Barakāt is able to appropriately contextualize his characters' feelings of cynicism, resentment and anger directed towards their leaders.

2g: The Question of Palestine:

Among his central themes, Barakāt explores various notions of Palestinian identity. To this end he creates a handful of images comparing different characters to the physical characteristics of Palestine. For example, describing some of his Palestinian students caught up in thoughts of returning to their families and the overwhelming enthusiasm of the moment, Ramzī reflects upon a wide variety of reactions. One student comes from a small village and is consumed with the necessity to organize. Although he is from northern Lebanon he, "felt that he was a stone from the walls of Jerusalem" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 54).[60] In this *tashbīh* image, Barakāt emphasizes the notion of a unified Palestinian identity emanating from the Diaspora. The comparison includes the juxtaposition of two entities drawn from separate categories, a man and a stone, which share a similar characteristic in that they are foundational elements of the nation of Palestine. This character identifies himself with Jerusalem, a geographic location central to Palestinian aspirations for statehood. He is a rock, a solid, enduring component of the land. He is a rock in the walls of Jerusalem, an aspect of the comparison emphasizing that this student feels he is united with his countrymen in defense of the city.

In another example, one of Ramzī's students is worried about her family back in Jerusalem:

> وتقفز الدمعة إلى عيني سهام، فتدير رأسها وتنعزل. تذكّرت أهلها في القدس. قلبها ينبض بسرعة. تتصور قنبلة تهبط على منزلهم. يتحول المنزل إلى قبر يضم والدها وأمها وأخاها وأختها. وتصبح وحيدة تتحول إلى جزيرة صخرية في المحيط الهادي. المطر يتساقط عليها وحدها. لماذا تتداعى هذه الصور إلى مخيلتها؟ أهلها على الأغلب بخير. الأشياء تبدو أسوأ مما هي من بعيد. لن يحدث أي شيء لأهلها.

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60 ولكنه يشعر أنه حجر في سور القدس.

> A tear builds up in Sihām's eyes, so she turned her head and isolated herself. She remembered her family in Jerusalem. Her heart beat quickly. She imagined a bomb dropping down on their home, transforming the house into a grave covering her father, her mother, her brother and her sister. She would be alone, transformed into a rocky island in the Pacific Ocean, rain falling on her alone. Why do these images summon one another in her imagination? Her family is most likely fine. Things seem worse from afar. Nothing will happen to her family (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 55).

There are two examples of comparative imagery in this citation relevant to Barakāt's framework for Palestinian identity. Sihām, like Ramzī, is experiencing the conflict from afar. She imagines her home as a grave, entombing her family. The comparison is manifest between two entities which are widely dissimilar, a home and a grave; however, arguably in this image they are compared as being from the same category as dwellings, one for the living and one for the dead where the specific point of similarity is that they both occupy the same physical location. The morbidity of the image is evidence of the anxiety of peripheral experience, but the grave itself is meaningful with respect to Palestinian claims to the land. Sihām's family lives in Palestine, and as casualties of the war, they will be buried in their home in Palestine. With this reference Barakāt identifies a specific point of emphasis behind Palestinian calls for self-determination. Edward Said describes how Palestinians determine their "place" suggesting that,

> the 1967 war and, ironically, the additional acquisition of Palestinian territory by Zionism put the exiled and dispersed Palestinians in touch with their *place*. From an esoteric policy of dealing with Palestinians as if they were not there, utopian beings whose brutish presence could be distributed and made to disappear in a maze of regulations forbidding their national presence, Israeli Zionism came out into the open in

> 1967. Here now were many hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, and there explicitly on top of them, militarily ruling over them in full view of a world that immediately grasped the meaning of military occupation, was Israel. The Palestinian quest for peace took on a concrete meaning, which was to get Israeli occupation ended, out of that place. Within the framework of possible solutions to the whole region imbroglio, Palestinian self-determination has come to rest by and large on the need for an independent state on a liberated part of the original territory of Palestine (*Question*, 124-125).

Said concisely sums up several "questions" of Palestine. Among these questions are the dilemmas of defining a national identity in the absence of a nation and calling for the "right of return" for displaced Palestinians. Accordingly, Said suggests that Palestinians must assert their presence against efforts to deny their existence. They must cling to their historical experience with the land and define the boundaries of their territory in their own terms.

Returning to Barakāt's image, after visualizing her home in Palestine becoming a plot for her family grave, Sihām fears she will be alone, isolated like an island where the rain only falls on her. This is an image of exile, and the two images juxtaposed in the citation help to define Barakāt's framing of the Palestinian in exile. This example of *tashbīh* is a comprehensible image comparing terms derived from separate categories, a woman and an island, where the shared attribute is their isolation. With homes destroyed as if they never existed, Palestine is a graveyard for the ancestors, the feeling that there is nowhere to return is acute, and the Palestinian in exile is stateless, like an island in the middle of an ocean where rain is constantly falling. The reference to the rain in Barakāt's image emphasizes the foreboding nature of such isolation as the exile is described as both physically and emotionally alone.

As the primary example of the nation personified in the novel, Barakāt also characterizes Ramzī as an exile identifying him with physical aspects of Palestine. Overcome by melancholy,

أحس رمزي بدموع ساخنة تحاول أن تبزغ في عينه. الجيش الإسرائيلي يحتل المزيد من بلاده. كأنما يحتل وجوده. أحذية العسكر الإسرائيلي تدوس صدره. طائراته تنسف وجهه بقنابل النابالم. مدافعه تصوب إلى عينيه، تخترق قلبه. إسرائيل تحتل كيانه. إنه بلا كيان. يتهدم مثل أبنية القدس القديمة. يمتلئ بالحفر مثل شوارع بيت لحم. يتكسر مثل زجاج الخليل. يبكي مثل أطفال أريحا، ويتهدل مثل أثواب رام الله. يلتصق بِذلٍ إلى الأرض مثل سجاد غزة.

> Ramzī felt hot tears try to come out of his eyes. The Israeli army occupied a greater portion of his country. It was as if they occupied his being. The Israeli soldiers' boots trampled down on his chest. Their planes blast Ramzī's face with napalm bombs. Their cannons aimed at his eyes, penetrating his heart. He has no being. He is falling down like the buildings of Old Jerusalem. He is filled with holes like the streets of Bethlehem, broken like the glass of Hebron, crying like the children of Jericho, dangling like the vestments of Ramallah. He clings humbly to the ground like the carpets of Gaza (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*,99-100).

This image reoccurs regularly throughout the novel with the contextual basis for the comparison relying on the notion that Ramzī is Palestine. This citation develops the broader *tamthīl* with specific reference to the war itself. Ramzī with the soldier's boot on his chest is Palestine trampled over and occupied by the Israeli army. He is filled with holes, broken, crying, dangling, prostrate to the ground, and clinging to the land. In each of these individual images the basis of comparison is Ramzī, a man, compared with either the tangible material evidence of defeat or the emotional consequences of failure.

In another image, Ramzī is a vulnerable Palestine as a plant with its roots exposed to the elements:

تطلع إلى خريطة فلسطين. إنه منفي منذ عشرين سنة. جذوره معلَّقة في الهواء تضربها حرارة الشمس. لا بد له أن يعود. ترى تنتهي قصة نفيه؟ إن لم تنته اليوم، لا بد أن تنتهي في المستقبل. تمتد يده إلى جيبه. يبحث عن شيء. لا يستطيع أن يذكر ما هو.

> He looked at a map of Palestine. He had been exiled for twenty years. His roots are dangling in the wind beaten by the heat of the sun. He must return. Will the story of his exile ever come to an end? If it is not ended today, it must be ended in the future. His hand stretched over his heart. He is searching for something. He cannot remember what it is (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 24).

The word *taṭallaʿ* (تطلع), translated here as "looked at" also means "longed for" or "hoped for" or "looked forward." In context the choice of this term is appropriate from Ramzī's perspective, and it also connects this narrative moment with Wagner's opera.[61] In this case, Ramzī is like Senta gazing at a portrait of the Dutchman, longing for him to emerge from the image. In Barakāt's novel, Ramzī is an exile, longing for the return of a map of Palestine that no longer exists. Ramzī is suffering in his exile like an uprooted plant with its roots withering, exposed to the hot sun. This image can be meaningfully juxtaposed with the previously cited reference to the blooming flower.[62] If Ramzī can be appropriately imagined as having the potential to lead, emerging from the masses like the flower that reveals its beauty from within, and in this case,

[61] In reference to this moment in the opera, Kohler explains that for Wagner and his audience, "Pictures were a source of anxiety inasmuch as they could bring the past back to life. But they could also waken an insatiable longing if they depicted the object of one's desire, an object no longer attainable" (Kohler, 145-146).
[62] Op. Cit., 34.

with his roots exposed to the sun, the image then provides a pessimistic reflection upon the likelihood for a leader to surface.

Building upon his effort to identify characteristics of the Palestinian in exile, Barakāt compares Ramzī to a leaf and Jerusalem to the scriptural city of Sodom:

هدوء حزين يغمر رمزي. يحس أنه مسطح مثل أوراق الأشجار، ملقى على الأرض. الريح تتقاذفه في أي اتجاه تشاء. لا يملك حتى أن يقاوم. لا يحاول. إنه حزين حتى الرعب. لا يملك عالمه. لا يملك بلاده. لا يملك نفسه. إنه مِلْك الريح. هذا اليوم في حزيران يتحول إلى يوم خريفي. الهواء حزين. لا يصدق ما يحدث لبلاده. لا يمكنه أن يصدق. القدس تحترق. كل بلاده تتحول إلى سدوم. لا شيء فيها يقاوم الاحتراق. يتطلع إلى الوراء. يحدق إلى بلاده. لا يهمه أن يتحول إلى عمود من الملح.

> A sad tranquility overwhelmed Ramzī. He felt he was prostrate like the leaves of the trees, flung to the ground. The wind hurling him back and forth in any direction it wished. He had no power to resist. He did not try. His sadness came along with fear. He did not possess his world. He did not possess his country. He did not possess himself. He is the possession of the wind. This day in June transformed into a fall day. The wind is sorrowful. He cannot believe what is happening to his country. It is not possible for him to believe. Jerusalem is burning. His entire country changes to Sodom. There is nothing to resist the fire. He longs for the past. He stares back at his country, not worried that he will change to a pillar of salt (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 61-62).

Within the space of several sentences this *tamthīl* situates the focus of comparison between entities drawn from separate categories, a man and a collection of leaves tossed about in the wind, where the shared attribute between them is their lack of control over the direction they are travelling. Additionally, within the context of Barakāt's broader reflections on exile, Ramzī as

Palestine is more a collection of leaves than a unified self. This is another of Barakāt's many references to the condition of the Palestinian Diaspora. Tossed from the tree of his origin, Ramzī in exile lies prostrate, motionless upon the ground until the wind, a power beyond his control, arbitrarily determines his future. The image is foreboding in order to express the helplessness of stateless existence. Ramzī has no place; his country is gone. Within the uniquely shared scriptural history acknowledged by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Palestinians, the comparison between Sodom and Palestine is especially insightful. In this *tamthīl* expression the comparison between Palestine and Sodom is rooted in their shared status within the category of nations where the common attribute is that they have each, in their own time, been destroyed. Like Sodom, Palestine is no more, and in both cases the demise was marked by a fiery inferno. In the scriptural remembrance of Sodom, the God of Abraham smites the nation with fire raining from the sky. In the context of Barakāt's novel the "gods," and specifically Israel, smite the nation in a fiery inferno in the form of napalm dropped from warplanes. In the final sentence of the image, Barakāt evokes the narrative of Lot's wife becoming a pillar of salt for looking back upon her destroyed homeland. Ramzī and Lot's wife want to look back, regardless of the consequences. In the scriptural tradition, Lot's wife is punished because of the implication that it is inappropriate, even sinful, to reflect nostalgically on a past which God has chosen to condemn to non-existence. In Barakāt's novel, Ramzī refuses to ignore his past despite efforts to nullify the legitimacy of his claims to the land of his birth.

2h: The Role of The United States (Middle East/Viet Nam):

Barakāt's novel includes a variety of images designed to criticize manifestations of the global influence of the United States. Specifically in reference to the Middle East and Viet Nam, Barakāt identifies the United States as an interloper, an imperial nation callously meddling in the affairs of sovereign nations. One straightforward example of this criticism appears when Ramzī's colleague Nādir opines about the possibility of direct military intervention by the United States in the June War. He says, "I do not rule that out, so long as the American nation is lead by a cowboy quick to resort to his gun" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭāʾir*, 64).[63] The general reference here is to the American president, and the cowboy image appropriately situates this expression within American and Palestinian cultural traditions. The comparison in this expression is an instance of *tashbīh* juxtaposing entities drawn from the same category; the cowboy and the President are men. The shared attribute is apparent in the perception that both tend to act impulsively violent. The reference is simple but suitable to Barakāt's intent because it is an expression of the ubiquitous nature of certain aspects of American culture exported throughout the world and does not require a deliberate reference to context as it pertains to the novel. In many cases, foreign perceptions of the United States are largely influenced, if not determined, by the media it exports. In the middle of the twentieth-century, "Western" films about cowboys fit that bill. The image of an American as a "quick on the draw" cowboy is as familiar to American audiences as it is to audiences worldwide. Barakāt unambiguously crafts this expression in reference to the militaristic nature of American presidents, specifically in the decade before and the decade following the June War of 1967.

In addition to Arab voices articulating such criticism of the United States, Barakāt's novel also includes a self-critical American voice. After Ramzī argues that his American

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[63] لا أستبعد ذلك، طالما على رأس الدولة الأمريكية راعي أبقار سريح اللجوء إلى مسدسه.

girlfriend, Pamela, is wrong to think the United States would not provide support to Israel, she agrees saying, "'Surely it is possible. America is crazy. My country is crazy. What it is doing in the Middle East is no different from what it is doing in Viet Nam'" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 58).[64] Although it has limitations, as the United States did not invade the Middle East like it did in Viet Nam, this comparison is timely and effective. The claim that the United States is acting the same way in the Middle East as in Viet Nam suggests that Israel is simply a proxy for the American government. According to this rubric, Israel in 1967 acts in the Middle East as the United States acts in Viet Nam. The two countries are compared based in the fact that they are both drawn from the specific category of nations with the similar capacity to exert their authority upon other countries through military intervention. In the novel, the comparison relies primarily on depictions of the Israeli Air Force use of napalm. Put bluntly, before the war actually ended, the use of napalm was widely regarded internationally as among the most problematic aspects of the American government's manner of prosecuting the Viet Nam War. Barakāt deliberately emphasizes the connection between these two wars and ostensibly suggests that the United States and Israel are essentially acting in concert; within the context of the June War, he vividly describes instances of the Israeli deployment of this particularly destructive weapon. Within this frame, another image appears in the voice of one of Ramzī's students. Bāsim assures his professor that the Arabs will win the war because, "Israel is a cardboard box defended by the Americans and the British" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 32).[65] In this image, Israel as the cardboard box suggests that the country is merely a proxy for their more powerful and influential allies in the West. As an example of *tashbīh* the expression is relatively easy to understand with respect to the comparison between two entities drawn from separate categories, a country and a cardboard

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[64] تصحح نفسها << بلى، يمكن. أمريكا مجنون. بلادي مجنونة. ما تفعله في الشرق الأوسط لا يختلف عما تفعله في فيتنام >>.

[65] إسرائيل علبة كرتونية يحميها الأميركان والإنكليز.

box, where the point of emphasis is based on the idea that without the support, or simply the interference of the West, Israel would fold.

In another example of Barakāt's American persona criticizing the United States, Pamela encourages Ramzī to participate in a spontaneous protest at the American embassy. She explains, "'The American government became a tool in the hand of the businessmen and the militants. It is against the American people as much as it is against the Vietnamese and the Arabs'" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 59).[66] In the first sentence, Barakāt creates another relatively straightforward example of *tashbīh* in the comparison between two entities drawn from separate categories, a government and a tool, with the shared attribute based on the shared characteristic of their utility. Like a tool, the American government is an instrument manipulated for the benefit of its user, in this case the businessmen and the militants. Additionally, the comparison between American government intervention in Viet Nam and the Middle East is extended to the American people in the second sentence. The comparison here is drawn between three entities all sharing the same category as human populations where the point of comparison is one of intensity with regard to the shared experience of being oppressed by the American government. In this citation, the government is not of the people; it is a tool of businessmen and militants and is as threatening to the American people as it is to the Vietnamese and the Arabs.

Within the context of the previous conversation between Pamela and Ramzī, Barakāt outlines Pamela's reading of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* as an explanation of why Americans act as they do towards Arabs. She explains how one particular aspect of Crusoe's adventure is troubling to her. She recalls that

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[66] الحكومة الأمريكية أصبحت آلة بيد التجار والعسكريين. إنها ضد الشعب الأمريكي بقدر ما هي ضد الفيتناميين والعرب.

ولداً مراكشياً أنقذ روبنسون كروزو من العبودية، وقد حاول أن يؤكد على ولائه لكروزو بتقديم نفسه ضحية له. ووعد كروزو الولد المراكشي بأن يحافظ عليه دائما. غير أنه في طريق عودته إلى بلاده صادف تاجراً برتغالياً فباعه الولد المراكشي بستين قطعة. [...] كيما يريح ضميره حاول أن يحصل على وعد من التاجر البرتغالي أن يعتقه بعد عشر سنوات شرط أن يصبح مسيحياً. ولم يندم كروزو أنه باع الولد المراكشي إلا في ما بعد، عندما احتاج إلى عبد يساعده.

> a Moroccan boy saved Robinson Crusoe from slavery. And he tried to stress his loyalty to Crusoe by offering himself as a sacrifice to him. And Crusoe promised the Moroccan boy that he would always watch over him. But on his return route to his country he came across a Portuguese merchant and he sold the Moroccan boy for sixty coins.[67] […] So that he could soothe his conscience Crusoe tried to get the Portuguese merchant to promise to free him after ten years on the condition he becomes a Christian. And Crusoe did not regret that he sold the Moroccan boy until later, when he needed a slave to help him (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 89-90).[68]

In conjunction with Pamela's additional commentary about various manifestations of American military intervention in the novel, this discussion constitutes an example of *istiᶜārah* rooted in *tamthīl* because although it is not explicitly stated in the novel, Pamela's comments should be read as a direct reference to her more broadly defined criticism of the United States. Through this commentary, Barakāt offers what amounts to his own literary analysis of Defoe's novel as some of its themes apply to his effort to connect the actions of the American and Israeli

[67] This is a unique reading of the events cited from Defoe's novel. After living as a slave in North Africa for two years, Crusoe secures his own freedom in the theft of his master's boat. The young Moroccan boy, Xury, aids Crusoe in navigating his escape and pledges his loyalty after Crusoe threatens to throw him overboard if he does not swear on the prophet Muhammad to serve him (Defoe, 19). A short time later, when the Portuguese merchant offers to purchase Xury Crusoe reports that he, "was very loath to sell the poor Boy's Liberty, who had assisted me so faithfully in procuring my own" (Defoe, 26). Then he proceeds, apparently with the boy's consent, to make the sale.

[68] In this case, reflecting on his solitary condition and his presumed close proximity to cannibals, Crusoe laments, "Now I wish'd for my Boy Xury, and the long Boat, with the Shoulder of Mutton Sail, with which I sail'd above a thousand Miles on the Coast of Africk; but this was in vain" (Defoe, 91).

governments within the frame of the events of the June War.[69] The comparison Barakāt implies with his unique reading of Defoe's novel is not simply between the actions of the character Robinson Crusoe and those of twentieth century Americans. Instead, in this case a more fruitful point of comparison exists between the attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of twentieth century Americans towards Arabs and the attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of Britons from roughly the early eighteenth century through the better half of the twentieth century towards every civilization within their colonial empire. Therefore, the basis for the comparisons is a link between two intellectual concepts because it relies on Barakāt's perception of the imperial aspirations of the United States and his understanding of the imperial history of the British Empire.

A careful examination of the novel *Robinson Crusoe* based on Barakāt's application of the text to his novel results in the conclusion that the protagonist represented precisely how the British people saw themselves operating in the "New World." On the island Crusoe enters into a savage, brutally unforgiving environment, and although the novel reads at times as a bi-polar simultaneous condemnation and celebration of God; instead of slipping into madness and falling prey to despair, Crusoe, like a proper British gentleman, rises above his situation to transform the island into a properly functioning colony. He cultivates the land, domesticates the animals, and finally saves a cannibal from his savage ways. This last point is crucial; not only does Crusoe take credit for saving a man from the depravity of his own culture, but he also names him "Friday," offering him a new language, and a new religion. This reading of the novel suggests

[69] Readings of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* vary widely in the centuries since the novel's original release. Examples of the critical treatment of this text proximally relevant to Barakāt's application of the text to his novel include reflections on capitalist individualism, as in Brian Fitzgerald's, *Daniel Defoe: A Study in Conflict*, or Ian Watt's, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Or more contemporary readings of race relations relevant to the early 18th century evident in Roxann Wheeler's essay, "'*My Savage,' 'My Man': Racial Multiplicity in 'Robinson Crusoe*.'"

that Crusoe's example is a microcosm for precisely what the British did throughout their colonial outposts coupled with a self-aggrandizing sentimental perception that what they were doing was a universal benefit to humanity.[70] Ramzī responds to Pamela's analysis of the novel recalling, "Crusoe was not interested in 'Friday' as a human being when he encountered him. He did not even ask his name. He gave him a name and taught him to say 'yes,' and 'no'" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 90).[71] Pamela replies, "'The gods do not ask us our names. They bestow the names they want upon us and teach us whatever sustains our bondage'" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 90).[72] The term "gods" appears again in this example providing a narrative link to several previous references to the various forces perceived to be influencing the events of the June War from afar. Crusoe acts like a god over his charge, Friday, by saving him from himself and creating him anew much as Barakāt is suggesting that the Western powers, through their subsidiary partner Israel, act like gods in their intervention in the Middle East.

2i: Pamela as the Western object of Arab desire and the male gaze

Regretting that his budding romance with Pamela was now being complicated by the outbreak of the war, Ramzī feels insecure about making advances towards her but, "He asks himself as he watches her integrate with the masses of students: Why was it that this didn't happen except for during the war? He is a hunter without a rifle, and the prey is calmly gazing at

[70] In his essay, "Crusoe's Island Exile," Michael Seidel identifies a justification for such a reading as he explains that, "many readers have intuited that Crusoe stands for something central in the English experience, even if he does so without a sense of national mission. His exile is a kind of blind trust, a metaphorical account that earns its interest not only as a new kind of sovereignty but as a new national enterprise" (Seidel, 122).

[71] لم يهتم كروزو بجمعة كإنسان عندما صادفه. لم يسأله حتى عن اسمه. لقد أعطاه اسماً وعلَّمه أن يقول << نعم >> و<< لا >>.

[72] الآلهة لا يسألوننا عن أسمائنا. يمنحزننا الأسماء التي يريدون ويعلموننا ما يدعم عبوديتنا.

him. He doesn't see his prey except for when he is unarmed (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 60).[73] In this image Ramzī is a hunter without the means to take his prey, and Pamela is his prey unfazed by his advances. Ramzī as a hunter without a rifle in this expression is an example of *tashbīh* because it is easy to discern this as an indication of his feelings of inadequacy. The comparison between Ramzī and the hunter is obviously manifest between two entities drawn from the same category, and the key to the meaning is that he has no rifle; he lacks the capacity to kill his prey. Ramzī is unprepared for his encounter with Pamela. Reading the last two sentences of this citation in isolation, this without prior information, the *istiʿārah* comparison between Pamela and the word "prey" (فريسة) would be unclear. It is necessary in this case to make reference to the previously stated *tashbīh* comparison between Ramzī and the hunter for the reader to comprehend that he is looking through his window at Pamela. Therefore, the comparison between Pamela and the word prey is a clear example of *istiʿārah* based in *tamthīl* because the previous sentences are necessary in order to understand that Pamela is the prey beyond his reach. The comparison links Pamela with the prey, each drawn from a separate category, and the harmony between the similar characteristic they share relies on the *tashbīh* comparison describing Ramzī as the incompetent hunter. Both Pamela and the hunter's prey are confident in their relative safety because neither Ramzī nor the hunter is in a position to threaten their tranquility.

With the premise that American women are like "prey" in the eyes of Arab men already in place, Barakāt complicates his original comparison with an argument between Pamela and Ramzī. Pamela says, "'I don't know, perhaps because I know that young Arab men see young

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[73] وتساءل وهو يراقبها تنضم إلى جماهير الطلاب: لماذا لم يحدث ذلك إلا في أثناء الحرب؟ إنه صياد بلا بندقية والفريسة تحدق إليه باطمئنان. لا يرى الفريسة إلا عندما يكون أعزل.

female American tourists as if they were easy prey" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 126).[74] In this instance, the comparison is still relatively clear, but the example is now a *tashbīh* comparison explicitly stated between the American tourist and the prey. This blatant analogy is where Barakāt complicates traditional renderings of the western male's obsession with an image of the exotic female of the Orient. Within this reading of the image, it is possible to uncover another hidden meaning because just as Pamela's commentary belies the notion that men like Ramzī should simply expect that she would be a willing conquest to satisfy his fantasy without consent, the western obsession with the Arab female is also built upon an unrealistic notion of accessibility. From either point of departure, the Arab man's view of the western female or the western man's view of the Arab female, the premise is built upon a fantasy.[75]

The relationship Barakāt develops between Pamela and Ramzī ultimately occurs on her terms and opens up space for the exploration of several provocative minor themes in the novel. While engaged in an intimate moment with Pamela, it occurs to Ramzī that,

يفكر في أنه يغازل امرأة فيما تغمر الجثث المحروقة وادي شعيب. [...] حاول أن ينسى الحرب وبلاده. يحاول. يحاول. تدفعه جانباً. إنما تعود وتنقض عليه. الطائرة تنقض نحو طه مباشرة. تنقض نحوه. الطائرة ستمر فوقه. يلتصق بالتراب. باميلا تنقض على رمزي. النابالم يحرق جسده. يشتعل. لا يقاوم. يترك نفسه يحترق مثل راهب بوذي في فيتنام. يفكر عند الذروة في أن الموت حقل تَطلع فيه البلاد زهرةً.

He thinks he is making love to a woman while the Shuʿayb valley is inundated with burned corpses. […] He tried to forget the war and his country. He tries and tries. Pamela shoves him away, but returns and swoops down upon him. The plane swoops

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[74] لا أدري. ربما لأنني أعرف أن الشبان العرب ينظرون إلى الفتيات الأميركيات السائحات على أنهن فرائس سهلة.

[75] Edward Said's groundbreaking work *Orientalism* continues to serve as a standard reference for a variety of traditional Western misconceptions of Arabs, and particularly his treatment of the notion of the Orient as the "exotic locale" and misconceptions about female sexuality outlined specifically in Chapter Three, "Oriental Residence and Scholarship: The Requirements of Lexicography and Imagination."

> down directly toward Tāhā, descending toward him. The plane passes over Tāhā, as he clings to the ground. Pamela swooped down upon Ramzī. Napalm burns his body. He burns, and doesn't resist. He allows himself to burn like a Buddhist Monk in Viet Nam. At the climax, he thought that death is a field and his country is sprouting within it like a flower (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 106-107).

This passage includes a variety of morbid images linking this intimate moment between Ramzī and Pamela with the Israeli bombing campaign. In the frame of several sentences Barakāt establishes at least three *tamthīl* comparisons where the points of comparison between constituent parts of each example emphasize the intensity of the sexual encounter specifically. The primary comparison is visible in the sexual act between Pamela and Ramzī and an image of a minor character, Tāhā, desperately trying to survive a napalm attack. This comparison juxtaposes two obviously different categories of experience, but nonetheless, the point of comparison relies on the perception that these two images share a similar level of intensity. Building upon the initial premise of the comparison, Barakāt likens Pamela to a plane swooping down upon Ramzī in the same way that an Israeli jet drops napalm upon Tāhā. Barakāt's connection between Ramzī and Tāhā burning under a napalm attack, which in this case is a comparison between two men, emphasizes the intense nature of this sexual encounter, but it also draws attention to Ramzī's guilt regarding his inability to ignore the wider world and the war going on around him. The image emphasizes the detachment, self-doubt, and guilt of the Arab intellectual disengaged with his people in their time of need.

In *A Short History of Modern Arabic Literature*, M.M. Badawi suggests that in Barakāt's novel, "The author introduces this love interest not only to provide for Ramzī a means of escape from grim reality, and pinpoint the irony of his love-making in Beirut while people are

slaughtered in Jerusalem, but also to use Pamela as a convenient interlocutor to whom Ramzī can express his views on, and attitude to, the Arab predicament" (Badawi, 181). In at least one example where Barakāt seems to get off track in his reliance on Ramzī and Pamela to serve as "interlocutors" in expression of views and attitudes toward the "Arab predicament," the previous citation includes an awkward reference to the Viet Nam War beyond the reference to napalm. As vulgar as this vision already is in the first few sentences, Barakāt proceeds to draw a comparison between Ramzī and an image of a self-immolating Buddhist Monk. Alongside other references to napalm in particular in the novel, this is most certainly a reference to Quang Duc who was famously pictured immolating himself in Viet Nam on October 5th, 1963. This is an awkward comparison at best within the larger context of the novel. There are several other references to Viet Nam, including all explicit reference to napalm, all meant to draw attention to Barakāt's perception of the similarities between the American government's intervention in South East Asia and its involvement in the Middle East. One weakness of this particular reference is apparent in the fact that Quang Duc was technically protesting a brutal government crack down upon Buddhist Monks for suspected Communist ties by the South Vietnamese government and not necessarily protesting American intervention. Although the South Vietnamese government in 1963 was already a surrogate for American interests in the region, this particular event occurred too early in this relationship to be appropriately situated as a protest against the war that would come. With this in mind, the reference is out of place among Barakāt's other imagery which is critical of the United States and the War in Viet Nam specifically. The reference is evidence of a common misapplication of this image to the subsequent escalation of direct military intervention by the United States after Quang Duc's protest in 1963.

In the final sentence of the previous citation, Barakāt returns to the image of his country like a flower. Previously, he suggests that a new crop of leaders must emerge from within like a blooming flower,[76] an image with a more positive connotation. In that example, Barakāt compares the flower with the nation in order to emphasize that within the Palestinian population there are potential leaders who will love their country unconditionally and strive to reverse the present course. Here he provides a much darker image of his country sprouting like a flower from a field of death with the implication that little good can emerge out of such circumstances. Obviously, Barakāt intends to connect this image to Ramzī's previous musings about the potential for hope in the future, but in this case the optimism inherent in that original image has been lost.

2j: Students as Water

In the service of one of his minor themes, Barakāt develops a *tashbīh* comparison between various constituencies among the Arab peoples and waves. The basic similarity Barakāt evokes in this comparison links two entities drawn from separate categories and the shared attributes he offers within this frame suggest contradictory feelings of solidarity and discord among Arab populations resisting the status quo. In some cases it would appear that each individual is like a single drop of water with many coming together to form a single, formidable force. Other images leave the impression that any sense of unity is lost in the uncontrollable nature of a wave crashing on the shore. For example, in one instance, Barakāt describes Ramzī looking out upon students celebrating the outbreak of war: Ramzī "stopped and observed the

[76] Op. Cit., 34.

outside from the window. Waves of students are entangled and the foam covers everything" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 23).[77] In this *tashbīh* comparison the image is easily discernible. The comparison links two sensually perceptible entities imagining the students like waves, unified or "entangled" (تتشابك) and covering everything. This image gives the impression that the students like the waves are together, inseparable in their purpose, yet like the waves in the ocean they are all susceptible to the volatility of natural elements beyond their control. The addition of the term "foam" (زبد) also suggests the volatility of the situation. When the sea is calm, waves may appear upon the surface with evidence of foam, but in a storm or in close proximity to the land, waves crest and break with foam appearing to cover the surface.

In another image, Barakāt clearly identifies the notion that this wave of students is out of control. In anticipation of a protest at the American embassy in Beirut,

> انهارت السدود فجأة وتحولت المياه الراكدة الهادئة المحقونة من عصور إلى طوفان مزبد مزمجر يجرف كل شيء في طريقه. يتدفق الطلاب صوب السفارة الأميركية حاملين في طريقهم الصخور والحجارة والعصي. الوجوه والأصوات والعيون تبدلت. ويصل السيل نحو السفارة. الحجارة تنطلق في الهواء. الزجاج يتكسر. جماعات أخرى من المتظاهرين تتقاطر من مدارس بيروت وجامعاتها...أمواج أخرى من الطلاب تتدافع. وحدة أخرى من الجيش تقبل. أمواج أخرى من غير الطلاب تتقاطر من كل صوب.

> Without warning the dams broke and the stagnant placid waters held back for ages transformed into a foaming, roaring flood washing away everything in its path. The students flow out towards the American embassy carrying rocks and stones and sticks along their route. Their faces, voices and eyes have changed. The flood arrives at the embassy. The stones are hurled in the air. Glass breaks. Other groups of demonstrators

[77] وقف نظر من النافذة إلى الخارج. أمواج الطلاب تتشابك والزبد يعلو كل شيء.

> stream from the schools and universities of Beirut. Other waves of students rush together tumultuously. Another group from the army approaches. Other waves not consisting of students stream from every direction (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 60).

Read in isolation, the first sentence in this passage can be considered an example of *istiʿārah*, but as it applies to the entire passage, it contributes to an example of a broadly developed *tamthīl* built upon the original *tashbīh* comparison between students and waves. The *istiʿārah* in the first sentence describes the launch of a flood as the dams break imagining the sudden rush forward of the student demonstrators in the streets without explicitly mentioning them. Prior to this flood, Barakāt describes the students as stagnant, placid water. In their unity they are apathetic, passive as if held back by a force beyond their control. In the instant that their long bound restraints are released, the demonstrators become like a flood collecting debris and gaining momentum. Barakāt then describes the students flowing toward the embassy, and like the flood, they bring destruction in their wake.

By the end of the passage, Barakāt successfully returns to the complex nature of Arab responses to the "question of Palestine." A demonstration of students in Beirut evolves into a coming together of various different groups including the army. Regardless of their unity as masses of waters converging, these various groups are visibly distinguishable from each other. This gathering is tumultuous, disorganized and streaming in from every direction. Barakāt describes a response to the defeat which, like the war itself, failed because instead of drops of water coming together to form a powerful wave, the Arab military effort during the June War is more appropriately compared to a frenzied crash of waves upon the shore. Under the direction of incompetent leadership lacking the knowledge or capacity to steer the ship, the Arab people crash in upon themselves bringing more pain and destruction in the effort.

In another reference and building upon his wave analogy, Barakāt clearly identifies a sense of anxiety surrounding individual responses to the war beyond his reading of the collective "Arab" response. Barakāt places Ramzī in several situations where he is more in danger of being injured or killed by his own people than he is of dying in a battle with Israelis. Encountering a potentially dangerous mob gathering around the Egyptian embassy, Ramzī is introspective. Barakāt writes, "he loves to drive his car parallel to the shore. He wants to be like a wave. He wants to be independent and attached at the same time. He wants to be free and part of something big at the same time" (*ʿAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 158).[78] In this case, Ramzī as the everyman Arab character has conflicting desires to be independent and also a part of something greater. While it seems reasonable to suggest that this is possible, Barakāt evokes this sentiment as a function of his original underlying *tashbīh* comparison imagining the people as waves. The concept of Arab unity is defined by a desire to participate in a coalition of nations in a position of international strength, but according to Barakāt, these sentiments are undermined by tendencies toward disunity.

In his final effort to further this theme, Barakāt describes a riot taking place outside the Egyptian embassy in Beirut after Egyptian President Gamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's speech declaring the end to hostilities. Barakāt again describes the protestors as waves:

أمواج من المتظاهرين يقبلون من الاتجاه المعاكس. يحطمون واجهات المحلات والمصابيح والإشارات. الزجاج يتناثر في الطريق. التجار يغلقون أبواب محلاتهم. أصحاب المحلات ذات الأبواب الزجاجية يبحثون عن صور عبد الناصر يلصقونها على الواجهات. لا تنفع. المتظاهرون يحطمون كل شيء.

[78] يحب أن يقود سيارته بموازاة البحر. هدفه أن يكون موجة. يريد أن يكون مستقلاً ومرتبطاً في الوقت ذاته. يريد أن يكون حراً وجزءاً من شيء كبير في الوقت ذاته.

> Waves of demonstrators approached from opposite directions, they are smashing shop windows, street lamps and signs. Glass is scattered in the street. Merchants lock their shop doors. Owners of shops with glass doors search for pictures of ᶜAbd al-Nāṣir to stick in the windows. It is useless. The demonstrators are destroying everything (*ᶜAwdat al-Ṭā'ir*, 161).

These scenes are central to Barakāt's primary intention with the wave analogy. In this example, the waves converge from opposite directions, disorganized and lacking restraint. Out of fear of their neighbors, shop owners look to protect their merchandise to no avail. In their failure to bring destruction to Israel, these demonstrators are bringing destruction to their own neighborhoods.

2k: The Question of Unity

In the effort to evaluate the concept of unity in Barakāt's novel, it is possible to identify several "unities" of composition relative to al-Jurjānī's concept of *naẓm* whether such unities represent a major theme or an individual image. Barakāt's novel provides ample space for further consideration of al-Jurjānī's concept of the spectrum of dissimilarity with specific reference to how certain images are unified by the strength of harmony and strength of difference between shared attributes. Additionally, Barakāt's images invite a discussion of al-Jurjānī's requirement for metaphoric language being truthful and whether or not it is helpful to consider the notion of textual unity.

As the more broadly defined reading of al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm* pertains to Barakāt's primary motif evident in the comparison between Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* and the "exiled"

nation of Palestine, the overarching relevance of the various themes related to this reference are well developed and represent a major accomplishment in terms of the unity of the text. The basis for the comparison between Palestine and Wagner's ship as vessels, for example, consistently provides for thoughtful consideration of Barakāt's lament concerning the failures of Arab leadership within the specific context of the June War. A closer reading of specific images related to this theme also reveals evidence of compositional unity present through the specific images Barakāt creates in the development of the *Flying Dutchman* analogy. For example, the specific comparison between Ramzī and a captain of a small ship embarking on a journey over unknown waters effectively provides the opportunity for Barakāt to reflect on the nature of the Arab intellectual's response to the crisis whether in the early stages of the June War or as the fighting came to an abrupt end. The image he develops in this regard is thoughtfully introspective with respect to the clear presence of his own auto-biographical voice in the novel, and it fits well within his commentary about the potential for future leaders to emerge from the nation like the beauty unfolding within the blooming flower. Regarding the strength of harmony and difference of shared attributes apparent in the comparison between a college professor and a ship's captain, this image is especially effective. Barakāt's suggests a point of similarity is manifest in the captain and the intellectual's failure to understand either how to control the ship or even where to locate the helm. In this case, Barakāt's reflection on the failure of leadership linked to this concept provides a suitable approach to confronting a difficult truth facing the Palestinian people. Additionally, the image of the ship lacking a rudder as representative of the Palestinian people's inability to adequately navigate the future and confront the forces arrayed against them also achieves a meaningful if not discouraging level of truth within Barakāt's critical assessment of the prospects of reaching a future settlement in the conflict with Israel.

By contrast, Barakāt's depiction of Ramzī as the everyman Arab is lacking with respect to truthfulness because of the inadequacies inherent in assuming that the Western educated intellectual is an appropriate symbol for the population at large. Similarly, it would be wrong to suggest that the elites of the ruling political classes somehow represent the broader interests of the people. In this way, Roger Allen is correct in his criticism of Barakāt's failure to provide more attention to the development of his characters. In addition to the fact that many of the characters are only depicted in reference to their anecdotal experiences, Allen suggests that while Barakāt successfully contextualizes the most fundamental socio-historical aspects of the Palestinian Israeli conflict within the immediate frame of the June War he loses characterization:

> the point to be made here is that, in his desire to use certain techniques of realism in portraying both the background and the events of this traumatic episode in the history of the Arab world, Barakāt has deemphasized characterization and overemphasized the documentary aspect to a degree which diminishes the artistic merit of the work as a whole (Allen, 158).

Allen's criticism goes on to acknowledge that Pamela and Ramzī specifically are simply vehicles for Barakāt's social commentary. In his insistence on situating an imperfect, anxiety riddled intellectual like Ramzī at the forefront of his narrative, Barakāt neglects other avenues for considering a more representative Palestinian voice.

However, as an example of an effective image for the Palestinian in exile, Barakāt's image of the blooming flower contrasted with the uprooted plant with its roots exposed to the sun is especially poignant. The image of an uprooted plant compared to the exile is a robust one with reference to the harmony of similarity and the strength of difference. The power of this image is

in the foreboding nature of the exile's existence as compared to the plant exposed to the elements withering away in the sun. Both face a precariously defined future at risk of geographical irrelevance and loss of identity related to a specifically defined sense of place.

In light of his criticism of Israel and the United States, although Barakāt refuses to ignore the responsibilities of Arab governments to respond more effectively to the circumstances facing the Palestinians in the second half of the twentieth century, he undermines the potential impact of that otherwise thoughtful message with the Nazi analogy. Considered with reference to al-Jurjānī's use of the term *ighrāq* (hyperbole), this comparison has the potential to impair efforts to win over significant numbers of potential supporters of the Palestinian cause. It lacks widespread appeal and distracts from his otherwise meaningful consideration of truth with respect to the reality of man's ability to commit profound acts of atrocity against his fellow man in times of war.

Finally, Barakāt's image of the student masses as waves is one of his most successfully contextualized themes even as it is by comparison a minor theme. The strength of this image comes in reading it as evidence of both union and dissonance represented in the Arab responses to the "disaster" of 1948 and the subsequent "setback" of 1967. Regarding Barakāt's depiction of the June War specifically, the predominate dissonance of the Arab military effort clearly undermined any impactful rallying of the potential for a sense of unity among populations spread across the Arab world.

Chapter Three

Gardening in Beirut:

Hudá Barakāt's *Ḥārith al-Miyāh*

حارث المياه

The Tiller of Waters

3a: Reflections on a City at War

Hudá Barakāt is a Lebanese novelist and playwright whose career began with the publication of a collection of short stories, *Zā'rāt* (*Visitors*), in 1985 and includes five critically acclaimed novels and two plays. Although Barakāt consistently inflects her fiction with comparative imagery, her novel *Ḥārith al-Miyāh* is an especially appropriate text for this study because of the distinct quality of the images she develops. For this work, Barakāt was awarded the Nagīb Maḥfūẓ Medal for Literature in 2000. Although all of her novels are set during the Lebanese civil war, *Ḥārith al-Miyāh* stands out because of its rhetorical exploration of the nature of historical narrative and its description of the city of Beirut as a liminal space between life and death.

In *Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, Barakāt creates several comparative images in the development of at least three primary motifs and several minor themes. Among her primary motifs, she compares weaving fabric with narrating history, she likens a woman's knowledge of fabric with her sexual maturity, and she describes the torments of punishment as well as the pleasures of reward in the hereafter as witnessed through the backdrop of a city at war. In *Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, the protagonist

is isolated in war torn Beirut. Seemingly alone, amidst rotting corpses and crumbling buildings, Niqūlā finds himself repeatedly torn between a literal underworld filled with images of terror and deprivation, and a scene of paradise complete with its comforts and abundance. Additionally, Barakāt uses comparative imagery to develop several minor themes, including references to the sectarian cultural and political divisions in Lebanon during the 1970s and 1980s, lingering resentment about the June War of 1967, and the international role of the United States after World War II.

3b: Narrative Weaving

In her novel, Barakāt explores a comparison between the process of weaving fabric and the recording of human histories. There are histories of humanity and histories of individuals, and their values are measured by the longevity of their relevance. Weaving the "fabric" of her own narrative, Barakāt develops an overarching *tamthīl* comparison between these two categories of human creation where the point of similarity is evident in the value of each process in the effort to record and preserve history. Within the development of this theme, several examples of *tashbīh* and *istiᶜārah* become apparent as Barakāt explores the notion that human histories are like fabric; high quality fabric lasts, while cheap fabrics fade over time.

In Barakāt's novel her protagonist, Niqūlā, narrates several different stories, and he recognizes that the education his father gives him about the history and business of textiles represents something more than random stories of cloth. In the development of this theme, Barakāt describes Niqūlā's nostalgic attachment to the fabrics collected in his father's shop. Niqūlā's ritual includes cloaking himself in the fabrics: "I cling my skin to it fully in order to

recall the details of my memory of what distinguishes it, to return as if reading its special qualities and elements in my memory page by page…word by word…letter by letter" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 40).[79] The cloth in this image kindles Niqūlā's memory. This expression is an example of a *tashbīh* comparison between fabric and books which is comprehensible without reference to a broader contextual moment. Both entities are considered as coming from a similar category of human creation. Both the fabric and the book are sensually perceptible, and the point of comparison between the two is an intellectual concept rooted in the recognition that they hold the power of memory. Like a book, each fabric narrates a story relating to Niqūlā's relationship with his father, and he reads each fabric page by page in the service of recalling those memories.

In addition to Niqūlā's personal reflections upon his own relationships, Barakāt introduces a more broadly defined ancient human history to support her comparison between weaving and narration. Niqūlā explains to his girlfriend Shamsa, "The first hieroglyph was a thread upon a thread, the first writing tablets were on sleeves" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 65).[80] This reference establishes an historical anchor for Barakāt's comparison between weaving and narration. In his own life Niqūlā gains his knowledge of history by proximity to his father, which is another "kind" of history representing the passage of generational knowledge through the narration of experience. Niqūlā values his father's mentorship: "And my father who taught me all of this and trained me in a long, willing apprenticeship, he was not merely a textile merchant. He was a scholar, he understood the secret" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 127).[81] The connection between weaving and narration is emphasized in the term "scholar" (عالماً). With the comparison evident here Barakāt begins to advance her comparison to the point where it should

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79 ألصقه بكامل جلدي لأسترجع تفاصيل ذاكرتي التي تخصّه، لأعيد كأنْ قراءة ذاكرتي هذه في خاصائصه ومكوّناته صفحة صفحة...كلمة كلمة...حرفاً حرفاً.

80 أول هيروغليف الخيط على الخيط، أوّل ألواح الكتابة على الأردان [...].

81 وأبي الذي علّمني كل ذلك ودرّبني تدريب المريد الطويل لم يكن مجرّد بائع قماش. كان عالماً فاهماً للسرّ.

be properly classified as an example of *tamthīl*. The basic premise, however, is still clear enough that as a textile merchant Niqūlā's father is by necessity a scholar of history. The scholar and textile merchant both occupy the same category. The primary attribute they share revolves around the notion that to thrive in one's profession requires a diligent apprenticeship in the effort to acquire knowledge.

The basis for this comparison, according to Niqūlā's narration, is as old as the rise of humanity. His recollection of a lesson from his father introduces the image of a loom, one of Barakāt's primary images in the examination of her theme:

نبدأ من البداية – كما يقول أبي – من حيث انطلقت هجراتنا إلى جهات الأرض كافة، من سواحل غرب القارة الإفريقية، حيث يروي حكماء قبائل الدوغو أن الربّ، وهو الكلمة الخالقة، كان في أول عمليات خلق العالم نفحة أوجدت النباتات ذات الألياف والحيوانات ذات الفراء والزغب، وهي التي كست جلودنا قديماً. [...] ولا تعود كلمة الربّ إلى البشر إلاّ بعد تكفير طويل يستمرّ حتى ولادة الجنيّ السابع، وهو جدّ البشري الجديد، والذي خلق الربّ على شكل نَوْل يحمل كلام الرب إلى البشر مجسَّداً في ثمانين خيطاً من القطن، أربعون عليا للسداة تكون المزدوجة وأربعون سفلى للنير وتكون المفردة موزّعة كما الأسنان في الفم. والسداة والنير تروحان وتجيئان كحركة الفكّين فيما تشكّل بكرةُ الخيط الحلقَ، أما المكوك فهو اللسان.

> We begin at the beginning – as my father says – from when our migrations began to all the parts of the Earth, from the western coast of the African continent, where philosophers of the Dogon tribes say that the lord, the word of creation, in the beginning created the world in a breath of wind which created plants having fibers and animals having fur, which covered our skins in ancient times. […] The word 'Lord' did not return to humanity except after a long atonement persisting until the birth of the seventh jinnī. He is the grandfather of the new humanity, who the Lord created in the form of a loom to

> carry his word to humanity embodied in eighty threads of cotton, forty above the warp couple with forty below the weft, in single threads dispersed like teeth in the mouth. And the warp and the weft go and come like the movement of jaws while the bobbin of thread forms the throat. And as for the shuttle, it is the tongue (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 128-129).

In the first half of this citation, Barakāt imagines the creation of the earth as a breath of wind, a word that creates the plants and animals which in turn become the fabrics that cover human bodies and allows them to survive. In the second half of the citation, the grandfather of the "new humanity" takes the form of a loom. Barakāt then describes the loom as a mouth, which implies a broader connection between weaving and narration. Within the space of several sentences, she establishes a *tamthīl* comparison implying a connection between the loom and the mouth as methods for recording history dating back to the origins of humanity. In this case, the loom and the mouth represent different categories related to creativity which share similar characteristics. They both possess the ability to create narrative.

Barakāt reinforces her comparison with a reference to a linguistic connection between weaving and narration. Niqūlā recalls, "In the language of the Dogon the word '*sawāḥ*' means cloth and also speech, and at the same time it means the embodied action…thus a naked woman, for example, it is said that she is a mute woman. As it is in Arabic, look at the harmony of the letters in the words *al-ḥakī*, narration, and *al-ḥiyāka*, weaving!" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 129).[82] In this citation, instead of simply providing the image of a mute woman, Barakāt offers an explanation of how *istiʿārah* expressions work. In this case she explains why there is meaning when the term "mute" (خرساء) is borrowed for the term "naked" (عارية) in reference to a woman. The borrowing

[82] وفي لغة الدوغو كلمة << سواح >> تعني القماش وأيضاً الكلام، وفي الوقت نفسه تعني الفعل المتجسّد..فالمرأة العارية مثلاً يُقال إنها امرأة خرساء. أما في العربية فانظري تطابق حروف الحكي والحياكة!

in this case relies on the notion that cloth and speech perform similar functions related to the narration of human history. Barakāt then draws attention to the linguistic similarity between the terms "narration" (الحكي) and "weaving" (الحياكة) in Arabic. Although they do not share the same root, Barakāt emphasizes the spelling, as well as oral and auditory similarities between these two terms to imply a link between their definitions relative to her underlying comparison.

In the following image, Barakāt extends her comparison suggesting that weaving a narrative of "life" is similar to other cyclical phenomena: "Planting and tilling in the grooves of the soil is the weaving of life, its going and coming like the movement of the loom, and like the movement of day and night following in succession around us, and like the union of the sky with the earth and life with death" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 129).[83] Weaving a narrative is like planting and tilling the soil because both activities include cultivation. With effort crops are sown, harvested and consumed like the story of a life. By repeating her image of the loom, Barakāt maintains a connection between this citation and her original *tamthīl*. In this instance, she adds complexity to her theme by adding that the narration of life is cyclical like planting crops, the passing of day and night, the union of sky and earth, and the cycle of life and death.

Barakāt goes further by emphasizing the "cycle" of life aspect of her theme with the suggestion that a human life is like a single thread representing the trajectory from birth to the grave. Niqūlā explains,

> وكما عندنا، نحن المسيحيين يا شمسة، يولد الإنسان عند الدوغو آثماً، لكنه يتطهّر من خطيئة كسر المحظور الأصليّة بالنسج [...] وهم يدفنون المكّوك والبكرة مع الميت بعد أن يلفّونه بغطاء على شكل مربّعات باللونين الأبيض والأسود، يُنسج بخيط واحد [...] فقطع الخيط يعني الضياع، تماماً كما سيكون عند أريان، ابنة مينوس وأخت فيدرا

[83] وليست الزراعة والحراثة في أثلام الأرض سوى نسيج الحياة رواحاً ومجيئاً كحركة النول، وكحركة النهار والليل تتوالى علينا، وكارتباط السماء بالأرض والحياة بالموت.

التي يخلّص خيطُها من الموت في المتاهة. وانقطاع الخيط [...] يعني انكسار تتابع النهار والليل والوقوع في هوّة الفراغ والنسيان والعدم.

> Shamsa, as it is for us Christians, for the Dogon the human is born in sin, but he is purified from the original sin of violating what is forbidden through weaving […]. They bury the shuttle and bobbin with the dead after wrapping them with a cover formed by squares of two colors, white and black. It is woven with a single thread […] and cutting the thread means loss, just as it is with Ariadne, the daughter of Minos and Phaedra's sister, whose thread saves her from dying in the labyrinth. And to sever the thread […] means breaking the succession of day into night and falling in the abyss of emptiness, oblivion and nonexistence (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 129-130).

In this citation, Barakāt implies a universal application of the essential motif. Specifically, she cites societies as diverse as the Dogon of West Africa, Christians in Lebanon, or the Greeks prior to the era of Athenian ascendancy as all sharing the same comparison between weaving and history. The thread tying the burial shroud is a single thread representing the duration of a life. It is unbroken until death, when life has ceased and the shroud is sown. At this point in the development of her *tamthīl*, Barakāt links the physically perceptible thread as representative of life, and the act of cutting it with death. The similarity is intellectual and emphasized in the symbolic severing of the thread, which marks the passage from life into death.

Barakāt anecdotally references several religious traditions in her effort to imply the universal nature of her now firmly established *tamthīl*. From West Africa, through the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia to China, she suggests that each civilization includes the idea that the narrative of history is like a woven fabric. To this end, Niqūlā asks, "Don't you see how

all of the stories resemble each other and come together regardless of their origin?" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 131).[84] With this rhetorical inquiry, Barakāt actually draws attention to the unoriginal nature of this particular comparison between weaving and narrating history. However, by doing this she describes the basis for the comparison as universal in order to substantiate a context for several of the novel's primary themes. For example, Barakāt evokes the image of Eve in the garden suggesting that neglecting the weaver of history leads to ignorance. While she is naked in the garden, Eve is "innocent" in her ignorance of the knowledge of good and evil, but her nakedness is also a point of emphasis in her "fall." Niqūlā explains,

> ولأننا ننسى يا شمسة، ولأننا جاحدون في جهلنا، نسينا أنّ الحائك، أينما كان في بقاع هذه الأرض، هو الموكل بسرّ الحياة والسلم، والمهدَّد دوماً بغلبة الموت والحرب. أو ليس نزع الثوب، العري، مرتبطاً بالخطيئة الأولى وبالقصاص، وبسعي لا يهدأ الى التكفير؟
>
> And because we forget Shamsa, and because we are in denial of our ignorance, we forgot that the weaver, no matter where he was on this Earth, is entrusted with the secret of life and peace, and is perpetually menaced with the victory of death and war. And is the removal of clothing, nakedness, not linked with original sin and punishment and the ceaseless pursuit of atonement? (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 130).

The weaver is entrusted with maintaining a connection to the past, but menaced by the human tendency to ignore the lessons of the past in the service of future failures. Nakedness represents both innocence and guilt, the "ceaseless pursuit of atonement" which, according to scriptural traditions, began when Eve realized she needed to cover her shame. Nakedness represents the bliss of ignorance as well as the guilt of only recognizing an error after the deed is done. The

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[84] أرأيت كيف تتشابه كلّ الحكايات وتلتقي مهما كان مصدرها؟

irony in this reference occurs with the acknowledgement that in the ignorance of her nakedness, Eve actually does the right thing by seeking the knowledge of good and evil. She learns her "lesson." Adherents to the faiths of Abraham endeavor to reinforce the avoidance of temptation by weaving narratives in remembrance of her story.

Barakāt adds to the notion that neglecting the weaver ends in disaster by suggesting that without continuity, the narrative of history loses its relevance and society suffers as a consequence. Recalling the lessons of the Sumerian goddess of weaving, Niqūlā shows how she teaches us that the loom weaves "the language of the ancients which enriches the memory we inherit and then we transcend in our era…and when we begin to forget the words of the ancients the knots and threads of the weave fall apart, and the world ends fragmented without shape, dust in the nebula" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 130).[85] When the weave is neglected its knots loosen and fall apart. In this *tamthīl* expression the words are the knots holding the weave together, as those words are forgotten, the knowledge of the ancients is lost and the world falls to dust. This is a creative way to imply the notion that when societies forget the lessons of history they are bound to repeat past failures. Although this sentiment is often misapplied to suggest that society can avoid the repetition of history by studying past mistakes, Barakāt appears to consider this premise to be inadequate. Returning to her previous development of this theme, Barakāt uses the movement of the loom or the passage of night into day, to illustrate the idea that history repeats its movements with predictable regularity. The imperative in this case is to attempt to know the past not because the cyclical nature of history can be thwarted, but because through the diligent study of history it is possible to confront the mistakes of the past when the inevitable opportunity comes around again to make those same mistakes.

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[85] هو كلام الأجداد الذي يُثري الذاكرة، نتوارثها ثم نزيد عليها بدورنا...وحين يبدأ نسيان قول الأجداد تتفكّك عقد النسيج وخيوطه، وينتهي العالم فتاتاً دون شكل وغباراً في السديم.

Barakāt offers an added dimension to her *tamthīl* comparison with the suggestion that the weaver of history's narrative can be corrupted by nefarious intentions. As Niqūlā points out, "Ignorant, also, are those who do not perceive the sorcery of thread and the curse of weaving. In their deficient knowledge and the delusion of their arrogance, they do not see that the weaver's trade has its dangers and its dark, evil turns" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 133).[86] As will become apparent in the deepening complexity of the comparison between weaving and narration, it is appropriate to draw a link to the "delusion" (وهم) and "arrogance" (غطرسة) of men who have manipulated the scriptural story of Eve in the garden in order to oppress women. In this reading, women fall victim to the sorcery and curse of a manufactured narrative of inferiority.

In another image, the knotted thread again appears to represent the circle of human life from birth to death: "And it is the thread's knot beginning every weave that consists of two parts that will become a single thread. One part in the hand of good and the other is in the hand of evil. One is in the umbilical cord and the other in the hangman's noose" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 133).[87] Beyond its similarity to previously cited references to the thread as a symbol of life, the *tamthīl* comparison here implies that every knot which begins a human life includes the capacity for good and evil, and all who are born will die. Again, Barakāt establishes the comparison between the sensually perceptible thread and the intellectual entity of a life's journey, but in this case she adds the umbilical cord and the hangman's noose as the critical points of emphasis. Barakāt implies a rejection of the notion that a human life is born in sin by acknowledging that every life has the capacity for good or evil. The suggestion here is that while a child may be born innocent, it has the potential to fall into sin. Thus, the umbilical cord portends the

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[86] جاهل أيضاً من لا يدرك سحر الخيط ولعنات النسيج. من لا يرى، في معرفته الناقصة ووهم غطرسته، أن لصنعة الحائك أخطارها ومنقلباتها السوداء الشريرة.

[87] وعقدة الخيط التي هي بداية كلّ حياكة تتكوّن من طرفين سيكونان خيطاً واحداً، طرف في يد الخير والآخر في يد الشر، طرفٌ في حبل الصرّة والآخر في عقدة المشنقة.

beginning of a narrative, and the noose brings it to an end when sin prevails and the lessons of the past are ignored.

Finally, Barakāt's development of the comparison between weaving and narrating history evolves into a lament for the consequences of neglecting the lessons of the past. Niqūlā's father complains about the decline of his business as a sign of societal decay:

> إنها تجارة أسواق اليوم. إنه أفول عصر بائع القماش [...] إنها حكاية بيوت هذه المدينة أيضاً. هي نفسها، أظر البرادي، الستائر، أقمشة المقاعد، أغطية الأسرّة، الشراشف، المحارم. نسيج خفيف متشابه ولا يعمّر، لا يورَث، متطاير ولا يترك أثراً، مثل فولكلور التلفزيون.
>
> That is the commerce of the markets today. The age of the textile merchant is fading. […] That is also the story of the houses in this city. It is the same, look at the curtains, the furniture upholstery, the bedding, the sheets, and the handkerchiefs. They are all of an identical thin weave that does not last, is not inherited. It is scattered and leaves no trace, like the folklore on television (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 142-143).

According to this citation, the thin fabrics that garnish the homes across Beirut are a sign of the decadent decline of civilization. As people have forgotten their past, the quality of narration fades like the cheap cloth found in their homes. The comparison here relies on the strength of Barakāt 's persistent development of this central theme. In this case, cheap fabric is like a poorly rendered story; both are evidence of the past but neither will endure. Nothing is of a quality worth passing down to future generations. In the final sentence, as symbols of the ignorance of the people, their cheap fabrics are as useless as the "folklore" on television. In this final edition to the development of Barakāt 's underlying *tamthīl*, the comparison between poorly manufactured fabrics and mindless entertainment is abundantly clear. The comparison in this

case is especially meaningful because, although the folklore on television can potentially be recorded, it is more likely seen as a degradation of the art of narration. This expression also helps to contextualize the novel's examination into the circumstances contributing to the civil war in Lebanon. As the people have failed to preserve their knowledge of the past, they have doomed themselves into repeating yet another human tragedy.

3c: Eve in the Garden and the Sinful Search for Knowledge

In one of several references to the scriptural narrative of the Garden of Eden, Barakāt explores the connotation that the quest for knowledge is in itself a sinful act. It is a reflection on the historical narrative relevant to Jewish, Christian and Muslim societies which suggests that certain knowledge, particularly in the hands of women, is forbidden and should be guarded against. Considering that her characters are Christians, it is certainly true in the Biblical tradition that the story of Eve eating from the tree of knowledge is the moment sin is introduced to the world. The irony is that this story has led to innumerable misogynistic offenses against women even though each of the three religious traditions that rely on this story, at least in part, acknowledge that Eve was doing something that God had intended, and that this original sin was not necessarily Eve's "fault." Regardless of the often contradictory sectarian nature of interpreting ancient scriptures, the message often communicated is that a woman sins when seeking knowledge beyond what the patriarchal authorities have deemed appropriate.

A clear point of similarity Barakāt stresses in the novel is the connection between the wearing of specific fabrics and a woman's emotional, intellectual, and sexual development. With the connection between weaving fabric and narrating history already established, Barakāt

continues to develop and add complexity to her theme with references to types of cloth which come to represent specific aspects of human knowledge. In a series of images, Barakāt anchors her description of the evolving sexual relationship between Niqūlā and Shamsa by comparing stages of their relationship with Shamsa's knowledge of different fabrics. Like Eve in the garden, Shamsa is innocent before the temptation. Developing this theme, Barakāt compares two intellectual concepts, knowledge of fabric and sexual maturity, and she draws a point of similarity between a sensually perceptible object, fabric, and an intellectual concept, knowledge. The various examples of comparative images are all linked by *tamthīl* because without acknowledging the basis for this comparison Niqūlā's stories of fabric are just stories and not a reflection on the development of his evolving relationship with Shamsa.

At the beginning of their relationship the linen Shamsa wears is a sign of her innocence. At this point it appears that Niqūlā is responsible for her temptation as he attempts to seduce Shamsa with his tales of the history of fabric. He asks, "Has the story of linen pleased you Shamsa? Now you know what you are wearing, your body knows it and moves forward in it. Your body moves forward in the learning we've begun together and we will continue together as long as you wish. This will be our secret, we two, and we will proceed with it as long as you desire" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 65).[88] Knowledge, in this instance, is defined as secretive, perhaps even dangerous, and the pursuit of knowledge is linked to the presence of a growing desire to know more. She is beginning to "know" the linen she wears; her body is maturing as she "moves forward" with this knowledge. The verb "desire" (أردت) also suggests that this knowledge is linked with sexual maturity. This is a subtle example of *istiᶜārah* based in the

[88] هل أعجبتك يا شمسة حكاية الكتّان؟ الآن تعرفين ما تلبسين، يعرفه جسمك ويتقدّم فيه. يتقدّم في معرفة بدأناها معاً وسوف نتابعها معاً طالما أحببت ذلك. سيكون هذا سرّنا نحن الإثنين وسنسير فيه طالما أردت ذلك.

overarching *tamthīl* comparison between knowledge of fabric and sexual maturity with the story of linen being representative of this relatively "innocent" stage of their relationship.

As she introduces this aspect of her narrative, Barakāt's *tamthīl* comparison between Shamsa's knowledge of fabric and her developing sexual identity paves the way for several examples of *istiʿārah*. At each stage of their relationship, Barakāt draws a comparison between a specific type of cloth and Shamsa's relative "level" of sexual maturity. In the following example, the cotton of her youth is replaced by the linen Shamsa wears as a symbol of her adolescent "purity" or virginity. Niqūlā ponders, "Did I fall in love with Shamsa because of her linen? She cast aside the cotton of her youth, her tame, affectionate, tender childhood to wear linen. To wear linen, and to add the seduction of velvet to it" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh,* 58).[89] Niqūlā's desire for Shamsa appears to be stimulated by both the purity suggested by the linen she wears, and also the potential he sees in her as a lover. Additionally, in this example Shamsa is no longer a child wearing cotton. Although the linen she wears represents her adolescence and suggests that she is innocent and chaste, her developing body nevertheless entices Niqūlā's interest in seeking her out to satisfy his sense of sexual conquest.

This general theme relating Shamsa's knowledge of cloth to her sexual development occurs as Niqūlā shares his knowledge of the history of textiles with her; while opening up his experience to Shamsa, he witnesses her transformation into womanhood. Linen comes first in his narration as a symbol of purity, innocence and even naiveté. Niqūlā explains, "the first to wear linen knew of its powerful medicinal qualities as they noticed, Shamsa, that it helped in the sealing of wounds. They used it as a cure for leprous ulcers. It became a symbol of purity and

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[89] هل أغرمت بشمسة من أجل كتّانها؟ حين تركتْ قطن عمرها الصغير، طفولتها الناعمة الدافئة الأليفة لترتدي الكتّان. لترتدي الكتّان وتضيف إليه غواية المخمل دخيلةً عليه وفي أوّلها.

whiteness increased its purity" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 61).[90] Shamsa is pure, like the linen she wears. She is the object of Niqūlā's conquest, and her purity makes her all the more enticing to him because it is a sign that she is maturing.

Niqūlā's expectations are, more often than not, misguided. He seems to think that he can take charge of Shamsa's developing intellectual and sexual maturity. He suggests that she should be open to his advancements: "Those afflicted with pain, Shamsa, must torment others, but don't torment me. Be tender, like a delicate thread…so delicate that in no time the sunlight tarnishes its whiteness" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 62).[91] The term, *yulawwith* **(**يلوّث**)**, rendered here as "tarnishes," can also mean "pollute," "defile," "soil," or "dishonor" in this context. Niqūlā perceives her purity as his to be taken. She is to be as "pliant and soft" as a delicate thread, to be virginal. The thin, delicate filament not sullied by the sun should be read here as an example of *istiᶜārah*. While not making an explicit reference to her anatomy in the expression, the thread so delicate it can be tarnished by exposure to the sun is a reference to the delicacy of her intact hymen, a physical sign that no other man has "tarnished" or dishonored her virtue. The *istiᶜārah* here is a comparison between two objects drawn from separate categories, the string and the hymen, and the point of similarity is based on the shared characteristic of their relative fragility. Barakāt implies that exposure to the sun tarnishes the delicate thread like sexual intercourse tarnishes the integrity of a woman's hymen, the physical sign of her chastity. However, at this point in their relationship, Shamsa is still presumably a virgin, and according to Niqūlā, "Linen is honorable and modest, Shamsa, and much like you" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 63).[92] Barakāt casts

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90 عرف لابسو الكتّان الأوائل له حسنات شفائية عظيمة إذ لا حظوا، يا شمسة، أنه يساعد على ختم الجروح واستعملوه دواء لتقرّحات البرص. صار رمز الطهارة وازداد أبيضه بياضاً.

91 ومن عُذّب يا شمسة لا بد أن يُعذِّب فلا تعذّبيني. ليني كالخيط الذي غدا رهيفاً...رهيفاً حتى أنّ ضوء الشمس سرعان ما بات يلوّث أبيضه.

92 فالكتّان كريم ومتواضع يا شمسة، ويشبهك كثيراً.

Niqūlā in a traditional masculine role; he has identified his conquest, confirmed her purity, and is ready to make his advance.

The relationship eventually progresses, which signifies that Shamsa is ready to leave the purity of her linen and her adolescence behind. In a moment where the boundaries of their previously platonic relationship are beginning to crumble, Niqūlā tells her, "Your linen shirt is precious and beautiful and it fits you well, Shamsa. Why haven't you untied the collar's knot, and removed the satin ribbon from your ivory neck? Who hennaed your long hair until it burned with an unimaginable blondness in this way? No, do not give me your perfect breasts all at once" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 65).[93] This flirtatious moment is only a precursor to the physical relationship that ensues. Shamsa's transition requires that she move on from linen to velvet in the next "stage" of her development.

Soon after it has become clear that their relationship has become physical, Niqūlā says, "I see Shamsa. I see Shamsa the woman who has ripened. Shamsa has ripened and abandoned her linen" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 75).[94] Like a fruit ready to be consumed, in this image Barakāt borrows the term "ripened" (أينعتْ) in reference to Shamsa's development into a mature woman. At this point, Niqūlā's descriptions of encounters with Shamsa become more suggestive and even sexually explicit. The linen of her innocence becomes the velvet of experience: "Abandon the linen Shamsa and come now to velvet. […] Her white flesh would overflow between my hands and forearms. It expands and gushes forth like blessed dough and her thigh wears the scent of vanilla, and her buttocks the taste of delicate biscuits and my saliva flows with distilled rose

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93 غال وجميل ويليق بك كثيراً قميصك الكتّان يا شمسة. هلاّ حللت عقدة الياقة وأبعدت شرائط الساتان عن جيدك العاجيّ؟ من حنّى لك شعرك الطويل حتى استحال أشقره ناراً هكذا؟ لا، لا تُعطني ثدييك كاملين دفعة واحدة.

94 أرى شمسة. أرى شمسة المرأة التي أينعتْ. أينعتْ شمسة وتركتْ كتّانها.

water" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 76). [95] In this image, Barakāt introduces another *istiᶜārah* comparison between objects drawn from separate categories, a woman and food, the shared attribute between them being their respective abilities to stimulate the senses. Niqūlā is consuming Shamsa's body like food in order to satisfy his sexual appetite. Velvet appears as the symbol for lost innocence, but this is a positive development for both Niqūlā and Shamsa. They are mutually attracted to each other physically and have a growing intellectual connection forged in Niqūlā's stories about the history of textiles.

In the following citation, Niqūlā reflects on how Shamsa is changing before his eyes:

تركتْ شمسة كتّان حين تركت خجلها من عري جسمها ومن عري حركتها في الضوء تحت عينيّ. تركت شمسة خجلها حين بدأت تتعلّم المخمل. أرويه لها طيلة النهار في بيتنا، وحتى حلول المساء حيث كان ينبعي عليها العودة والمبيت عند أهلها. لكنها تعلّمته أيضاً في أنوار الليل وفي ظلمته حين كانت المعارك الشديدة تجعل مبيتها عندي أمراً مقبولاً لدى أهلها رغم قصر المسافة إليهم.

> Shamsa abandoned linen when she abandoned her shame for her body's nudity and the nakedness of her movements in the light under my eyes. Shamsa abandoned her shame when she began to learn velvet. I tell her velvet throughout the afternoon in our house, until the beginning of the evening when it was necessary for her to return and spend the night with her family. But she also learned velvet in the lights of the night and in its darkness when the violent battles made her staying the night with me acceptable for her family despite the limited distance between our homes (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 77).

At this point the *istiᶜārah* is located in the idea that Niqūlā tells Shamsa of velvet in the afternoon, evening, and occasionally through the night. The citation does not explicitly mention

[95] اتركي الكتان يا شمسة وتعالي الآن الى المخمل. [...] كان لحمها الأبيض يفيض بين يديّ وساعديّ. تكبر وتفور كالعجين المبارك ويكتسي فخذاها رائحة الفانيليا وإليتاها طعم البسكويت الهشّ فيسيل ريقي بماء الورد المقطّر.

sex, but the implication is clear. Additionally in this instance, the reality of the world around them has come into focus. In spite of the growing violence, Niqūlā is ready to take advantage of the instability in the streets. Barbara Winckler in her essay, "Androgyny as Metaphor: Hudá Barakāt and *The Stone of Laughter*," suggests that Hudá Barakāt's novels are "set in Lebanon during the years of the civil war (1975-90). In her work the war functions as a kind of 'blind spot,' one that, although not the focus of attention, nevertheless determines events" (Winckler, 382). In her reading of Barakāt's novels, Winckler notes that although they are all set within the historical context of the Lebanese Civil War, the violence is always of subsidiary relevance in the lives of her characters. In *Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, although this violence is potentially threatening to their lives, it also affords Niqūlā more intimate time with Shamsa. This is an interesting way to introduce the idea that regardless of the conditions of the world, life for the individual continues and instinctual desires still command our dedicated attention.

The imagery Barakāt creates related to Niqūlā and Shamsa's budding physical romance is reliant on the recognition that her accumulating knowledge of the story of textiles mirrors the rise in her knowledge of sex. As she continues to seek knowledge in both regards, she begins to demonstrate a new level of control over her desires, and over how she expresses them in the context of her relationship with Niqūlā. In the process of his instruction on the topic of velvet, Niqūlā explains:

> بل أجعل لها في كل حكاية، في كل درس، واحدة، فترتقي معي في المتعة ارتقاء المريد، تدرّب لذتها بالمعرفة والإنكشاف والكشف. تصعد في حواسها درجة درجة، وتتعلّم أيضاً الكلام. تعلن رغبتها عالياً وتطلب الطاعة والأنصياع. تعلّمني كيف أخدم حواسها وأتّبع الطريقة في جسمها. هكذا أيضاً كانت تفكّ أقفال ذاكرتها وتحكي لي عمّن تكون، عن قومها وأهلها وأرضها التي غادرتها.

> But I make a story for each one, for each lesson a story, and she climbs with me willingly ascending in pleasure, training her pleasure with knowledge, disclosure and inquiry. Her senses ascend by degrees, and she also learns speech. She announces her desires loudly, and demands obedience and submission. She teaches me how to attend to her senses and follow the way to her body. And in this way she also loosens the locks on her memory and tells me about who she is, her people, her family, and the land she left behind (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 77).

With her new knowledge of velvet and, in turn, the pleasure of sex, she has "learned speech," she is now capable of articulating her own desires. She even finds the space to teach Niqūlā how to more effectively navigate her body in the fulfillment of her pleasure. With all walls torn away, she is ready to assert herself, and in the process she shares the intimate details of her family story with Niqūlā. In the final sentence, Barakāt uses the term "locks" (أقفال) as an *istiʿārah* reference to both the physical and intellectual aspects of Shamsa's relationship with Niqūlā. In addition to her now "open" physical availability, their intimacy is also developing intellectually. Shamsa has loosened the locks on her body and her mind.

Eventually, Barakāt makes it clear that Niqūlā has lost control over Shamsa's intellectual and sexual development. He laments not knowing, "the misery of wisdom. No one told me, no one taught me that what I give, I lose. I lose it and pay an enormous price" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 118).[96] Barakāt uses the term "price" (الثمن) as an *istiʿārah* comparison between two intellectual concepts, Niqūlā's relationship with Shamsa and a possession with a definable value or price. The similar attribute in this case is related to Niqūlā's sense of loss. Losing Shamsa, Niqūlā loses something he values. As he slowly realizes that he is losing control over Shamsa, he

[96] لم أكن أعرف بؤس الحكمة. ما قال أحد لي، ما علّمني أحد أنّ ما أعطيه أفقده. أخسره وأدفع الثمن غالياً.

regrets that in his zeal to possess her, he opened the door too widely and Shamsa outpaces him through her desire to know more than he can provide. This eventually leads to his irrelevance in her life, and her departure.

In this context, Barakāt returns to her allusion to the scriptural narrative of Eve in the garden. As it is with traditional readings of the danger inherent in Eve's temptation to eat from the tree of knowledge, Niqūlā determines that "knowledge is dangerous for the ignorant that are unprepared to receive it, because the matter is not limited to a lapse in understanding or a loss of pleasure…it is as you taught me about the mandrake, how it alternates from elixir to poison" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 127).[97] In this *tashbīh* image, Barakāt draws her comparison between an intellectual concept and a sensually perceptible object. It is clear within the space of this single sentence that knowledge is like the mandrake[98] plant, both posses the similar potential to be beneficial or destructive. Despite his concern that he may lose his grip on Shamsa, in order for Niqūlā to seduce her and attempt to possess her sexually, he must teach her. Although he must introduce her to the knowledge of fabric in the pursuit of satisfaction for his sexual desire, the lessons he offers drive the two of them apart.

As a key to her development of this theme, Barakāt demonstrates that Niqūlā is consciously aware of his dilemma. Although he recognizes the pitfalls of his seduction, he suggests, "And here I am, taking a chance telling you this, for you are still ripe, but you besiege me with your insistence and haste, and you use forbidden weapons as you threaten me with absence. So listen well because we are together – you and I – two sailors together on the same

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[97] فالمعرفة خطر على الجاهل غير المهيّأ لتلقّيها إذ لا يقتصر الأمر على فوات الفهم وضياع اللذة...إنها، كما علّمتني عن اليبروج، قد تتحوّل من الأكسير إلى السمّ الزعاف.

[98] In Barakāt's text the term *al-yabrūj* (اليبروج) is repeatedly used to mean "the mandrake," but for a dictionary reference the term *al-yabrūḥ* (اليبروح) is preferred here.

adventure" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 128).[99] The reference to Eve's eating from the tree of knowledge can be seen in the remark about Shamsa still being "ripe" (يانعة), and of course the term "forbidden" (ممنوعة) connects the Biblical tradition to Barakāt's narrative. Niqūlā realizes that he must be cautious in order to thwart Shamsa's hasty insistence to learn from him too quickly, to avoid allowing her to spoil. In this case, the comparison is an example of *istiʿārah* where Shamsa is the forbidden fruit. The similarity shared between these two entities drawn from separate categories is their potential to spoil. In the final sentence of the citation, Barakāt offers an example of *tashbīh* suggesting that Niqūlā and Shamsa are two "sailors" (مبحران) together on the same journey. It is significant at this point in the development of their relationship, that it is Niqūlā who says this. From his perspective they are together in this relationship, but in a case of dramatic irony it is clear that Shamsa is on her own path.

Although Niqūlā is aware of the potential for disaster, Barakāt describes him as naive and ignorant regarding the true nature of his relationship with Shamsa. Niqūlā still thinks he is in control of the situation when he says, "No Shamsa…now it is necessary for you to return home. Remain for a while in what I have narrated for you, and what you heard. Like the silk worm, it is necessary for you to fast a little from the gluttony of listening…so that the quality of the story's spinning reaches perfection" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 150).[100] Barakāt develops this *tamthīl* image within the space of several sentences; Shamsa is like the silk worm in need of rest prior to reaching the perfection in her knowledge of the story Niqūlā tells her. This comparison also connects the theme under development within the context of Niqūlā's relationship with Shamsa to the theme of narrative weaving previously described. In this case the silk worm is the key to

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99 وها أنا أجازف بقصّ ذلك عليك، فأنت ما زلت يانعة، لكنك تحاصرينني بإلحاحك واستعجالك وتستعملين أسلحة ممنوعة حين تهدّدين بالغياب. فاسمعي جيّداً لأننا معاً – أنا وأنت – مبحران سوية في المغامرة نفسها.

100 لا يا شمسة...ينبغي الآن أن تعودي إلى بيتك. أن تمكثي قليلاً في ما رويتُهُ لك وسمعته. كدودة القزّ يجب أن تصومي قليلاً عن شراهة الإستماع...لكي يكتمل حسن غزل الحكاية.

the connection between the knowledge of fabric and the process of "spinning" a narrative (غزل الحكاية). Niqūlā appears to recognize that there is danger in Shamsa's "voracious appetite" for knowledge. He must be careful not to push her too far too fast for fear of losing her.

In the continuance of this theme Barakāt clearly demonstrates that Shamsa succumbs to the temptation for knowledge, and her desire to know only increases with every new disclosure from Niqūlā. She begs him, "'repeat the story of velvet a second time for me,' she said, 'as I would love very much to hear it before you move on me, and I move on you to another lesson'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 89).[101] Again, the key to the broader *tamthīl* under development is the *istiʿārah* use of velvet in this expression. At this point Shamsa's appetite appears insatiable. This is arguably the first indication that Niqūlā will eventually lose grasp over his conquest. He has taken her to this level of intimacy, but there are hints that he will not be able to satisfy either her accumulating thirst for further knowledge or her growing physical desires. She has turned the tables on Niqūlā and he is now the instrument she plays to meet the evolving demands of her libido. Niqūlā recalls her telling him, "'turn off the light and come, we will eat together. Come, we will devour each other. Take me'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 94).[102] If this change is any indication of Shamsa's eventual departure, Niqūlā is clueless, and wrapped up in the moment. Shamsa, however, has made a transition, she has taken authority over her sexuality, she says to Niqūlā,

> عدْ إليّ، قالت شمسة. تعرَّ وتمدّد في المخمل. لنلتفَّ به من كلّ الجهات، لتستعيدني فيك وتردّني إليك...تلصق جلدك في جلدي، في مسامه، حبكة حبكة، ليعلو الوبر بين السداة والحبكة كأني أقشعرّ عند أول اللمس. عدْ إليّ وأخبرني المخمل، إرو لي كيف أني مخمليّة صرت.

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101 أعدْ لي رواية المخمل ثانية، قالت، فأنا أحبّ كثيراً أن أسمعها قبل أن تنتقل بي وأنتقل بك إلى درس آخر.

102 أطفئ النور وتعالَ نأكل معاً. تعالَ نأكل بعضنا. كُلْني.

> ‘Come back to me,’ Shamsa said. ‘Undress and lie down in the velvet, so we can cover ourselves in it on all sides. Retrieve me within you, and return me to you…your skin clings to mine, to its pores, body on body, raise the nap between the warp and the weft as I tremble at the first touch. Come back to me and tell me about velvet, tell me how I came to be velvet’ (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 97).

With this example, Barakāt shows that now Shamsa appears to be in control over the physical and intellectual aspects of this relationship. The terms “nap” (الوبر) or raised fibers of velvet, and the “warp” (السداة) as the threads situated lengthwise in the loom and interlaced with the “weft” (الحبكة) to form the lengthwise treads in a woven fabric are evident here as *istiʿārah* references to the hair rising between the lines on her arms as she trembles at his touch. Shamsa knows what she wants and is not ashamed to demand satisfaction.

Barakāt plainly identifies Niqūlā as an everyman figure in order to consider traditional misogynistic fears that women in control of their own sexuality are dangerous. The rapid advancement of Shamsa’s developing sexual maturity is not entirely lost on Niqūlā. He does recognize that she has changed. She has joined the ranks of experience, she is a woman:

> كلّ هذا المخمل وراءه أنت يا شمسة. صورتك. صورة المرأة الممتلئة بنعمة جسدها الفائض. العارفة الغاوية، الشهوانية الخطرة، المقموعة الممنوعة المتخيّلة في ضباب البخار، في ارتجاج الرغبات المحفوظة بجيوش الخصيان، والمكتومة كأصوات الكسولات الناعسات المتآمرات السريّات.

> All of this velvet is beside you Shamsa. Your image, it is the image of a woman full with the blessing of her abundant body. The learned seductress, the dangerously erotic, the repressed, forbidden woman imagined in the vapors of the mist, in the tremors of desires

> guarded by armies of eunuchs, and concealed like the voices of idle, drowsy, conspiring, mysterious women (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh,* 100).

At the forefront of Barakāt's underlying *tamthīl* comparison between knowledge and sexuality is the progression towards Shamsa's sexual maturity, her relationship with Niqūlā, her knowledge of fabrics and Niqūlā's storytelling remain. In this citation, Barakāt acknowledges the perverse nature inherent in the suggestion that a woman aware of and in control of her sexuality is nothing more than a "seductress" (الغاوية) and regardless of efforts to guard her desires, her sexual maturity is dangerous in a man's eyes. In yet another history lesson, Niqūlā reminds her that from the, "end of the age of privilege to the age of the dismal bondage of factories, as my father says, velvet could preserve the honor of tradition. […] the velvet garment became a symbol of the entrance to full adult life […] symbolizing the strength and superiority of men, and the obedience and sexual maturity of women" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 101).[103] In this example Barakāt explicitly states the link between velvet and sexuality as evidence of entrance into adult life. Velvet, and particularly Shamsa's knowledge of the fabric, in Niqūlā's eyes signals her "submission" (الطاعة) or her readiness to obey; she is his conquest and he has planted his flag. This dispensation within their relationship is short lived at best, and it is mostly the product of Niqūlā's own naiveté, or simply his immaturity. Shamsa challenges his estimation of her by questioning, "'How can you associate sexual maturity with obedience? […] Is that why you say I have become velvet and the learned, lustful seductress imagined in the vapors of the mist?'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh,* 101).[104] This is Barakāt's first indication that Shamsa will inevitably evolve in

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103 انتهاء عصر الأمتيازات إلى زمن عبيد المعامل الكئيبة، كما يقول أبي، استطاع المخمل أن يحفظ شرف التقاليد [...] صارت قطعة اللباس المخملي علامة الدخول إلى حياة البالغين المكتملة. [...] رمزاً للقوة والإستعلاء عند الرجل، وللطاعة ونضج الجنس عند المرأة.

104 كيف يقترن نضج الجنس بالطاعة، تقول شمسة، أهكذا تقول إني صرت مخملاً؟ وتلك العارفة الغاوية الشهوانية المتخيلة في ضباب البخار؟

her knowledge of fabric and sex, and that in this evolution she will be ready to leave Niqūlā behind.

In another of Barakāt's interesting twists on the story of Eve in the garden, she implies that Shamsa is more like the serpent, playing the role of temptress in order to lure Niqūlā into revealing his knowledge. When it becomes clear that Shamsa has surpassed Niqūlā to the point where he can really no longer appease her desire, his view of her begins to change along with her thinning figure: "She appeared much taller without her roundness, like a small snake. Or a viper, with what remains of the curving lines of her body. She was upright, motionless, like a coiled viper" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 152).[105] In this example Barakāt repeats two *tashbīh* images envisioning Shamsa as a snake. She has assumed the role of the devil in the garden, tempting Niqūlā to share more fruit from his tree of knowledge.

The irony persists that in order to gain access to her sexually Niqūlā has to share his knowledge with her even though it is this very knowledge that leads to the dissolution of their relationship. He clearly sees this coming as he wonders, "should I call her coming disease a devastation or the perfection of evil and depravity, moving to another world crossing the forbidden, a world the doctors call hysteria?" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 153).[106] In this reading of the novel, the term "hysteria" (هستيريا) is particularly meaningful. Barakāt describes Niqūlā's perception of Shamsa's command of her own sexuality as a "disease" (مرض) building upon her theme within the context of her underlying *tamthīl*. Women who seem to step out of the traditional roles set for them, roles set largely by men, have historically been condemned,

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105 بدت أكثر طولاً وهي بدون استداراتها. تشبه الحيّة قليلاً. أو الأفعى، بما تبقّى من خطوط جسمها المنحنية. كانت وهي واقفة لا تتحرّك كأنها أفعى تتلوّى.

106 هل أسمّي مرضها المقبل خراباً أم هو اكتمال في الشرّ والرذيلة، انتقال إلى عالم آخر يعبُرُ الممنوع ويدعوه الأطباء هستيريا؟

ridiculed, and even labeled clinically insane. For Niqūlā such women must be crazy to attempt to break through the limits of patriarchal society, and Shamsa's thirst or desire for knowledge is an all consuming disease which will inevitably lead to the corruption of her purity.

Barakāt's movement into the final stage in the development of this theme ends with Shamsa's knowledge of silk. Niqūlā sees it coming, and he has reason to consider it an ominous development in their relationship. His father has taught him as much, that knowledge of silk is the ruin of a woman's virtue, and Niqūlā acknowledges as much suggesting that, "we proceed to the curse of silk" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 113).[107] In this expression, Barakāt offers an *istiᶜārah* whose meaning is obvious because of the previous development of the underlying *tamthīl*. In this case Barakāt borrows the phrase "the curse of silk" (لعنة الحرير) to signify Shamsa's sexual liberation. Her knowledge of silk represents her unquestioned authority over her own sexuality. This meaning is comprehensible with reference to Niqūlā's thoroughly pessimistic view of his relationship with Shamsa. The curse he perceives is related to Shamsa's acquisition of knowledge of silk leading to an irreversible change in how the lovers relate to each other.

Barakāt leaves no confusion that this stage of Shamsa's development is not welcomed by Niqūlā. For the men in her novel, silk as a symbol of their inability to control women, is intrinsically related to lust and seduction: "it remained a game for the eye and a pleasure for the mind since it does not rise from a single, level plane to blend with the air and open the imagination's appetite for illusory lust and the seduction of the touch of vice in stripping off what is veiled" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 113-114).[108] Silk is related to pleasure, lust, and vice, which is why Niqūlā hesitates to introduce it in the course of Shamsa's education. The use of the term

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107 نسير إلى لعنة الحرير.

108 إلاّ أنه بقي لعبةً للعين ومتعةً للذهن إذ هو لم يرتفع عن السطح السويّ الواحد ليمزج به الهواء، ويفتحَ شهيّةَ الخيال على شبق الاستيهام وغواية ملامسة الرذيلة في تعرية ما يبقى مستوراً.

"veiled" (مستورا) is particularly appropriate at this stage in the development of Barakāt's theme. It is an example of *istiᶜārah* in this case simultaneously evoking the removal of clothing and the revelation of knowledge. In a religious context a veil is often seen as "guarding" a woman's modesty, or reserving her beauty for her husband alone. In this case, its removal can represent a rejection of patriarchal structures of sexual identity.

In another sign that Shamsa is beginning to leave Niqūlā behind, or at least growing impatient and increasingly more unsatisfied with the pace of her learning, she challenges Niqūlā again: "'but you do not tell me the whole story. Why don't you teach me silk?'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 124).[109] This impatience may also be read as an indication of her growing sexual frustration. As her knowledge of textiles, her sexual maturity, and her desire continue to grow, Niqūlā appears inadequate. He can only bring her so far; she will eventually move on, leaving him behind to wonder what he did wrong. With this example, Barakāt invites a discussion of the narrative of *The Thousand and One Nights*. At this point in their relationship, Shamsa begins to assert herself as the authority. Like King Shahrayar who is unsatisfied by his conquests, Shamsa expects Niqūlā to entertain her. He has tempted her with his story to this point and she will compel him to finish the narrative. She complains, "'you are lying to me. You have never brought me silk. You promise me the story but you don't tell it…you promise me so that I return to you longing to hear the conclusion that never comes, the story that does not begin'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 124).[110] Niqūlā, in this reference, has become like Shahrazad, compelled to tell his story for the pleasure of the woman playing the role of the sovereign in his world. Continuing this analogy, Niqūlā asks if Shamsa will remain for the night: "Shamsa returned from the

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109 لكنك لا تروي لي كلّ الحكاية. لماذا لا تعلّمني الحرير؟

110 أنت تكذب عليّ. لم تحمل حريراً لي إلى هنا حتى الآن. تعدني بالحكاية ولا تحكيها...تعدني لأعود إليك رغبة في سماع التتمة التي لا تجيء، الحكاية التي لا تبدأ.

bathroom, her long red hair dripping with water. I see her turn her head into a large towel and she doesn't return to her clothes, so I ask her to stay the night with me and she says: 'that depends on the story, if hearing it entices me I will stay…if learning it seduces me'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 127).[111] Shamsa has now put the onus of maintaining their relationship upon Niqūlā's shoulders. She has asserted herself, and demonstrated that she possesses authority over her sexuality and her availability to Niqūlā's continued advancements.

In her final effort to develop the *tamthīl* comparison between knowledge of fabric and sexual maturity, Barakāt implies a broader application of her theme beyond its relevance in the relationship between Niqūlā and Shamsa. Niqūlā learned all of his knowledge about textiles and women from his father. This generational knowledge, passed originally from Niqūlā's grandfather to his father and then to him, inspires a cautious suspicion of allowing the women in their lives access to certain information. With this additional context, Barakāt reasserts the idea that Niqūlā is an everyman character and his regrets about the progression and ultimate conclusion of his relationship with Shamsa reflect a much larger concept regarding traditional male perceptions of female sexuality. Barakāt introduces a generational pattern of behavior that helps to more broadly contextualize Niqūlā's relationship with Shamsa in this regard. When Niqūlā learns about his mother's affair with her music teacher, this development in the novel leads to a general theory on why women go astray. As professor Kīfūrk, the music teacher, tries to apologize to Niqūlā's father for the affair, Barakāt introduces a theory about what these men believe is the female obsession with silk, and with reference to the underlying *tamthīl*, the female obsession with sex. Niqūlā recalls his father telling his rival, "if you had known what silk is

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[111] تعود شمسة من الحمام وشعرها الأحمر الطويل يقطر ماء. أراها التفّت بمنشفة كبيرة ولم ترتد ثيابها فأسألها إن كانت ستبيت عندي فتقول: هذا يتوقّف على الحكاية إن أغواني السماع بقيت...إن أغوتني المعرفة.

Kīfūrk, you wouldn't hope for a cure'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 160).[112] With the use of the term "cure" (الدواء) Barakāt once again offers an example of *istiᶜārah* in the comparison between a woman's unrestrained sexuality and a disease. Niqūlā's father acknowledges that he has no control over his wife's sexual desires, she has already moved beyond him in her knowledge of silk and therefore in her desire for sexual satisfaction. Professor Kīfūrk tries to explain that there is a more theoretical or even scientific justification for his wife's "condition":

> إنهنّ يعتبرن النوم في الحرير أو لبسه غواية لا أخلاقية منوطة بالعاهرات اللواتي يستعملن أجسادهنّ وأسرتهنّ للإيقاع بالرجال...ليست رذيلة إذن يا جرجس، إنه مرض لا يصيب إلا النساء ولا يشبه أمراضنا نحن الرجال، أمراضنا الجنسية أقصد، لا يشبهها في شيء. [...] إنهنّ ينسيننا تماماً. يتوقفنَ تماماً عن اشتهائنا. لسنا موجودين بالمرّة في رغباتهنّ...ليس هناك سوى الحرير وعذاب اللذّة به ومتعة ذلك العذاب منقطعاً عن كلّ ما سواه. ينصرفن إليه فقط. منقادات إليه دون خيار. لا يرين شيئاً آخر.

> They consider wearing or sleeping in silk to be an immoral sin associated with prostitutes who uses their bodies and their beds to seduce men…It is not a vice, Jirjis, it is an illness that only afflicts women and is not similar to our illnesses, we men. I mean our sexual diseases, they do not compare in any way. […] They completely forget us. They completely abstain from craving us. We are not present at all in their desires…There is nothing but silk and the agonizing pleasure for it and delight in that agony cut off from anything else. They devote themselves only to silk, obedient, lacking free will. They see nothing else (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 161-162).

In this example, Barakāt reasserts the idea that wearing silk is a sin, an illness associated with women. With reference to her underlying *tamthīl* comparison, the wearing of silk is an

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[112] لو كنتَ تعرفُ ما الحرير يا كيفورك لما أملْتَ بالدواء.

expression of a woman's sexual liberation which Barakāt's male characters associate with a disease. Of course, these are the justifications offered by these men to explain their own inability to reign in the sexual desires of the women in their lives. Without reflecting meaningfully upon their own inadequacies, professor Kīfūrk, Jirjis, and Niqūlā all want to believe that there is some external reasoning for their personal failures with women. Returning to the original theme under examination here, a woman's sexual liberation is a reflection of her level of knowledge and experience, and of a man's failure to maintain control over her access to that knowledge.

In addition to associating all three of these men with regard to their shared inadequacies, Barakāt juxtaposes Shamsa and Niqūlā's mother in order to continue with her development of the universal nature of this theme. Niqūlā ponders: "My mother, and Shamsa after her, departed to a place we had anticipated and were aware of, and perhaps we alone were capable, with our anticipation and awareness, of preventing their departure and securing them" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 165).[113] This is a relatively simple example of *tashbīh* where the comparison is drawn between members of the same category. Shamsa and Niqūlā's mother are both women, and as such Barakāt draws a similarity based on the intensity of Niqūlā's disappointment and his reaction to their respective afflictions with the disease of silk. Even in his acknowledgement of his own failures and inadequacies, Niqūlā clings to the belief that perhaps things could have been different between him and Shamsa, and even between his parents. He believes that if only he could prevent Shamsa from gaining access to knowledge of the world he could preserve her as his woman. Unfortunately for Niqūlā, the day he completes his story of silk is the last he time they are together: "She was naked, wrapped only in transparent silks, several layers of different

[113] أمي وبعدها شمسة ذهبتا إلى حيث كنّا نتوقّع ونعرف، وكنّا ربما الوحديَنْ القادريَنْ، بتوقّعنا ومعرفتنا، من منعهما، من حفظهما.

shades" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 151).[114] With this citation, Barakāt concludes her description of the relationship between these two primary characters. Shamsa is free and independent now, despite Niqūlā's efforts to remain in control of her knowledge. On this occasion, she precedes him so that she could experience silk on her own accord.

In her depiction of the dissolution of this relationship, Barakāt returns to her theme of the importance of learning the lessons of the past. Once again, the question of knowledge and access to learning holds the potential for disaster when in the wrong hands, or when neglected and not properly applied to the present. Yet, Niqūlā realizes that in spite of his father's efforts to educate him, ultimately the knowledge he gains is limited and perhaps not even applicable to his own situation. He wonders,

> وقد يكون السبب في أن كلام جدّي لأبي، والذي بقي في حسن إنشاء العبارة، وفي مجاز الحكمة التي تتوارثها الأجيال دون أن تأخذ حقاً بها، تَجَسّدَ في سيرة أمي وتحقّق [...] في عبث الإفادة من درس الأجداد. فالنصيحة بعيدة في الزمن الآتي، والعبرة في التجربة لا تقع إلاّ في فوات الأوان.
>
> Perhaps the reason why my grandfather's word to my father, which remained in gracefully composed phrases, and in the figurative language of wisdom inherited by generations without embracing its truth, took shape and is realized in my mother's life story. […] Benefiting from the grandfather's lesson is futile. The advice is distant to the following age, and the lesson in experience does not come unless it's too late (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 165).

Essentially Barakāt clearly states the idea that men have been wrong all along in their attempts to control the women in their lives, and like other neglected lessons of the past, men will continue

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[114] كانت عارية ملتفّة بالحرائر الشفافة فقط، بطبقات عديدة مختلفة التلاوين.

to fail to properly apply the knowledge of their forbearers in the effort to avoid repeating their mistakes. The knowledge passed down from generation to generation is relatively useless if subsequent generations fail to make use of it. Prior experience is meaningless if not employed for effect in a timely manner. In this context, Barakāt revisits the notion that if we fail to learn the past we are bound to repeat it. The suggestion is, of course, that the failure to properly acknowledge the lessons of the past leads us inevitably to repeat previous failures. In retrospect to a previous comment on this concept, this is a failed theory because knowledge of history does not necessarily prevent the repetition of events in time. A more appropriate rendering of this adage is that when we fail to learn the past we will not be ready to respond appropriately when history does repeat itself.

In a final series of images Barakāt solidifies the connection between narrative weaving and sinful knowledge, her two primary motifs. Questioning his mother's infidelity, Niqūlā ponders, "The question pressed forcefully against my head until it is pushed away in the movement of a clock's pendulum, like the insane detached from hearing the world completely, departing for an emptiness whose bottom no one knows" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 154).[115] In the first half of this expression, Niqūlā's questioning of his mother's infidelity is like a clock's pendulum in an example of *tashbīh* juxtaposing an intellectual concept with a sensually perceptible object. Barakāt derives a point of similarity between these component parts of her image, which suggests that like the pendulum, Niqūlā's questioning is ceaseless; it has no answer he can comprehend. Furthermore, in the second half of the sentence Niqūlā is like an insane man falling into an infinitely deep depression. In this case, the comparison is an example of *tamthīl* with its meaning reliant on the previous phrase and drawing a similarity between two entities from the

[115] كان السؤال يلحّ على رأسي قوياً حتى يدفعه فعلاً في حركة رقّاص الساعة، كهؤلاء المجانين المنفصلين عن سماع الدنيا بكاملها، منصرفين إلى فراغ لا أحد يعرف قراره.

same category in which the shared attribute is one of intensity. Niqūlā's depression is like the insane man completely detached from the outside world. Combining these two images in this sentence, Barakāt effectively contextualizes the inadequacies of Niqūlā's response to the behavior of the women in his life.

Reflecting upon the notion that knowledge is power, it is necessary in this framework to reiterate Barakāt's exploration of the suggestion that certain knowledge in the hands of women is threatening to traditional patriarchal authority. Although the primary focus of this theme is Shamsa, and the parallel example is Niqūlā's mother, in the following example, Barakāt maintains the connection to the unreliable nature of historical narrative:

وحين تقترنُ قوةُ الخيط بمتانته تنعقد غواية السلطة ومكائد الخبث والأذيّة. لذا ربما قصر الأقدمون لبس الحرير على الملوك والسلاطين والأقداس وحرّموه على غيرهم. لم يكن ذلك استبداداً، بل حفظاً من شبق السلطة، من أوهام القدرة وما يولّده ذلك من إفساد في النفوس والمجتمع واختلاط الحدود النقيّة.

> When the strength of the thread joins with its durability it is tied to the seduction of power and the desires of the wicked and the evil. Perhaps as a result of that the ancients restricted the wearing of silk to the kings and the sultans and the saints and they forbid it to anyone other than them. This was not a dictatorship, rather a defense against the lust for power, from the delusions of power and the corruption bred in the mind and in society and against the confusion of clear boundaries (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 166).

The efforts referenced here of kings, sultans, and saints attempting to forbid knowledge of silk to the masses is linked to a recognition that certain knowledge in the wrong hands inevitably leads to destruction. Again, the knowledge of silk is an example of dangerous information: "In all

stories of silk you will find infidelity, malice and often covetousness" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 167).[116] The overwhelming suggestion is that women need to be prevented from accessing certain knowledge in order to preserve their subservient role in traditional misogynistic structures of gender dynamics. For example, Niqūlā suggests that Muslim societies have traditionally been wary of the knowledge of silk. He explains,

> المسلمون الأوائل فهموا ذلك حالما رأوا حرير فارس والروم. قالوا حرام الجمع بين اكتمال غوايتين: جسد المرأة والحرير. لشدّة ما أعلوا رغبتهم بذلك الجسد منعوا عنه التلفّع بالحرير خارج البيت. قالوا حرام وجشع خطير. تعذيب كبير واختبار فوق الطاقة البشرية لعيون الناظر الممنوع.

> The first Muslims understood this as soon as they saw the silk of the Persians and the Byzantines. They said that the unity between the two perfect temptations is shameful: the woman's body and silk. Due to the intensity with which they elevated their desire for that body they forbid covering it with silk outside the house. They said it is shameful, covetous and dangerous. It is a terrible affliction and a test beyond the human capacity for the eye to behold the forbidden (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 168).

Again, Barakāt links her two primary motifs in order to emphasize the absurdity of such efforts by men to control women, and particularly their efforts to control expressions of female sexuality which they consider threatening to their authority. Reflecting on Barakāt's successful effort to unite these themes, Winckler writes: "In the process the fabric history turns out to be the history of mankind, of peoples and kings. The dramaturgical arch from simple to precious fabrics – cotton, linen, velvet to silk – is closely tied to the development of the individual from child to adult, which in its final stage – that of silk – can culminate in madness" (Winckler, 385). Of

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[116] في كل حكايات الحرير ستجد خيانةً وشرّاً وكثيراً من الطمع.

course with the exception of the pendulum image and Niqūlā's "insanity," which is actually an expression of Niqūlā's inability to truly understand the women in his life, Barakāt's male characters universally conclude that madness is a characteristic of women exclusively.

In her final reflection on the failed relationship between Niqūlā and Shamsa, Barakāt creates an image emphasizing Shamsa's independence: Shamsa tells Niqūlā, "I no longer need the weight or solid ground…I no longer like to eat, I found something better than eating…I am becoming as light as what I wear…and perhaps I will try to fly, like a butterfly" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 152).[117] Barakāt's *tashbīh* comparison between Shamsa and the butterfly stresses the freedom of will and direction that they share. Shamsa wants to be like a butterfly, free from any restraint and able to determine the direction of her own life. As further evidence of Barakāt's effort to emphasize the failure of her male characters to understand the women in their lives, Niqūlā regrets not challenging Shamsa's assertion:

أردت أن أقول لها إن على الفراشة قبل الطيران أن تُتلف الحرير، أن تقطع الخيوط. كلّ ما أفرزته طيلة حياتها عليها أن تنساه تماماً وأن لا تتذكر من الحرير شيئاً حين تصبح فراشة. لكي تعيش عيشة الفراشات السريعة الغبيّة التافهة. عليها أن تُفسد كلّ ماضيها، وأن تنسى الحرير.

> I wanted to say to her that before flying, the butterfly must destroy the silk, cut the threads. All of what it secreted throughout its life it must forget completely and not remember anything of silk when it becomes a butterfly. So that it lives the fleeting, dull, trivial life of butterflies. All of its past is spoiled, and it must forget silk (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 152).

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[117] أعد بحاجة للوزن والثبات في الأرض...لم أعد أحبّ الأكل، وجدتُ خيراً منه...سأصبح خفيفة كالذي ألبسه...وقد أحاول الطيران. كالفراشة.

In the previous image, Barakāt stresses the freedom of thought and action that now defines Shamsa's future free from restraint. In the current citation, Barakāt reiterates that Niqūlā's knowledge of the past fails him not because he has forgotten the lessons of his father and grandfather, or misapplied their message, but because what he learns from these sources is simply wrong in the first place.

3d: Alive or dead?

Depictions of the hereafter, whether located in the foundational theological documents of a given religion, or in contemporary literature, are inherently symbolic and metaphorical due to the human incapacity to witness the state of being that comes after death. Life and death rest on opposite ends of the spectrum of dissimilarity; and imagery associated with the hereafter, by necessity, consists of familiar depictions of sights, smells and sensations perceivable during one's life.

In conceptualizing the hereafter, humans employ metaphor to describe the unknowable by associating aspects of nature, perception, and emotion with an image of life after death. It would seem natural that that which we perceive in life would be associated with that which we will face in death; what more do we know? This is the case in the metaphoric treatment of the hereafter in Arabic literature. According to Adūnīs,

> Metaphor in Arabic is more than an expressional device; it is in the structure of the language itself, an indication of a spiritual need to transcend reality, that is the immediate and the given, and the product of a sensibility which is bored by the concrete and looks beyond it – a metaphysical sensibility (*Poetics*, 70-71).

In order to envision the hereafter one must transcend reality. Bored with the concrete, humans look to the metaphorical depiction of the incomprehensible to understand what lies beyond conventional understandings of life and death. In common uses of language and in literature, this is accomplished with metaphor. Adūnīs continues by writing that metaphor, "releases reality from its familiar context, while releasing the words used to discuss it from theirs, changing the meaning of both words and subject matter, and in the process constructing new relationships between one word and another, and between the word and reality" (*Poetics*, 71). Adūnīs is not talking about the language of fantasy here. Instead, he acknowledges that in Arabic language and literature, metaphor allows for the construction of a relationship that conceptualizes the human encounter with life after death in terms that alter the relationship between the word and reality. Through metaphor, words that have been associated with the hereafter define our understanding of a reality that is inherently beyond our ability to visually perceive, and is therefore the only way to use language "truthfully" in the service of imagining what comes after death.

The operative form of comparative imagery in this effort to describe the afterlife is an *istiʿārah* based on the union of two intellectual concepts, sentient life experience and death. The comparison in this case can be drawn between sensually perceptible entities and an inherently intellectual concept. In order to introduce her image of the hereafter as located in the war torn city of Beirut, Barakāt gradually indicates that Niqūlā is in fact deceased, and narrating his own eulogy. Niqūlā suggests that he lives, "now in happiness and bliss that my father and mother never imagined in their lives. […] And I now live as I have always desired, nothing disturbs me here…It is as if all of our desires, my grandfather, my father and I, and perhaps also my mother,

are embodied in my current life" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 16).[118] In this example, Barakāt's protagonist suggests that he lives in a state of bliss, previously unattainable during his life. While it is not clear in the novel at this stage that Niqūlā is dead, as the narrative progresses this citation provides the basis for a comparison of his "current life" and the life he left behind in death. In the process of coming to the realization that he is dead, Barakāt describes Niqūlā experiencing life like a childhood fantasy: "I live now as I have always wanted surrounded by everything I've desired to have around me since my childhood. I see what I want, and touch what I've always dreamed of touching and to hear its rustle and to inhale its perfume, the aromas, filling my eyes with light and shade" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 27).[119] Each of these two references is relatively subtle and they both serve as introductions to Barakāt's effort to situate her reflection on the hereafter within the frame of one man's isolation in Beirut with particular emphasis on the pleasures of life he enjoys.

Among the initial indications that Niqūlā is deceased, Barakāt describes his nightly routine, in the comfort and protection of his father's shop as he wraps himself in various fabrics and nostalgically recalls their stories. Each night he crosses a threshold into the basement storage room, literally entering a state of repose underground: "I nearly cried with joy and amazement before proceeding to touch it…then, I undress completely and wrap myself inside it the entire night" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 40).[120] This reference may not be clear until confirmed later in the novel, but in retrospect Barakāt is describing Niqūlā as if he is buried in his grave, warped in a funeral shroud. This example should be classified as an *isti^{c}ārah* based in *tamthīl* because

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118 الآن في سعادة وهناء لم يذهب إليهما خيال أبي وأمي في حياتهما [...] فأنا الآن أعيش في ما تمنّيته لنفسي دائماً، لا شيء يشوّش عليّ ما أنا فيه...كأنّ كلّ أشواقنا، جدي وأبي وأنا، وربما أيضاً أمي، تجسّدت في عيشتي الحالية.

119 أعيش الآن كما أحببت دائماً، محاطاً بكلّ ما رغبت منذ طفولتي أن أُحاط به. أرى ما أريد وألمس ما حلمت دوماً بلمسه وسماع حفيفه، واستنشاق رائحته، روائحه، وامتلاء عينيّ بضوئه وظلّه.

120 أكاد أبكي فرحاً ودهشة قبل أن أتقدّم للمسه...ثم التعرّي تماماً والإلتفاف داخله ليلة كاملة.

although the expression does not explicitly suggest that the fabric is his burial shroud, the narrative as a whole confirms this interpretation.[121]

Complicating her reader's ability to determine whether or not Niqūlā is actually deceased, Barakāt describes his memory of being shot and includes his conclusion that he survived the incident. After an unidentified group of combatants captures Niqūlā and several others, the men line them up and open fire. According to Niqūlā in retrospect,

أدركتُ أنّهم أخطأوني وأنّي على قيد الحياة حين رأيت الجثث المنفوخة حولي وشممتُ وائحتها. أدركت أيضاً من شذرات صور ومضتْ في رأسي أني استفقت مرّات تحت وزن من ماتوا فوقي ودفعتهم عنّي، وأني سمعت أصواتاً تبقبق بقبقة من حناجر مفتوحة إلى الهواء سرعان ما همدت وانطفأت بعد أن ملأها ماء المطر الذي انهمر عنيفاً. عنيفاً حتى صمّت طرطقته أذنيّ وردّتني إلى نومي.

I realized that they had missed me and I was still alive when I saw the swollen corpses around me and smelled their odor. I also realized from the fragments of images flashing in my head that I had woken up several times beneath the weight from the dead above me and I pushed them away from me. I heard gurgling sounds from open throats spluttering

[121] Recalling this specific image in Barakāt's novel, David Tresilian in *A Brief Introduction to Modern Arabic Literature* writes that in her novels she "has imagined the lives of male homosexuals in Arab societies and from within, the first-person narrators of both these works being attracted to men. In *The Tiller of Waters*, for example, the narrator struggles to recreate a familiar space amid the destruction of the Lebanese civil war. Safe in the basement of the destroyed family fabric store, he spreads out the surviving fabrics, rolling in them luxuriantly as he remembers his mother's world […] but nevertheless at odds with the masculine hustle of the city outside" (Tresilian, 152). A closer reading of *Ḥārith al-Miyāh* reveals that this interpretation is unsupported by the narrative. In fact, by contrast, in her novel *The Stone of Laughter*, where the protagonist is clearly described as a homosexual man, there is nothing in this novel to suggest that Niqūlā is homosexual. Simply reflecting on the nature of Niqūlā's infatuation with Shamsa and their intimate, physical relationship undermines Tresilian's reading of his character. An early reference to his attraction to women also appears in an example of *tashbīh* as he sees the cousin of his friend Abd al-Karīm and considers his prospects for courting her. His friend leads Niqūlā to understand that she is, "farther from my reach than the stars in the sky" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 19). This expression is simple to understand as an example of *tashbīh* comparing entities derived from disparate categories which nonetheless share a similar attribute in that they are both out of Niqūlā's reach; like the stars in the sky Niqūlā has no chance of coming near this young woman. In his effort to draw a link between these two novels, Tresilian stretches the boundaries of interpretation to arrive at a conclusion without adequate evidence, and ignores the broader theme associated with death in his reading of Niqūlā and his tendency to rest while wrapped in a shroud under the ground.

> into the air quickly fading away, extinguished after being filled with the rain water violently pouring down. Rain so violent its crackling deafened my ears and returned me to my sleep (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 120).

Read in isolation it is not necessary to conclude that this is the moment of Niqūlā's death, but when considering Barakāt's typically tangential references to the war itself in conjunction with the eventual revelation that Niqūlā is in fact dead, this passage is especially relevant. In the last sentence of this citation, Barakāt describes the violent, crackling rain deafening Niqūlā's ears and returning him to his sleep. Again, read in context of Niqūlā's death, the rain in this image is borrowed in an example of *istiᶜārah* for the bullets fired into the crowd. Although this conclusion still is not adequate in terms of locating exactly when Niqūlā dies, in the following example Barakāt refers to the same incident with a vivid description of the moment when the combatants fire upon him:

> ما عدت أخاف شيئاً بعد أن أخطأني الرصاص الرشّاش حين أوقفنا صفّاً واحداً لصق الحائط. رموا أجسادنا خلف الساتر معتقدين أنّا متنا جميعنا، أو أنّا على وشك ذلك والدماء تفور من الثقوب التي تركها الرصاص فينا. لا بدّ أني وقعتُ من فزعي قبل أن يصلني الرصاص فغطّتني أجساد الآخرين، أو على الأقلّ جسد من كان بقربي، عن يساري.

> I don't think I fear anything after the machine gun's bullets missed me when we stood in a single line against the wall. They threw our bodies behind the barricade believing that all of us had died, or that we were on the verge of death with the blood gushing forth from the holes that the bullets left in us. Terrified, I must have fallen before the bullets reached me and the other bodies covered me, or at least the body of whomever had been closest to me on my left (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 121).

In locating this incident as the moment of his death, it is important to recognize that Barakāt clearly describes Niqūlā as being unaware of the fact that he is actually dead until the novel comes to an end. Once he reaches this conclusion Niqūlā realizes, "I died without warning, or without preparing myself to meet the angel of death. I knew this from the transformation of things, from time's passing without me" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 171).[122] In the closing moments of the novel Niqūlā repeats his lament that he was not prepared for his demise. He asks himself, "Who killed me? I did not die a natural death, I did not see death coming so that I could be aware of it" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 172).[123] Regardless of when he dies, the fact of Niqūlā's death within the narrative arch of her novel, affords Barakāt the opportunity to situate the city of Beirut as a physical location for the hereafter with descriptive imagery naturally inflected by metaphor.

3e: The Church as a Gate to Hell:

Developing her comparison between the city of Beirut and the hereafter, Barakāt offers references to specific locations which reflect the potential for both punishment and reward in death. With respect to the former, it is interesting in and of itself that she introduces the image of a church, a place of sanctuary for the living, as a gate to hell. Each time he enters the church, Niqūlā eventually finds himself lost in the voluminous catacombs under the surface. In his descent into hell he is confused: "I did not know how I found myself in a dark hole beneath the ground. […] There was nothing there except the stone steps, and I began to descend step by step filled with apprehension" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 50).[124] The comparison Barakāt offers in this

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122 متّ دون أن أنتبه أو أحضرّ نفسي لملاقاة ملاك الموت. عرفتُ ذلك من انقلاب الأشياء، من مضيّ زمن دوني.

123 مَن قتلني؟ فأنا لم أمت ميتةً طبيعية، لم أرَ الموت قادماً فأعرف.

124 لم أعرف كيف وجدت نفسي في حفرة مظلمة تحت الأرض. [...] لم يكن هناك سوى الدرج الحجري، فرحت أنزله درجة

example is another example of *istiʿārah* based in *tamthīl* requiring a reflection upon the broader context of her references to the time Niqūlā spends under the church. In this example, Niqūlā is stuck in a dark hole, apprehensive in his descent with nothing to soothe his sense of fear which grows with every step. At one point while under the ground Niqūlā is tormented by voices he cannot understand: "Then I heard voices. Babble. […] An incomprehensible language. […] What am I hearing, what language? Who was speaking above, which devils? […] I remained stiff as a rock until they were completely gone and their voices and the rumbling metallic clamor disappeared" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 74).[125] With this reference Barakāt exemplifies the requisite balance between realistic imagery known and sensually perceptible in life and the necessity to draw on that imagery in order to describe living in a state of death. The term "devils" (شياطين) is primarily relevant in this regard. In this example, the key to the *istiʿārah* comparison between hell and Beirut is the recognition that underneath the church, Barakāt places Niqūlā simultaneously in a hell occupied by devils while also in close proximity to the reality of war in the city streets. In the case of the latter reading, the voices he hears could simply be coming from one of several groups of enemy combatants. Edward Said succinctly outlines the complexities of the various parties engaged in the Lebanese Civil War writing,

> The Lebanese conflagration has seemed to pit 'Muslims' against 'Christians,' but what has been obscured is that it is the Maronites, a special variety of Oriental Christianity, who at the start of the war opposed the Sunni Muslims, themselves not in alliance with the populous Shiite Muslims; and the fierce Maronite struggle has not at all included the Greek Orthodox or Protestant or Armenian or Greek Catholic communities with nearly as

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[125] درجة يملأني الوجل.
ثم سمعت الأصوات. لغط. [...] كلام غير مفهوم. [...] ما الذي أسمعه. أية لغة. من يتكلّم فوق. أية شياطين [...] جامداً كحجر حتى ابتعدوا تماماً واختفت أصواتهم والهدير واللغط المعدني.

> much unanimity as one would have expected. Then, too, there has been the active Israeli role in egging on the Maronites, providing them with arms, supplies, and political support. The Israeli policy in Lebanon has partly been governed not by sympathy for 'the Christians' but by a common minority cause with the Christian right-wing ambition to destroy the Palestinians" (*Question*, 146).

Reflecting on the sectarian nature of the Lebanese civil war it makes sense that Niqūlā might likely encounter individuals whose language he does not understand whether in reference to the dialectical variation apparent in the Arabic language, the prevalence of languages like English and French in Lebanon, or in reference to the presence of Israeli soldiers speaking Hebrew. Therefore, this particular reference to hell by necessity requires a descriptive use of language rooted in the reality of the circumstances of a city at war.

Barakāt describes several trips Niqūlā makes into the dark underworld situated beneath the church. After each instance he is saved by a glimpse of light that guides him back to the surface:

> وعاودني إحساسي بالورطة التي أنا فيها فاستعجلت نفسي على التفكير بالخروج قبل هبوط الظلمة الكاملة على المكان...وكان لا خيار أمامي سوى الإتجاه صوب الضوء الشحيح [...] وسرعان ما استطعت الوصول إلى مصدر الضوء الذي كانت تغطّيه أعشاب كثيرة...وبيسر استطعت التسلّق إلى الفتحة فأبعدت الأعشاب وخرجت.

> My sense of the predicament I am in came back to me and I urged myself to reflect on leaving before the darkness fell entirely over the place…and there was no alternative before me except heading in the direction of the scarce light. […] Quickly I was able to reach the source of the light which was covered in many plants…and with ease I was able to climb to the opening, I pushed the plants aside and I walked out (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 52).

After each trip to the underworld, Niqūlā's deliverance is marked by his return to the surface guided by a light leading him back to a landscape covered in foliage evocative of a thriving, fertile garden. However, with the acknowledgement that Niqūlā is not necessarily safe above the ground, Barakāt appears to suggest the existence of purgatory, a place in between heaven and hell.

After establishing the church as a gate to the underworld, Barakāt describes how the torments of hell pursue Niqūlā even in the streets. For example, emerging from underground Niqūlā encounters a pack of stray dogs; and like demons they threaten his sense of tranquility: "Shrill and intense the howling rose, and it pierced my head and filled it with terror in a single moment…It is not the howling of dogs, I kept repeating to myself, and I searched for a place to hide, the hair on my head sticking up like the spines on a hedgehog" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 54).[126] Again, in this citation Barakāt includes a relatively straightforward *tashbīh* comparison to describe Niqūlā like a hedgehog in his terrified reaction when he first notices the presence of the dogs. The presence of the dogs, however, serves a larger purpose in Barakāt's imagery of the hereafter. For example, Niqūlā finds that avoiding the dogs, "was not easy with me in my isolated place, its passageways like a labyrinth" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 54).[127] In this case, he is roaming the city streets in the effort to avoid the dogs and finds himself stuck in a labyrinth without hope for escape. In the pursuance of her underlying *isti^{c}ārah* based in *tamthīl*, Barakāt is describing Niqūlā in hell, tormented by demons and unable to find sanctuary.

In one such instance where Niqūlā finds himself surrounded by the dogs, in his despair he arrives at a critical realization of his predicament: "This is all nonsense…this is all nonsense…I

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126 ارتفع العواء حادّاً قوياً ودخل رأسي وملأه رعباً بثانية واحدة...ليس عواء كلاب، كنت أردّد في نفسي وأنا أبحث عن مكان أختبئ فيه، وشعر رأسي منتصبٌ كشوك القنفذ.

127 لم يكن ذلك سهلاً وأنا في مكاني المنغلقة منافذُهُ كمتاهة.

won't risk anything, and I will stay in my loft until my death…I will never return to my blissful life, my paradise…my garden will die and I won't say goodbye to my fabric and my home" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 55-56).[128] In essence the demon dogs, as Niqūlā sees them at this point, torment him to the extent that he has lost all hope. These events all occur after his first descent into hell underneath the church. In context with Barakāt's narrative reflection on the afterlife, Niqūlā is confronted with his final judgment in these scenes. The fear and critical self reflection he experiences contribute to an overwhelming despair indicating the prospect that his punishment awaits. In another instance when he encounters the dogs, "I began to recall the beauty of this exceptional day with the perfection of its pleasures and its joys forbidden to me, and I consider the punishment which God has brought down upon me in exchange for all of it. The punishment which howls above my head" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 95-96).[129] In this example, Barakāt once again places Niqūlā in a position which implies he is buried and terrorized by demons. He has no hope for redemption and feels that all has been lost. Eventually he endeavors to resist this menacing punishment, "I said I wouldn't die here, and the more I delayed my departure the more my frailty ruined me and the stronger the beast above me" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 103).[130] In each of these brief citations when dogs confront him in the streets of Beirut, Barakāt's narrative speculation on Niqūlā's final judgment all lead to the conclusion that he is destined for hell. Barakāt associates the terms "labyrinth" (متاهة), "punishment" (القصاص), and "beast" (الوحش) with the notion that in his death Niqūlā would only find the torments of hell without hope for redemption.

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128 كلّ هذا هراء...كلّ هذا هراء...لن أجرؤ على شيء وسأبقى في عليّتي هذه حتى مماتي...لن أعود أبداً إلى حياتي الهانئة، إلى جنّتي...ستموت حديقتي ولن أودّع قماشي وبيتي.

129 رحت أسترجع جمال هذا النهار الإستثنائي الذي حُرمت اكتمال لذته وأفراحه، وأفكر بالقصاص الذي أنزله الربّ بي لقاء ذلك كلّه. القصاص الذي يعوي فوق رأسي.

130 قلت لن أموت هنا، وكلما أرجأت خروجي، هدّني الوهن أكثر فأكثر وقوي الوحش عليّ.

3f: Beirut as the Garden of Eden:

Contrasting starkly with these scenes of suffering and trepidation, Barakāt also creates a sense that Niqūlā finds reward in his death. In this case, Barakāt fills his days with signs of abundance and peace which Niqūlā enjoys in spite of the intermittent reminders that he is occupying a secluded place within the war ravaged center of Beirut. Regarding the city as the location of paradise, Barakāt establishes this theme in the opening pages of her novel when Niqūlā's mother Athena describes seeing Beirut for the first time from the sea: "It was a beautiful land from afar, like the vision of a dream" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 9).[131] In this *tashbīh* expression, Beirut is like a dream, and Barakāt compares the physical, perceptible location of the city with an intellectual image associated with pleasure. Barakāt also establishes that, like the Garden of Eden, Beirut is a place of temptation. Niqūlā's grandfather warns his father to avoid this temptation:

لم يعارضها حين قرّرت الإقامة في بيروت رغم كلّ ما كان سمعه من أبيه البيروتي أيضاً، الذي حدّثه طويلاً وقرأ له كثيراً عن تلك المدينة...وكان يُنهي جلساته ناصحاً ابنه بألاّ يقع في غوايتها، ويعتبرها يوماً مآله لأنها كانت ذات يوم أرض أجداده.

> He did not resist when she decided to reside in Beirut despite all he had heard from his father, also from Beirut, who narrated to him at length and read much about that city…And he always ended his reading sessions advising his son not to get caught in Beirut's temptation, and to one day consider his return because it was his ancestors' land (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 11).

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131 كانت أرضاً جميلة من بعيد كالرؤيا.

The term "temptation" (غواية) provides the key to Barakāt's comparison between Beirut and a celestial paradise. In this case, the similar attribute shared between the city and the famous garden is the offer of both a joyful life of leisure and the ever present temptation into sin. This citation is also interesting in relation to the development of Barakāt's other primary motifs about narrative weaving and the sinful nature of forbidden knowledge. Barakāt suggests in this example that Niqūlā's father is ignoring the lessons of his past and that this mistake will only lead to suffering. As will become apparent through the course of the novel, Beirut is also the scene of temptation for Niqūlā's mother and her subsequent "fall" into sin.

In another reference supporting the image of Beirut as the location of paradise, describing the city as he sees it Niqūlā is confused:

كيف يمكن ذلك، رحت أتساءل. من أين أتت للأرض كلّ هذه الخصوبة، أين ذهب إسفلت الطرقات، هل فلحته القذائف أم أن ما تساقط من الأبنية وجرفته مياه الأمطار التي عرّت الحجر، أقام على الأرض أرضاً جديدة؟ أم تراني كنت غائباً عن الوقت ساهياً عن جريانه منذ بدأت هذه الأحداث لتتحوّل إلى حرب.

> How is this possible? I wondered. From where had all of this abundance come to the land, where did the roads' asphalt go? Had the bombs plowed it or had what fell from buildings and what had been swept away by rain water, which washed the stone, created a new land on the Earth? I wonder was I absent from time, oblivious to its flow since the events began to transform into war (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 31).

Barakāt makes it clear that the city in Niqūlā's eyes is foreign to him despite the fact that he had lived there all his life. An abundance of foliage has replaced the city's asphalt roads to the extent that Niqūlā wonders if it was bombs which plowed the land and recreated the Earth. This is an especially powerful image in the service of Barakāt's underlying comparison. Just as God

created the heavens and the Earth, the gods of war and their bombs have created Beirut anew rendering Niqūlā oblivious to the flow of life beyond the garden all around him. Barakāt even includes a reference to a fruit bearing tree in the center of Niqūlā's strange and unfamiliar new home:

> أنا الذي ربيت في هذه الشوارع الضيّقة لم أعد أعرف إن كانت شجرة الأكيدنيا التي اقتتُ من ثمارها لمدة طويلة موجودة في مكانها هنا، [...] منذ كان السوق سوقاً، أم أنها نبتت وأثمرت في غيابي...في كونسرتو هذه الجنة التي أشعلها الربّ إشعالاً لتغلب الخراب وتمحوه وتنتصر عليه. ليستردَّ الترابُ سلطته.

> I, who was raised in these narrow streets didn't think I knew if the loquat tree, whose fruit I had lived on for a long time, was present in its place here […] since the market was a market, or did it grow and bear fruit in my absence…In concerto with this paradise that the lord had ignited, burning it in order to overcome the devastation, to obliterate it and triumph over it, for the soil to recover its authority (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 31).

These references combine within Barakāt's frame to suggest that Niqūlā is indeed living in a place God has created for him, a "paradise" (الجنة) meant to triumph over the devastation of war.

Continuing to develop her suggestion that Beirut is the site of paradise, Niqūlā reflects on his situation and concludes that, "like the prophets I walk where I want and desire for my own amusement and discovery, and for the wisdom of the days and nights which I discover without fear after establishing my authority over these places…for long period of time" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 66).[132] Niqūlā is free to enjoy the abundance around him without restraint. This situation contradicts the otherwise chaotic reality of war which Barakāt consistently reminds her reader is ever present despite its seemingly tangential relevance in Niqūlā's current life.

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[132] كالأنبياء أسير حيث أريد وأرغب، للهوي واكتشافاتي وحكمة الأيام والليالي التي أستخلصها من دون خوف، بعد أن استتبّ لي الملك على هذه البقاع...لفترة طويلة.

In the next example Barakāt continues to provide evidence in support of the notion that Niqūlā's experience in the streets of Beirut is akin to living among the pleasures of Eden:

رحت أمشي خفيفاً عارياً [...] كانت النخلة الصغيرة في مكانها وثمارها ما زالت عليها وقد طابت. تسلّقت ساق النخلة بسرعة ويسر ورحت أقطف التمر اللذيذ وآكل حتى المتلأ بطني. حملت بعض الجرود الكثيفة الثمر، واتجهت سعيداً هانئاً صوب بيتي وأنا أتساءل عمّا يكون الآن من حال الحديقة والمصطبة دون أن يشعرني ذلك بالقلق.

I began to walk, naked and light […] The small date palm was in its place with its fruit still upon it, ripe. I climbed the palm's trunk quickly and easily and I began to pick the delicious dates and I eat until my belly fills. I carried some palm branches heavy with fruit, and I headed happily and with delight toward my house asking myself about what the current state of the garden and terrace is without feeling uneasy about it (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 123).

Among the keys of comparison to this particular example, Niqūlā is naked like Adam and Eve prior to the fall. In this case, he willfully enjoys the fruits of the date palm without restraint or concern for the battles raging around him. However, Barakāt also complicates these scenes as Niqūlā begins to think more deeply about the nature of his existence as yet still unaware of his death. For example, Niqūlā is never satisfied in his condition, "I can hardly stop eating. It is as if whatever I swallow does not placate or fill my stomach. I try chewing things that I had not come close to previously, plants or creepers crawling on the ground or birds caught in my traps. I despise hardly anything" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 139).[133] The point of emphasis here is that Niqūlā is surrounded by abundance but the satisfaction he seeks in eating whatever he encounters

[133] أكاد لا أتوقّف عن الأكل. كأنّ ما أبتلعه لا يهدأ في معدتي. لا يملؤها. أجرّب مضع ما لم أكن أقربه في السابق، نباتاً أو زواحف تدبّ في الأرض أو طيوراً وقعت في شباكي. أكاد لا آنف شيئاً.

continually eludes him. In his current state he wants for nothing, but still he finds himself wanting more.

In reference to these scenes of pleasure and abundance, Winckler identifies Barakāt's achievement in the development of this image of paradise on Earth:

> Niqūlā builds a new 'home' in his extensively gutted shop, amidst the devastated souks of Beirut's city center. In the heart of the fiercely contested city he lives in a kind of utopia – a 'non-place' –, in fully deserted surroundings, where wolf-like dogs roam the streets, one of which he takes for a companion. Even after the fighting comes to an end […] long after the end of the war, the outside world eventually penetrates into his 'utopia' (Winckler, 385).

It is in the creation of this "non-place" that Barakāt carves out the utopian vision of Niqūlā's life after death. The reader of these pages is constantly reminded that the nature of Niqūlā's existence is a reflection upon his prospects for reward in the afterlife. The peripheral presence of the war is among the most obvious gateways to this conclusion. In spite of his wandering the streets of a densely populated metropolis where various factions struggle for supremacy, Niqūlā is seemingly alone. Perhaps above all other details of his existence, this fact is the most telling with respect to the reality of his demise. Although all people experience death, the individual must by necessity experience his transition from life alone.

3g: Border Security

Developing several minor themes on the periphery of her more extensively established motifs, Barakāt successfully creates expressions based in comparative imagery to provide commentary on some of the more nuanced social and political consequences of the Lebanese civil war. One of the more effective of these minor themes relates to the efforts by various militant groups to identify their place within the broader regional conflict. The Lebanese civil war is characterized by the sectarian nature of Lebanese society itself. Describing the civil war in Lebanon as it applies to Barakāt's fiction Winckler writes,

> The unity of the nation was shattered and countless splinter groups were formed, whose 'opponents' and 'coalition partners' rotated at ever-diminishing intervals. If the fronts of the conflict were initially clearly recognizable, as it unfolded the war seemed increasingly irrational and unfathomable. No end was in sight, or rather, time and again it seemed as if the fighting had ended, only for it to flare up again shortly afterwards (Winckler, 383).

Among the various factions endeavoring to enforce claims to the land are disparate and conflicting groups of Muslims, Christians, secularists and foreigners including Americans, Iranians and Israelis. In order to contextualize this chaotic array of oppositional forces, Barakāt describes Niqūlā's own realization that he must, like those threatening him, make an effort to define the boarders of his territory: "I didn't hear any suspicious movements but I stayed awhile in my hiding place. Perhaps he is setting a trap for me. He'll let me leave safely from my hiding place then hunt me on his ground which he has fenced in with his urine, as he guards the air with his powerful nostrils" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 103).[134] In the immediate context of this citation,

[134] لم أسمع أية حركة مريبة لكني لبثت وقتاً في مكاني لعلّه ينصب لي فخاً، يخرجني آمناً من مكاني ثم يتصيّدني على أرضه

Niqūlā is specifically worried about the presence of the stray dogs stalking him. More broadly applied as a reflection of Barakāt's use of comparative imagery, the dogs provide an effective example of *istiʿārah* in reference to the militants and the borderlines relevant to the conflict dividing the city of Beirut which are carefully defined and defended. Without mentioning the militants explicitly, Barakāt compares them with the wolves, entities derived from separate categories which share a similar attribute based on their shared tendency to mark, occupy, and defend specific territory.

Eventually Niqūlā tries to mark his own territory with urine in an effort to defend himself against these militant dogs: "Thus I tried, in the very least and as an experiment, to enclose a circle to be my territory. I'll see him enter my territory and if we are capable, the two of us, to find an agreement, symbolic of the possibility for us to begin to live together in peace in this, God's wide world" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 104).[135] In this instance Barakāt is directly addressing one of the most fundamental aspects of this regional conflict. Within this tenuous and constantly evolving scenario as it applies to Barakāt's novel, in order for peace to be achieved, specific lines of demarcation must be established and respected by the various conflicting parties. These borders are necessary in the wider regional peace process because acknowledging the legitimacy of borders is at least a symbol of the requisite identification of the conflicting groups' presence and their mutual right to exist in God's wide world. As Niqūlā proceeds to define his own territorial boundaries, he is cognizant of his responsibility to do so and encouraged by the possibility for peaceful coexistence with his enemies:

التي لا بد سوّرها ببوله وهو يحرس هواءها بخياشيمه القوية.

135 هكذا أكون حاولت على الأقل، وعلى سبيل التجربة، أن أسوّر دائرة تكون منطقتي فأرى إن كان يدخلها وإن كان باستطاعتنا نحن الإثنين أن نجد اصطلاحاً ما، ترميزاً ممكناً نبدأ منه تعايشنا بسلام في أرض الله الواسعة هذه.

عليّ أن أكون أكثر شجاعة على أيّ حال، أكثر شجاعة بقليل...فلا أبول في لباسي أو أكاد كلّما لاحت لي أشداق الكلاب...مرة أخرى رحت أقنع نفسي بوجوب التوصّل إلى تعايش معقول، بلا مواجهات دامية...وقلت ربما كان ما فعلت اليوم من التبوّل في الأماكن التي مررت بها إلى هنا بدايةً جيدة.

> In any case, it is on me to be braver, a bit more courageous…and to not pee, or be on the brink of peeing in my pants whenever the dog's jaws come into my sight…Once again I began to convince myself of the necessity to come to some sensible coexistence, without bloody confrontations…and I said, perhaps what I did today by urinating in the places I pass through on my way here is a good start (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 107).

As an analogy for the complex nature of conflict, Barakāt's description of the process of marking one's territory with urine and the implication that the conflicting militant groups are appropriately described as dogs is an especially effective rhetorical device. In the context of war these various factions occupying portions of Beirut exist in denial of the humanity of their opponents. They are all more like dogs than humans in their struggle to assert their authority, to define their respective territories, and to fight in order to maintain a secure sense of place.

3h: Gamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir as the Goalie before a Penalty Kick

Barakāt also uses the question of border security as an opening to consider a more broadly defined reflection on the historical and regional implications of the violence in Lebanon. Thinking that the dogs were surrounding him, Niqūlā recalls an argument between his mother and father about Gamāl ʿAbd al-Nāṣir's June War strategy. His mother explains that ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, "said to himself: 'They are leaking information that they will attack in the east, so I figure they will come from the west so if I wait for them in the east, they'll strike in the west'" (*Ḥārith*

al-Miyāh, 106).[136] In response to his wife's assertion Niqūlā's father suggests that, "'the problem is similar to the position of the goal keeper before the release of a penalty strike […] in an instant, a second before. East or West. The foot will strike the ball to my right or to my left. Where is the intelligence in that?'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 107).[137] Niqūlā's mother retorts, "'War is not football, so of course there is intelligence. As the goalie looks in the eyes of the player in front of him he must know, or his behavior must influence the player's behavior, in the movement of his foot. This is intelligence. Why do the Israelis always know?'" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 107).[138] Finally, reflecting on this dilemma Niqūlā decides,

لا تحلّ. ليس لها حلّ. الإثنان، أمي و أبي، معهما حق، لكنّي أرجّع رأي أبي. ذلك أنه من الصعب جداً أن تؤثّر على شخصية اللاعب وهو بعيد عنك...لا ينظر في عينيك ولا يسمع كلامك. ينظر إلى الشباك وإلى الكرة...ويسمع هيصة الجماهير وهتافهم وطبل قلبه.

> It has no solution. The two of them, my mother and my father together were right, but my father's opinion resonated for me. It is very difficult to influence the player's behavior when he is far away from you…he is not looking into your eyes or hearing your voice. He is looking at the net and at the ball…and he is hearing the crowd and their cheers and the beating of his heart (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 108).

With this minor elucidation into the larger context of the regional conflicts that have defined the second half of twentieth century Middle Eastern history Barakāt identifies, if only briefly, the complexity of the situation with an example appropriately situated within Arab culture. Instead

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136 قال في نفسه: يسرّبون إليّ أنه الشرق فأعتقد إذن أنهم سيأتون من الغرب فأكمن لهم في الشرق فيضربون في الغرب.

137 إنّ المسألة تشبه أن تكون مكان حارس المرمى قبل انطلاق ضربة الجزاء [...] بلحظة، بثانية. الشرق أو الغرب. إلى يميني أو إلى يساري ستضرب القدم الكرّة. أين الذكاء في ذلك؟

138 الحرب ليست فوتبول، ثم طبعاً هناك ذكاء. من نظرة الغولار في عينيّ اللاعب أمامه يجب أن يعرف، أو أن تؤثر شخصيتـه في شخصية اللاعب، في حركة رجله. هذا هو الذكاء. لماذا يعرف الإسرائيليون دوماً؟

of diminishing the gravity of the test confronting the Arab world in the June War, the simplicity of Barakāt's football analogy demonstrates the efforts on behalf of common citizens to make sense of historical events beyond their control and even beyond their ability to fully understand by nature of their lack of a role in the decision making process. ʿAbd al-Nāṣir is like the goal keeper who fails to respond in his moment of expectation. By extension in this case, Israel is the player poised to strike the ball unfazed by the gesticulations of the keeper or the roaring of the crowd. Each of these comparisons relies on the juxtaposition of entities drawn from the category of human experience. The shared attribute between ʿAbd al-Nāṣir as the goal keeper and the Israeli government as the penalty kicker is a common intellectual characteristic they share in the crucial moment related to strategy. Focused on the goal, the Israeli government ignores all distractions and decisively sends the ball into the net while ʿAbd al-Nāṣir overanalyzes his opponent and fails to provide an effective defense, thereby becoming the scapegoat for the failures of his team. This last point is perhaps the most poignant in Barakāt's image. In the context of the football match, the only reason why the penalty kick occurs in the first place is as a result of the previous failures of the goal keeper's teammates. Whether as the result of a foul during the match or as a consequence of the team's failure to decisively score a victory throughout the duration of the match, ultimately the position of the goal keeper is the most visible on the field and his action is scrutinized more closely in the final moment regardless of his performance throughout the entire contest. With this analogy, articulated from the perspective of common citizens, Barakāt brilliantly sums up the inadequacies of Arab society in its attempt to confront Israel.

3i: One Thousand Suns Over Japan

Finally, in a reference that suffers from a lack of any previous or even subsequent contextual relevance, Barakāt introduces an image of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to comment on what she evidently considers the inevitability of war to elicit unnecessarily destructive force upon civilian populations.[139] The point of dropping the atomic bombs on Japan, according to Niqūlā's father, was to "test the destructive power of the newest bomb to be manufactured at that time. […] The Japanese wanted to surrender but the Americans delayed acceptance of this surrender in order to test the bomb and to irritate the allies, and especially Stalin" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 96).[140] Initially, Barakāt situates these musings in a casual conversation and she unequivocally indicates that the decision to drop these bombs was not actually made in the effort to end the war as it is described in popular American sentiment apparent in the narrative histories of World War II. Niqūlā's father continues by suggesting, "Of course, to irritate the allies while the point of dividing the spoils of war began, in the post war stage. Everyone wants to be seen by his neighbor as the strongest, and to warrant the necessity for the lion's share of the loot to fall to him, and also that the decisions of leadership and authority should belong to him" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 96).[141] Each of these statements contradicts the American justification for the bombs which traditionally includes the idea that without this attack, the war with Japan would have continued into the foreseeable future and would have resulted in an ever increasing loss of American blood and treasure.

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[139] This is actually not an original idea in and of itself. Even Robert McNamara shares this opinion in his mea culpa reflection on his personal role in influencing military action by the United States over several decades in the last half century. See the documentary film, *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert McNamara*.

[140] هو اختبار قوة تدمير القنبلة الحديثة الصنع آنذاك [...] فاليابان لم تكن تملك طيراناً حديثاً بحيث يحلّق عالياً في السماء. اليابان كانت تريد الإستسلام لكن الأميركان أرجأوا القبول بهذا الإستسلام لاختبار القنبلة، وأيضاً نكاية بالحلفاء وبخاصة ستالين.

[141] طبعاً نكاية بالحلفاء إذ كانت بدأت مرحلة تقاسم الغنائم، مرحلة ما بعد الحرب. كل واحد يريد أن يُري جاره أنه الأقوى، وإليه إذن يجب أن ترجع حصة الأسد من الغنائم، وإليه ترجع أيضاً قرارات القيادة والتسلّط.

With these statements, Barakāt prepares the groundwork for the following image: "It was a day certainly like that day. Then the light of a thousand suns burning in a single moment was added to that day. The largest rainbow fluctuated with millions of colors…surely just like the moment when God created the heavens and the earth…then the black rain upon the smoking corpses" (*Ḥārith al-Miyāh*, 96-97).[142] This expression is an example of comparative imagery more appropriately described as *takhyīl* because of the inclusion of an image arguably drawn from fantasy. One must imagine the brilliance of the light of a thousand suns in order to recognize the reality of the bomb's blast as it appeared in the early morning sky that day. Additionally, Barakāt then compares this moment with the moment of creation, an allegorical if not crudely devised reference to the big bang.

Although there is at least one previous reference to bombs plowing the city of Beirut inaugurating a new creation of abundance evocative of a similar allegorical reference to the creation of the Earth,[143] this reference is awkward because it lacks an appropriate contextual anchor in Barakāt's novel. There is no other reference, critical or otherwise, to the United States beyond this passage in the novel. In the immediate context, the passage follows Niqūlā's musings about the beauty of the day he has enjoyed. This beauty causes him to ponder how beautiful it must have been on the day the bombs were dropped on Japan. Although it appears to be a reference to a reflection upon the notion that calm weather portends a coming storm, the reference seems forced and out of place.

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[142] يومٌ يشبه لا بدّ ذلك اليوم. ثم أُضيفت إليه آلافُ الشموس التي اشتعلت في لحظة واحدة. أكبر قوس قزح متقلّب بملايين الألوان...كما اللحظة التي خلق فيها الربّ السماوات والأرض، لا بدّ...ثم المطر الأسود على الجثث المتبخّرة.

[143] Op. Cit., 31.

3j: The Question of Unity

With respect to the compositional merits of textual unity, there are several strengths worthy of acknowledgment regarding specific images Barakāt creates in the development of her primary motifs. Among Barakāt's primary weaknesses in this novel, however, is her failure to develop the narrative weaving motif beyond references to broad notions about the cyclical nature of events across time in human history. Her efforts to contextualize a culturally universal application of the themes supporting the wider motif fall short. Although it would seem she is headed in this direction at times, this general premise fails to unite her narrative adequately as an elucidation on the nature of storytelling and its generational relevance over time. While Barakāt does manage to develop the peripheral premise that the quality of narrative and weaving are valuable in the preservation of knowledge, she does not appear concerned with linking the concept to the development of her other themes.

Among the strengths of her novel, Barakāt expertly renders the failure of her male characters to recognize their own inadequacies in regard to the preservation of their intimate relationships. Barakāt successfully contextualizes the consequences of Niqūlā's misguided efforts to control Shamsa physically, emotionally and intellectually. The themes supporting her motif concerning the dangers of knowledge with respect to the story of fabrics, as opposed to the more broadly defined weaving of narratives, do effectively invite a deeper analysis of the unity apparent in the specific images she creates. For example, Barakāt is convincing in her efforts to associate different stages of Shamsa's sexual development with her evolving interest in and knowledge of specific fabrics. As an aspect of this theme, she also provides a consistent link with the scriptural narrative of Eve's thirst for knowledge and the male perception that this desire to know more is inherently sinful. There is palpable humor in the trepidation Niqūlā feels about

sharing the story of silk with Shamsa particularly in reference to his eagerness to get her out of her linen and into the velvet of experience as quickly as possible in the early stages of their relationship. Also, the progression from one lesson to the next does provide for more of a unified narrative as her trajectory ends where it should, with the dissolution of Niqūlā's relationship with Shamsa.

Among the themes Barakāt develops in the "background," the different application of references to Eve and the Garden of Eden are well situated and applicable to several different themes across the narrative. In addition to her creativity with respect to the sinful search for knowledge as it applies to Shamsa, the dramatic irony she creates in her reader's acknowledgement of Niqūlā's demise relies on the evidence she provides of his blissful existence in Beirut on the one hand contrasted with the scenes of deprivation and despair on the other. Her insistence on maintaining the peripheral relevance of the war is one of the effective unifying factors of her narrative.

Reflecting on her use of individual images in the development of her minor themes, some of her examples are also expertly rendered in terms of the strength of harmony and difference within al-Jurjānī's spectrum of dissimilarity. The dogs, for example, and Niqūlā's musings about the necessity to mark his territory allow Barakāt to directly confront some of the most fundamental issues regarding the sectarian nature of the Lebanese civil war without betraying her insistence on maintaining its peripheral relevance in the broader narrative. In fact this is one of her most effective uses of *istiʿārah* as she is able to continue to develop the notion that Beirut is a location for the afterlife while also confronting the lingering issues of reality as it pertains to the war. In this way, the dogs and their territoriality provide an effective referent for both Niqūlā's various torments in death and for Barakāt's consideration of the future potential for peace.

Finally, the last two images examined in this chapter, namely the comparison of ᶜAbd al-Nāṣir and the goal keeper and the light of a thousand suns over Japan represent opposite examples of comparative imagery with regard to al-Jurjānī's reflections on truth in metaphoric language. As simplistic as it is on the surface, the ᶜAbd al-Nāṣir analogy is actually quite profound with regard to the fact that he was widely criticized for his military strategy during the June War. There are several truths apparent in this analogy. Again, for legitimate reasons as the leader of one of the most sophisticated Arab armies at the beginning of the June War, ᶜAbd al-Nāṣir certainly earned his share of critical scrutiny given the dramatic defeat the Arab armies suffered in the brief conflict. It is also true, however, that the scrutiny he received distracted the Arab world by and large from addressing many of the fundamental questions of failure regarding that war.

By contrast, Barakāt's image in reference to the bombing of Japan at the end of World War II is misplaced and provides an example of disunity in her text. This image lacks a contextual foundation in the novel, and is quickly forgotten in the subsequent development of the narrative. It does, however, provide a helpful opportunity in this study to consider the difference between *istiᶜārah* and *takhyīl*. The image of one thousand suns over Japan cannot be appropriately classified as an example of *istiᶜārah* because it violates al-Jurjānī's basic premise of truthfulness. As it is the case in the above analysis, the image is more appropriately classified as an example of *takhyīl* because of the impossibility of rendering the light of a thousand suns into a truthful context accessible to the intellect without reference to the fantastic.

Chapter Four

Blood and Honor:

Nawāl al-Saᶜdāwī's *Jannāt wa Iblīs*

جنّات وإبليس

Jannāt and the Devil

4a: The Perils of Patriarchy

It comes as no surprise to readers of Nawāl al-Saᶜdāwī's fiction that her novel, *Jannāt wa Iblīs*, provides a biting critique of patriarchy. During her prolific career as a novelist, al-Saᶜdāwī has routinely scrutinized gender inequalities in her native Egypt.[144] Similar to the other novelists considered previously in this study, al-Saᶜdāwī's narrative accomplishments in this novel derive from her creation of a series of vivid and provocative themes supported by figurative language. In *Jannāt wa Iblīs* nearly every paragraph includes at least one instance of comparative imagery making it an easy choice among her other fictional works for this study. As the basis for most of the primary motifs within her novel *Jannāt wa Iblīs* she confronts the broader historical context of religion in Egypt as a function of its service to traditional structures of patriarchy. From the ancient beliefs of the pharaohs to the doctrines of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the histories, mythologies and images of these faiths define the lives of her characters. In *Jannāt wa Iblīs* al-Saᶜdāwī re-imagines the origins of patriarchy in the Abrahamic tradition. She offers another

[144] Al-Saᶜdāwī's novels *Woman at Point Zero*, *God Dies by the Nile* and her auto-biographical texts *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* and *Memoirs from the Women's Prison* are all excellent examples of her contribution to modern Arabic literature and the conscious effort to undermine traditional cultural structures contributing to the persistence of gender inequalities.

approach to reading traditional concepts and stories, such as the notion that God created man in his image, the nature of Eve's temptation to eat from the tree of knowledge, the Devil cast from heaven, and the fall of (wo)man into sin. Additionally, al-Saᶜdāwī considers the connection between blood and honor, the violence and power relationships inherent in sexual abuse, and the perils of lesbianism within the Egyptian cultural context.

4b: God is Man

The idea that men in positions of authority created God in their image in order to more effectively impose their authority over those they consider inferior is among the more provocative themes al-Saᶜdāwī develops through the use of comparative imagery in *Jannāt wa Iblīs*. The essential comparison is an example of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl* because although she never explicitly suggests that in reality the men in her novel are gods, with the singular exception of Iblīs, all of the male characters look alike regardless of their individual status in the hierarchy of authority. As a consequence of this framework, al-Saᶜdāwī imagines God and man as entities drawn from the same category, and the point of similarity they share is based on the intensity with which they exert authority over others. Al-Saᶜdāwī reinforces this premise through the repetitive use of comparative imagery as she essentially undermines the foundational narratives of human religion through the reversal of one of the most basic tenants of faith in the Abrahamic tradition in which God is said to have created man in his image. With her character known as "the Lord" and his status as a ward of the state, for example, it is as if men have replaced god as the authority, imprisoning him in an asylum while they manipulate "his" message to suit their own misogynistic patriarchal world view. Through this narrative premise al-Saᶜdāwī bluntly

rejects the notion that a god created man in his image. Instead, men have deemed themselves to be superior in this socio-religious framework and it is necessary for god to be imagined in the form of a man.

As a primary figure in the development of this motif, al-Saʿdāwī situates the Lord as an antagonistic character always seeking to control those around him. Although it becomes clear that at one point the Lord enjoyed significant power earlier in his life, from the outset of the novel he is a patient in the asylum and he is described in a specific way:

قرص الشمس يتوهّج فوق هرم خوفو. صورته تظهر داخل القرص. يتعرّف على وجهه رغم المسافة البعيدة. مربّع كبير يشبه وجه الضبع. حاجباه كثيفان يلتقيان عند أرنبة أنفه. غضروف كبير مقوّس، كمنقار النسر، منذ رآه في المرآة، لأول مرة أراد الخلاص منه. ثابت له جذر عميق داخل رأسه. أذناه أيضاً ليستا مثل آذان البشر، تلتويان إلى الأمام مثل قرني البقرة أو العجل.

> The sun disc blazes above the pyramid of Khūfū. His picture appears inside the disc. He recognized his face despite the great distance, a large square like the face of the hyena. His thick eyebrows meet at the tip of his nose, a large piece of crooked cartilage like the beak of an eagle. Ever since he had seen it in the mirror for the first time he wanted to be rid of it, but it was permanently ingrained in him, its roots deep inside his head. His ears were also not like human ears, they bend forward like the horns of a cow or a calf (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 45).

This citation includes three individual examples of *tashbīh*. The Lord's face is square like the hyena, his nose is hooked like the eagle's beak, and his ears bent forward like a cow or calf. The points of comparison are based on similar attributes he shares with the physical features of animals and the images are relatively straight forward in each instance, but this description

portends subsequent links between the common features of men with images related to ancient Egyptian gods. This citation as a whole serves as the basis for the primary *istiᶜārah* comparison maintained throughout the novel in every description of men in positions of authority. The purpose of this comparison is to demonstrate that the religion of men has been a practice imposed upon the populace since the beginning of the earliest human civilizations by an all seeing and all powerful god crafted in the image of a man. More directly, the suggestion here is that there is no god. God is the creation of men in positions of power, a god crafted in their image in order to impose their authority over the masses. The fact that the Lord is a mental patient indicates that men have imprisoned religion in the asylum. They assert their control over god and the devil by packing them away among other discarded members of society. With the Lord locked away, men have then gone on to rule the world by the dictates of their own desires.

As she outlines the basis for this premise in her novel, al-Saᶜdāwī establishes the notion that from the earliest beginnings of civilization in Egypt the asylum has been,

> سراي أو قصر قديم منذ الفراعنة. كان يسكنه ملك تصوّر أنه يملك الأرض والسماء، وبني آدم وبنات حوّاء. ثم مات كما تموت الخيول. دفنوه في حفرة بالأرض إلى جوار حصانه وسيفه. لم يبق من الثلاثة إلّا قطعة صغيرة من الحديد على شكل نصف دائرة، كانت حدوة في حافر الحصان وأصبحت داخل غرفة زجاجية بمتحف المدينة يتفرّج عليها السيّاح.

> A house of government or an ancient palace since the Pharaohs. A king used to live in it who imagined himself as reigning over the heavens and the earth, and over the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve. Then he died, just as horses die. They buried him in a hole in the ground next to his horse and his sword. Nothing remained of the three except for a small piece of iron in the form of a half circle. It was a horseshoe from the horse's

> hoof and it was shown inside a glass chamber in the city museum open for the tourists (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 6).

The suggestion that a king from ancient Egypt imagines himself as ruling over heaven and earth and over the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve is an example of *istiᶜārah*. Although there is no direct reference to "god" in the sentence, the king's rule, at least as he imagines it during his lifetime, is compared to the rule of a god with dominion over humanity. The reference is also derogatory, as it is a reflection on the fact that the king is not a god, he is mortal and dies just like horses die. The expression comparing the king to the horse is an example of *tashbīh*. The king and the horse are obviously derived from different species, but the common attribute linking them is simply their mortality. The phrase "he died, just as horses die," is comprehensible without any deeper reflection upon the context. For all the power and authority he enjoys in life, the king dies and is largely forgotten. The horseshoe completes this citation and should be read as an example of *tamthīl*. Within several sentences the king's living self has been reduced to a piece of metal associated with his rule. This artifact is all that remains after all other remnants of his existence decomposed over time, and the king is now nothing more than the horse's shoe. The one time "god king" reduced to the reality of his mortality is remembered because of a mundane trinket of casual interest to modern day tourists. With this citation, al-Saᶜdāwī expertly recalls the belief among the ancient Egyptians that their potential for happiness in the afterlife requires that their physical appearance in life be preserved in death. This reference is especially meaningful in the continued development of her theme because of the traditional belief among the ancient Egyptians that even in death there is recognition of the relevance of worldly hierarchy. Put simply, not everyone got the royal treatment in ancient Egyptian society when it

came to burial practices and the potential for a life of leisure in death.[145] Not only did the king in the previous reference and his worldly artifacts, buried with him in the belief that they would be beneficial to him in death, decay away to nothing, he is also virtually unrecognizable when all that is left is a horse shoe to remember him by and he is thus relegated to suffer the curse of non-existence. In this manner, al-Saᶜdāwī emphasizes the absurdity inherent in one of the most fundamental beliefs of ancient Egyptian theology regarding resurrection and everlasting life.

In another reference linked to this ancient Egyptian belief system, when the Lord recalls hearing his acolytes call out, "May he live forever,"

يتلقَّى كلمة << الأبد >> بكل الفتحات في رأسه. العينان والأنف والفم. الأذنان تنتصبان مفتوحتين. مسام جسده تتفتَّح. يستقبل الخلود والحروف قطرات ماء يلعقها بطرف لسانه ثم يمضغها. يهزّ رأسه علامة الرضا. ابتسامة خفيفة تحوم حول شفتيه. يميل فمه ناحية اليمين في اعوجاجة. ثم يعتدل.

> He receives the word, 'forever,' with all the openings in his head, the eyes, the nose and the mouth. The ears perk up, the pores on his body open. He takes in the word 'eternity' and the letters are drops of water he laps up with the tip of his tongue then he chews on it. He shakes his head, an indication of his satisfaction. A thin smile hovers around his lips slanting, twisted to the right side of his mouth. Then it straightens out (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 46).

[145] In *Egyptian Religion*, Siegfried Morenz writes that it was not until the end of the Old Kingdom, during the First Intermediate Period when, "the Egyptians secured access to the realm of the dead in heaven, previously reserved to the king, and that for private persons the (bird-like) 'soul' (ba) was associated with heaven. In this way the preservation of the body in the tomb became the prerequisite for ascent to heaven" (Morenz, 206). Regarding evidence of the belief that the body must be preserved in death in the earliest known burials in ancient Egypt, in *Egyptian Religion: Ideas of the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*, E.A. Wallis Budge explains that, "Before the body was laid in the ground it was either wrapped in gazelle skin or laid in loose grass; the substance used for the purpose of wrapping probably depended upon the social condition of the deceased" (Budge, 185). Therefore, even in the earliest development of the Egyptian conception of the afterlife, both the need to preserve one's appearance and the reality of worldly privilege are evident in burial practices.

The way the Lord encounters these words "forever" (الأبد) and "immortality" (الخلود) provides the space for a *tamthīl* comparison. In both cases the comparison, comprehensible by reference to several sentences, compares entities drawn from separate categories, such as food and words, where the similar attribute is discovered in the idea that the letters are drops of water the Lord consumes with pleasure and satisfaction, or food he consumes to satisfy his hunger for affirmation. Additionally, his smile, twisted to the side, is also relevant in this citation because it is one of several attributes of masculinity repeated in depictions of men throughout the novel. The image of the smile twisted to the right side of the mouth evokes two dimensional renderings of gods from the ancient Egyptian pantheon. The gods Horus, Set, Thoth, Khnum, Sobek, Ra, and Anubis, for example, all have non-human heads.[146] They are commonly depicted from the side, in this case the right side, and each holds a unique, twisted grin. It is evident in the following examples that depictions of men in various positions of authority invariably include a feature that resembles one or several of these particular gods.

Building upon this notion that all men are essentially the same in appearance, as if crafted in the same image, Iblīs recalls his father "was sitting on the high-backed chair in a military uniform, discs shining with a red glow upon his chest. His shoulders broad and full, his nose a large piece of cartilage sticking out, crooked in the shape of a bow. His neck twists to the top like the neck of a turkey cock. His voice reverberates throughout the house." (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 102).[147] This description, repeated with slight alterations to describe other men of authority in the novel, clearly resembles images of the gods of ancient Egypt. In such images the gods often

[146] For references to these images see *Journey Through the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, edited by John H. Taylor, and Veronica Ions' *Egyptian Mythology*.

[147] كان جالساً فوق الكرسيّ ذي المسند العالي، داخل بدلة عسكرية. فوق صدره أقراص تلمع بضوء أحمر. كتفاه عريضتان محشوّتان. أنفه غضروف كبير منتصب على شكل القوس. عنقه تلتوي إلى أعلى كعنق الديك الرومي. صوته يدوي في أنحاء البيت.

look more like creatures, real or imagined, than men. They are combinations, hybrids, recurring in ancient depictions of the Egyptian pantheon. In her novel, the men look like these creature gods to emphasize the larger question of patriarchal authority and also the longevity of the religious and political institutions that have maintained that authority in Egypt for several millennia.

This point is further emphasized in the acknowledgement that the character known as the Lord is just a man. The development of his character reveals that before his exile in the asylum he enjoyed divine status politically. Yet, as divine as he may perceive himself to be, "His voice booms in his ears like the voice of god, but his fingers are yellow and from his breath comes the odor of tobacco and he sweats under his armpits like Shaykh Masᶜūd" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 107).[148] The Lord's voice resounds like the voice of god, but his other features betray any claims to divinity. In this example, god is cast in the image of a man. In this instance, "god" is both the Lord, an inmate at the asylum, and Shaykh Masᶜūd, a child molester and a vile man reeking of tobacco and body odor who abuses the petty authority he possesses over his students.

Another key to al-Saᶜdāwī's underlying comparison between god and man revolves around the novel's primary protagonist, Jannāt, and the ways in which she rebels against the authority of men in order to seek an education. In several instances, she incites social turmoil that is quelled with violence instigated by the same misogynist authorities. At one point, she sees the general-in-chief of the army within the rows of soldiers: "She saw him emerge from the first row. She immediately recognized him wearing the director's white coat, and her dead grandfather's body, the square face and white complexion of the king, and Shaykh Basyūni's

[148] صوته يدوي في أذنيه كصوت الربّ، لكن أصابعه صفراء وأنفاسه لها رائحة التبغ، وعرق تحت الإبط كالشيخ مسعود.

turban with the feather upon it standing upright in the air" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 163).[149] Regardless of their specific social stature, in the development of her primary motif al-Saᶜdāwī associates all men in any position of authority with the image of a god. The director, Jannāt's grandfather, the king, and her teacher all impose their will like gods upon her in their various roles in her life.

Even her husband fits this description. Looking at a picture of Zakariyā, Jannāt notices that, "Amidst the rain and broken glass she sees him emerge from the picture – in his military uniform with the medal on his chest. He wears her dead grandfather's face. He has a square head like a white bear, fixed in the air like the Sphinx, with a pointed crown like the Pyramid of Khūfū. His nose, crooked cartilage like the eagle's beak" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 127-128).[150] There are alterations to the general description of men across several citations, and while in this example Zakariyā has a square face like a bear rather than a hyena, the comparisons are still consistent throughout the novel and they all include the link to images of ancient Egyptian gods. In this paradigm men are by their nature in positions of authority. From the peasant man lording over his wife to the greatest of pharaohs overseeing the empire, men in even the most banal positions of authority always behave the same.[151]

In the novel it is clear that this perpetuation of misogynistic social institutions is persistently ingrained in the minds of young boys and girls. Boys are taught to assume their authority over women and the girls are taught that they are inferior. As a boy in school, Iblīs

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[149] من الصفّ الأول رأته يخرج. عرفته على الفور يرتدي معطف المدير الأبيض، وجسد جدّها الميت. وأنف زكريا المقوَّس، الوجه المربّع وبشرة الملك البيضاء، وعمامة الشيخ بسيوني، من فوقها الريشة منتصبة في الهواء.

[150] من وسط المطر والزجاج المكسور تراه يخرج من الصورة – داخل بدلته العسكرية والوسام فوق صدره. يرتدي وجه جدّها الميت. له رأس مربّع كالدبّ الأبيض. ثابت في الهواء كأبي الهول. له قمّة مدبّبة كهرم خوفو. وأنفه غضروف مقوّس كمنقار النسر.

[151] According to Morenz among the Egyptian pantheon, "It will be remembered that the notion of one god taking up his abode in another was the basis on which numerous deities merged, and that behind the plurality of deities there was thought to be a unity" (Morenz, 151). Al-Saᶜdāwī manages to recapture this sense of unity in her male characters both in terms of their appearance and behavior.

"didn't listen to his mother's words. He heard his father say that women are deficient in intellect and religion. And in school he heard the teacher say that men were the custodians. He opened the book and made him read, 'men are the custodians of women.' Every day he reads it and he repeats it after the teacher three times" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 104).[152] Iblīs is learning to fill the role determined for him, the custodian of women. He learns from his teacher that to be custodians men must be sovereign over women, and he remembers his instructor saying, "'The man is the master and the woman submits to the man'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 104).[153] Thus every man is the king, the master over his woman. Reinforcing this standard in his young mind, Iblīs remembers that his sister Nafīsa used to be chased away from school by their teacher Shaykh Masᶜūd who would say, "'Go on with you, Nafīsa, go to your mother!'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 109).[154] To earn this scolding all Nafīsa does is seek the knowledge of writing, and for this she is rejected. Shaykh Masᶜūd does not believe women should be in school: "he tightened his lips and he pronounced the word 'women' as if he was spitting. Then he turned around and offered them his back. From behind, his neck appears thick and bent forward like a turkey" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 110).[155] This is another description of a man in authority, and in this case al-Saᶜdāwī adds to her theme by repeating it within the context of Shaykh Masᶜūd's insistence on Nafīsa's inferiority and by including at least one of the several references to images of the gods. There are several layers of authority apparent within the novel. When Shaykh Masᶜūd is in front of his students, he embraces his role as master and acts accordingly, but when he spots the Village Mayor, a man with higher social standing, "The turkey neck shrank and became like a sesame seed. He

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152 لم يكن يسمع كلام أمّه. سمع أباه يقول: النساء ناقصات عقل ودين. وفي المدرسة سمع المدرّس يقول الرجال قوّامون. فتح الكتاب وجعله يقرأ: الرجال قوّامون على النساء. في كل يوم يقرأها ويردّدها وراء المدرّس ثلاث مرّات.

153 يعني الرجل يسود والأنثى تخضع للذكر.

154 امش يا بت يا نفيسة روّحي لأمّك!

155 مطّ شفتيه وهو ينطق كلمة << نسوان >> كأنما هو يبصق. ثم استدار وأعطاهما ظهره. عنقه من الخلف غليظة ملتوية إلى الأمام كعنق الديك الرومي.

approaches him with his head bowed down. He bows over his hand to kiss it (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 110).[156] The *tashbīh* comparison apparent here between the Shaykh's neck and a sesame seed indicates his inability to hold his head up in the presence of another man who outranks him on the social ladder.

Throughout her novel, al-Saᶜdāwī repeatedly underscores the essential premise that social relations are determined by gender and access to authority. Male or female, an individual is bound to oblige the dictates of those in authority over him/her without question or protest. For example, Nafīsa's brother Iblīs, like all peasant boys who lack meaningful access to power, is eventually conscripted into the Army. Hearing the term "national service,"[157] leads women to,

> تخفي النسوة أولادهن في صدورهن. يتكوّر الولد في حضن أمّه يودّ العودة إلى الرحم. منذ فرعون الأول لم تكن الجهادية إلّا الموت. تلد المرأة ابنها وتقدّمه قرباناً للإله. يجلس فوق عرشه المذهّب ومن حوله الجنود. يرونه مرسوماً فوق ورق الصحف. يتغيّر اسمه من زمن إلى زمن. تتغيّر الحروف والأسماء لكن العرش يبقى. [...]. رأس ثابت في الهواء كرأس أبي الهول. الوجه مربّع كالضبع. العينان شاخصتان في الفراغ. والشفتان منفرجتان في ابتسامة على شكل اعوجاجة في الفم.

> Conceal their boys in their chests. The boy curls up in his mother's lap wishing to return to the womb. Since the first Pharaoh military service meant nothing but death. The woman gives birth to her son and then offers him up as a sacrifice to the god. He sits upon his golden throne, surrounded by soldiers. They see his decree in the newspapers. His name changes from time to time. The letters and the names change but the throne remains. […] His head is fixed in the air like the Sphinx, his face square like a hyena, the eyes staring into the void, the lips relaxed in a crooked smile (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 58-59).

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156 يلمحه الشيخ مسعود فينكمش عنق الديك ويصبح كالسمسمة. يتقدّم نحوه محنيّ الرأس. ينثني فوق يده يقبّلها.

157 الجهادية

Initially in this image al-Saᶜdāwī contextualizes another reference to the continuity of structures of authority over time by suggesting that the call to military, or national service, is a death sentence and a woman's son the sacrificial lamb. These two references combine as examples of a *tamthīl* comparison. The first juxtaposes two intellectual concepts suggesting military service equals death, and the second includes a comparison between the sensually perceptible child and an intellectual concept, a sacrifice to the God. These comparisons are justified because of the historical context al-Saᶜdāwī suggests by pointing out that, since the first Pharaoh of ancient Egypt, women have perceived their sons' conscription into the military as a death sentence. In the second half of the citation the now broadly established *tamthīl* comparison between men and gods is reiterated with al-Saᶜdāwī's reference to the idea that the man who is king changes over time whereas the essential recognition of his authority, and of course his appearance, endure over time.

Later in the novel al-Saᶜdāwī offers another image in reference to the notion that conscription to the military in the form of national service is synonymous with a death sentence. Describing Iblīs and his fellows being shipped off to their duty al-Saᶜdāwī writes, "They pile into the armored van. They appear from the back, their heads trimmed bald. Their faces are long like the faces of old men with the wide eyes of children. Behind them is another armored van, the shaven heads of sheep appear from within it on the road to slaughter" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 113).[158] In this image, Iblīs and his fellow conscripts are like sheep sent to slaughter. The meaning of this image, accomplished within the space of several sentences, is a relatively simple example of *tamthīl* with the point of similarity apparent in several shared characteristics between the

[158] يتكدّسون داخل العربة المصفّحة. يطلّون من وراء القضبان برؤوسهم الصلعاء. وجوه طويلة كوجوه العجائز وعيون أطفال متّسعة. من خلفهم عربة أخرى مصفّحة تطلّ منها رؤوس الخراف المحلوقة في طريقها إلى الذبح.

conscripts and the sheep. Both groups share a similar appearance because of their shaved heads, but more importantly neither the boys nor the sheep are free to resist this death sentence.

4c: Writing, Knowledge and Sin

Based in the premise that men are the ultimate godlike authorities in the lives of women, the novel includes several examples of comparative imagery that identify the persistence of gender inequality as a characteristic of traditional social institutions. Al-Saᶜdāwī develops this imagery based on the principle comparison between knowledge and sin, two intellectual concepts where the shared attribute is inherently intellectual, as in al-Jurjānī's conception of "pure" metaphor. For example, as a child curious about her grandfather's writing, Jannāt is caught and scolded when he discovers her looking through the Qur'ān. Her grandfather curses her and points out that she is mishandling God's book: "Before going to sleep she took a feverish beating from him with a bamboo rod. She lied down close to her grandmother crying with a stifled voice. The brass bed posts shake with her sobbing. She didn't know that God wrote books like her grandfather" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 20).[159] Al-Saᶜdāwī implies her underlying comparison in an example of *istiᶜārah* evident in the punishment Jannāt receives for trying to read the Qur'ān. She is beaten because her grandfather perceives her interest in the book to be sinful and deserving of correction. In this passage, al-Saᶜdāwī also continues to develop her comparison between men and God with Jannāt's confusion and inability to understand how to associate her grandfather with God. In Jannāt's mind, although God is like her grandfather as they are both authors, it is perplexing for her to think that God is somehow less accomplished

[159] وأخذت قبل أن تنام علقة ساخنة منه بالعصا الخيزران. رقدت إلى جوار جدّتها تبكي بصوت مكتوم. أعمدة السرير النحاسيّ تهتزّ مع نشيجها. لم تكن تعرف أن الله يؤلّف الكتب مثل جدّها.

than her grandfather. With a child's capacity for logical thinking Jannāt has a hard time understanding, "How is it that her grandfather had two books and God only had one?" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 21).[160] Consoling her, Jannāt's grandmother explains that God is superior to her grandfather, but Jannāt, "could not imagine that there was anyone above her grandfather except for his majesty the king. And the king did not write books. She used to hear from her father that he was an immoral king passing the night drinking wine with the dancing girls" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 21).[161] In the broader context of the novel, this "immoral king" is the Lord who has presumably been disgraced and shipped away to the asylum with only his memories to sustain his identity as a man of significance. This reference constitutes an instance of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl* because it requires knowledge of the subsequent narrative context and the development of the Lord's character to discern. These reflections in the mind of a young girl are further evidence of the juxtaposition of men in authority and god. They also introduce another theme associated with the imperative to withhold education from women in order to preserve traditional social structures related to gender identity.

In the next example, al-Saᶜdāwī reflects upon the role that women often play in the reinforcement of the generational structures of inferiority young girls are exposed to from birth. Compelled by her own desire to learn to read and write, Jannāt "used to dream that she could write like her mother, but her grandmother said that God did not create women for writing. She read from the Bible, the story of the lizard and Eve. You will crawl on your belly through eternity longing for your man and he is your master" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 73).[162] The *tamthīl*

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160 كيف يكون لجدّها كتابان وربّنا ليس عنده إلّا كتاب واحد؟

161 لم تكن تتصوّر أن هناك أحداً فوق جدّها إلّا صاحب الجلالة الملك. ولم تكن الملك يؤلّف الكتب. كانت تسمع من أبيها أنه ملك فاسد يقضي الليل في شرب الخمر مع الراقصات.

162 كانت تحلم أن تكون مثل أمّها تكتب. لكن جدّتها قالت إن الله لم يخلق المرأة لتكتب. قرأت عليها من الإنجيل قصّة السحلية وحوّاء. تزحفين على بطنك إلى الأبد ويكون اشتياقك لرجلك وهو يسود عليك.

comparison here links Jannāt with Eve and the Devil, all of whom are condemned to be subservient to men for eternity according to al-Saᶜdāwī's framing of the story of Eve's temptation in the garden. The basis for this comparison is an intellectual correlation between entities drawn from the same category. Jannāt, like Eve, is a woman. Both make an effort to access the tree of knowledge and, in the eyes of the men in the novel, both are guilty of criminal intent. Al-Saᶜdāwī chooses the word "lizard" (السحلية) in this citation and all others referring to Eve's temptation. It appears this choice is meant to undermine the legitimacy or authority of this conventional narrative. There are several terms that would be more appropriate according to traditional renderings of this story in Arabic. The word "snake" (حيّة) has a variety of synonyms such as "viper" (أفعى) or "serpent" (ثعبان); and these are all regularly used in common references to the story of Eve's temptation. In fact, the word *ḥayya*, "snake" is linguistically related to the word *ḥawwā'*, "Eve" (حوّاء) because of this connection between the scriptural figure of Eve and the snake. This is not by coincidence; it is a clear example of how gender inequality is ingrained in structural institutions as fundamental to cultural identity as language and the meaning of words. Eve and the snake are bound through history by a name and the suggestion that they share the guilt for original sin.

By using the term "lizard," al-Saᶜdāwī asserts her artistic license to define the terms which she chooses. There is no apparent tradition of using this word in specific reference to the stories of temptation in the Garden of Eden. A lizard is perhaps somehow less of a menacing figure than a snake. It can still be representative of a creature that is cunning and mischievous in its ability to conceal itself, but it does not evoke the same feelings of fear that a snake does. The choice of the term "lizard" in this novel also seems to relate to the general idea that the devil is an innocent pawn in god's design and not deserving of peoples' hatred. The lizard in this case is

the hapless surrogate for god, not the conniving autonomous snake seeking revenge against god for casting him from paradise by drawing people to sin through temptation.

Introducing more complexity to her comparison between knowledge and sin, al-Saᶜdāwī describes an occasion when, as a child, Jannāt discovers some of her mother's writing. She reads, "'I do not fear you. You who forbid knowledge and extinguish the light. You who disguise yourself behind the veil of god, and raise fear and obedience as a substitute for love. You who kill thousands without sin, and eternally curse me like the lizard" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 74).[163] The *tashbīh* comparison between knowledge and light is relatively straightforward in this citation. Additionally, it should not require a broader contextual moment to understand that men seek to extinguish the light of knowledge by denying women access to education. This second reference, however, is an example of *tamthīl* based on the previously established comparison between men and gods. In the expression, explicit references to the second person masculine pronoun "you" in the form of its conjugated form in the verbs "to forbid" (تحرِّم), "to disguise" or "to hide oneself" (تتخفّى), "to raise" (تزرع), and "to kill" (تقتل) combine with the reference to the word "Lord" (الربّ) to complete the requirements that meaning in an instance of *tamthīl* must be comprehensible with reference to both units of comparison in addition to a reflection upon the context of several sentences. Read in isolation, the reference to the "veil of the Lord" (قناع الربّ) is an example of an *istiᶜārah* comparison between a veil or mask and religious doctrine. In this case the veil is a sensually perceptible object compared with an intellectual concept. Men dictate the doctrines that govern society without the threat of external scrutiny or challenge by disguising themselves behind the authority of a god. Finally, in this citation there is another

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163 أنا لا أخاف منك. يا مَن تحرِّم المعرفة وتطفىء الضوء. يا مَن تتخفّى وراء قناع الربّ. وتزرع الخوف والطاعة بدل الحب. وتقتل الآلاف بلا ذنب. وتلعنني كالسحلية إلى الأبد.

example of al-Saᶜdāwī's choice of the word "lizard" in reference to the association between the devil, Eve, and women in general in the final sentence.

As the novel progresses, Jannāt is not alone in her aspirations to learn. Her fellow patient Nafīsa shares this desire for knowledge as well as a history of being punished for pursuing it. As a child, she gets her hands on a copybook at home and she exalts at the writing of her own name. At the same time it seems as if the world is right to her, the birds are chirping in approval, children are singing, all sorts of animals in the natural world are pleased and, "the lizard's head emerges from the crack. It wags its tail, laughing with its eyes" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 111).[164] In this case, the Devil is delighted to see that Nafīsa is susceptible to his temptation; in the continued development of al-Saᶜdāwī's theme, Nafīsa shares Eve's desire to know.

4d: Iblīs Rebels Against the Law

In al-Saᶜdāwī's effort to recall traditional renderings of the story that god expelled the devil from heaven for his hubris in refusing to bow before Adam, the character Iblīs is constantly rebelling against the law. As has already been demonstrated in the asylum, like in the world outside its walls, all the men seem to resemble each other. In their mannerisms and appearance they are similar except for "one man they called Iblīs, he seemed young, with a cleanly shaved face. No mustache or beard. The hair on his head rebelled against the law" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 6).[165] In the novel and specifically in the example of *istiᶜārah* evident in the last sentence of this citation, the character known as Iblīs is like the devil banished from heaven. The *istiᶜārah* here is reliant on al-Saᶜdāwī's premise that there actually is no Devil, in the same way that there are

[164] تخرج السحلية رأسها من الشقّ. تهزّ ذيلها وعيناها تضحكان.

[165] إلّا رجل واحد يسمُّونه إبليس، يبدو في عمر الشباب. حليق الوجه. بلا شارب ولا لحية. شعر رأسه متمرِّد على القانون.

no gods other than the images of them otherwise created by men in the maintenance of traditional structures of authority. Therefore it is an example of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl* which compares the scriptural characterization of the Devil and al-Saᶜdāwī's patient in the asylum, Iblīs. Like the Devil in scripture, Iblīs rebels against conformity in this context by altering his appearance against the orders of the asylum director. As a child Iblīs learns that, "it is known that the Devil is the origin of evil in the world, and that he was the only stubborn angel to say 'no,' as the rest fell down in adoration, not one of them raising an eye" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 124).[166] Other than the fact that they share the same name, al-Saᶜdāwī's Iblīs does not fit the traditional, religiously defined role of the Devil. This Iblīs is a victim of patriarchal authority, not the source of all evil in the world. A looming sense of regret and guilt lingers around Iblīs as the novel progresses. He regrets his actions and the predefined role he is expected to assume in the world. In traditional renderings, the Devil is responsible for his devious behavior. As for Iblīs, it is the Lord who compels his behavior, and he resists the Lord's insistence that he tempt his fellow patients in the night.

When Jannāt first sees Iblīs in the asylum, she recognizes him. In this moment, Iblīs is attempting to elude capture by a male nurse, and by running around a tree "he escaped from him, clapping his hands like a child playing hide and seek" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 13).[167] In this example of *tashbīh*, the image is easily discerned from the expression itself. Iblīs is like a child playing hide and seek in order to stress that he is innocent. In this moment, Iblīs catches a glimpse of Jannāt. When she calls out her name, Iblīs is struck by a conundrum: "Her voice rang out in the air and dissolved in the breeze. Wide eyed, he stood gazing in her direction. Her name is

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166 ويعلن أن الشيطان هو أصل الشرّ في العالم، وهو الوحيد الذي ركب رأسه وقال << لا >> والجميع يسجدون، لا ترتفع لأحدهم عين.

167 يفلت منه ويصفّق بيديه كالطفل يلعب << الإستغماية >>.

Jannāt? And he was dreaming of just one Janna" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 13).[168] With this reference al-Saᶜdāwī reasserts the link between Iblīs and the Devil, both of whom long to return to paradise. The name *Jannāt* (جنّات) is the plural of *Janna* (جنّة), "paradise." Although the plural theoretically exists in the Arabic language, theologically there is only one paradise which is why Iblīs is so moved when he hears this name.

Stemming from the story of Eve's encounter with the Devil in the garden, al-Saᶜdāwī makes it clear that Iblīs bears a deep seated resentment of women. Hiding by the tree in the asylum yard, Iblīs notices that the Head Nurse can see him from her bedroom window:

لمحها في النافذة فاختفى وراء الشجرة. تكوّر حول نفسه كالقنفذ. كان يخاف منها أكثر مما يخاف من المدير، فهي المرأة وفي أعماقه خوف دفين من النساء. انحشر رأسه بين عظمتي الحوض في جسد أمّه. ضغطت عليه بعظمتي الفخذ، كاد يموت قبل أن يولد. أدرك أنها لم تكن تريده حيّاً. ولم تكن تطيق النظر إلى أرنبة أنفه، تذكّرها بأبيه. وهي الرئيسة. في أعماقه خوف من الرؤساء.

> He caught sight of her in the window and hid himself behind the tree. He curled himself up like a hedgehog. He feared her more than he feared the director, because she is a woman and deep within him he has a latent fear of women. His head was caught between his mother's pelvic bones. She had squeezed him with her thigh bones until he nearly died before being born. He realized that she did not want him to live, and that she couldn't bear even the sight of the tip of his nose which reminded her of his father. And she is the boss. Deep within him he had a fear of bosses (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 35).

In this manifestation of al-Saᶜdāwī's underlying premise that Iblīs is the devil, the emphasis is on the notion that since the moment Eve ate from the tree of knowledge the two characters would

[168] دوى صوتها في الفضاء وذاب في الهواء. وهو واقف شاخص نحوها بعينين متّسعتين. اسمها جنّات؟ وهو يحلم بجنّة واحدة؟

forever be connected in a relationship built upon enmity. In the second sentence, there is an easily discernible example of *tashbīh* which compares entities al-Saᶜdāwī draws from separate categories, a man and a hedgehog, where the point of similarity is manifest in their defensive response to a perceived external threat. Additionally, Iblīs is a man with a crooked nose like his father, and although this is enough to elicit his mother's enmity, he is the only man in the story that garners any sympathy from the reader. Whether in his role as his mother's son, a soldier in the national military service, or a patient at the asylum, he is a pawn at the mercy of "bosses" (الرؤساء) he innately fears. For Iblīs it is clear that, "Between him and bosses is an ancient animosity. Ever since his birth when his mother squeezed her pelvic bones around his head. He was small and she was big. The palm of her hand fell upon his temple like an ax" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 43).[169] As al-Saᶜdāwī continues with the development of her comparison between Iblīs and the Devil, she explains that during his childhood Iblīs bears the brunt of this natural resentment in his relationship with a mother whose hand falls upon him like an ax. This example of *tashbīh* which compares a woman's hand with an ax appropriately describes the power of his mother's authority over him and the brutality of the abuse she inflicts upon him as a child.

In her development of the relationship between Iblīs and his mother, al-Saᶜdāwī suggests a reversal of traditional renderings of the story of Eve's temptation. In this frame, Iblīs plays the role of Eve and his mother is responsible for the temptation inspiring his resistance to the law. Although he does make an effort to demonstrate his masculine authority over his mother, Iblīs is deeply affected by her behavior around Shaykh Masᶜūd and the Mayor. At one point, she pulls Iblīs away before he can have a chance to bow before the Mayor and kiss his hand. She says,

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[169] بينه وبين الرئيسات عداء قديم. منذ ولدته أمّه وضغطت بعظمتي الحوض على رأسه. كان صغيراً وهي كبيرة. كفّها ضخمة تسقط فوق صدغه كالبلطة.

"'don't kiss anyone's hand; we eat by the sweat of our brow'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 110).[170] The irony here is evident because despite his deep seated animosity towards women, it is a woman that inspires Iblīs to rebel against authority. Building upon this reversal of scriptural precedent, al-Saᶜdāwī describes the moment when Iblīs sees Jannāt enter the asylum for the first time. In this instance, he remembers seeing the same defiant confidence in his mother:

منذ رآها تدخل من البوّابة وهو يتذكّر أمه. طويلة ممشوقة الجسم كالسهم. تمشي أمام العمدة لا ينحني لها رأس. رؤوس الرجال تنحني وعيونهم تنكسر. وهي تمشي مرفوعة الرموش لا يطرف لها جفن. قدمها كبيرة حافية مثل قدم النبي. تدوس عليها بكل ثقلها. عظامها قوية. تقبض على الفأس وتشقّ الأرض نصفين. صوتها في أذنيه كصفير الريح: أوع يا ابني راسك تنحني قصاد العمدة زي أبوك!

> Since he saw her entering the gate he remembered his mother, her body tall, slender like an arrow. She walked in front of the Mayor without bowing her head, while the men's heads bowed with their defeated eyes. She walked with her eyelashes raised, without blinking an eye. Her large bare foot like the foot of the prophet. She treads upon them with all her weight. Her bones are strong. She grips the hoe and splits the earth in half. Her voice in his ears is like a hissing wind: 'My son, do not bow your head in front of the Mayor like your father did' (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 50).

Describing his mother's body as being tall and slender like an arrow, Iblīs channel's al-Jurjānī's previously cited *tashbīh* comparison of a man's body with a spear.[171] An arrow is also sharp, sturdy, and threatening, and this is how the men who know her perceive Iblīs's mother. In another *tashbīh* comparison evident in the juxtaposition between a woman and a man who share an air of authority, she walks among them like the prophet commanding their attention, respect,

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[170] إوعَ تبوس إيد حد! بناكل بعرق جبينّا!

[171] Op. Cit., 69-70.

and even fear. In an example of *istiᶜārah* which repeats the comparison between Iblīs's mother and the Devil without actually mentioning the Devil explicitly, her voice hisses like a snake in the wind as she tempts her son to rebel against conventions regarding deference to authority. In al-Saᶜdāwī's expanding frame of comparison between Iblīs, his mother, and Jannāt, they all resemble the Devil refusing to bow before Adam at God's command. They are all free, equal, and independent.

In another example of al-Saᶜdāwī's depiction of Iblīs, acting like the devil, and rebelling against the law, in the initial interaction between the Lord and Iblīs at the asylum, the Lord insists on Iblīs recognizing his authority and addressing him properly as "Lord" (رب). Although Iblīs cynically acquiesces to this, he pleads for some rest. The Lord scoffs at him and replies, "'what do you mean sleep, Iblīs? Who will tempt the people?'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 52).[172] In the conversation that ensues, Iblīs asks, "'and if I don't tempt the people what will come of it? Let all the people go to paradise!'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 52).[173] And the Lord indignantly retorts, "'And for whom did I create Hell, you ass?'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 52).[174] The Lord then scolds Iblīs for addressing him as an equal to which Iblīs apologizes and sarcastically acknowledges, "'I'm sorry Lord! You are right! You are not my brother, and nothing like it. You are my master, and my king. I kiss the hat on your head!'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 52).[175] In this citation Iblīs *is* the devil and the Lord *is* god. Iblīs borrows the word "hat" (هات) here for the word "crown" (تاج) in an *istiᶜārah* based on *tashbīh* which emphasizes the sarcastic and insulting intent of his remark. In this reference, both the hat and the crown are derived from the same category as an object worn on the head; and the point of similarity is manifest in their respective qualities as such. Any man

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172 تنام يعني إيه إبليس؟ ومين يوسوس للناس؟

173 وإذا ما وسوستش يجرى إيه؟ خلّي الناس كلها تروح الجنّة!

174 والنار أنا عاملها لمين يا حمار؟

175 متأسّف يا ربّ! حقّك عليّ! إنت مش أخويا ولا حاجة. إنت سيدي وتاج راسي. هات رأسك أبوسها!

can wear a hat, but only the king wears a crown. Iblīs proceeds to fall before the Lord, and they end up in a scuffle that causes the other men in the ward to wake up. The confrontation ends curiously with the appearance of an old man carrying a book whose voice disrupts the altercation and commands silence in the room. The men in the ward quickly rearrange their beds and create a platform complete with a glass of water and a gavel for the man now recognized as the judge. It appears that the old man represents the role of the wise elder whose knowledge of his holy book has elevated him to a status above both the Lord and the Devil with the authority to adjudicate their dispute. Once again men, and this old man in particular, have evolved in their relationship with god to the point where they are responsible for determining right and wrong; they are prepared to dole out justice. The moment is short lived, however, as the Head Nurse asserts her institutional authority over the men and shuts down the entire operation.

In another example, Iblīs engages with the Lord in a physical confrontation when the Lord is trying to steal half of a cigarette. Iblīs asserts his autonomy once again by resisting the Lord and only sarcastically acknowledging his authority by dismissively calling him "boss" (الرئيس). The Lord snaps back announcing that he is higher than anyone. But for Iblīs, "there is no one who is higher than the General. He heard that from his fellow soldiers. The General walks in the front and behind him the patrol" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 107).[176] In her continued development of this general premise, al-Saᶜdāwī shows that Iblīs, like most people who lack access to power, does not understand that the general, the Lord, and God are one in the same.

In the final twist, al-Saᶜdāwī builds upon the traditional narrative of Iblīs rebelling against the law, as the Lord begins to acknowledge and regret that he alone is to blame for the existence of evil in the world. The Devil only tempts the masses into sin to fulfill his duty to serve God's

[176] لم يكن هناك من هو فوق الجنرال. هكذا سمع من زملائه الجنود. يمشي في المقدّمة ومن خلفه الحرس.

will. In his lamentation, the Lord admits, "I am responsible for the defeat my son! The one in possession of authority is responsible. But the world was upside down. Those responsible appear innocent, and the innocent are judged guilty. The leader gets a medal and the soldier dies. […] In the court they made me appear to be innocent, and you the scapegoat" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 181-182).[177] While this citation specifically refers to the Lord and Iblīs, it can be read as an example of an *istiᶜārah* comparison when considered beside every previously cited example of a power relationship in the novel. No matter what the power relationship happens to be, husband over wife, teacher over student, noble over peasant, the individual in power claims innocence for his/her own bad behavior while eyeing those they rule over to be guilty, and the cause of evil in the world.

4e: Fallen Man

As al-Saᶜdāwī continues to develop his character, the Lord remembers his previous life outside the asylum. He is nostalgic for his former prestige and social stature. These recollections are clouded, however, by the Lord's memory of his wife's response to his cheating. The previously cited *istiᶜārah* example referring to the king and his affection for drinking and dancing girls now has a contextual counterpart.[178] This is actually another example of how al-Saᶜdāwī provides a basis for comparison of the men who populate her narrative. The Lord, like every other man who is described as unfaithful in his marriage throughout the novel, grows up with a sense of entitlement when it comes to infidelity. He remembers resenting the presence of

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[177] أنا المسؤول عن الهزيمة يا إبني! صاحب الأمر هو المسؤول. لكن الدنيا كانت بالمقلوب. المسؤول يطلع براءة. والمرؤوس يحاكموه. القائد يأخذ وساماً. والجندي يموت. [...] في المحكمة طلّعوني براءة، وإنت كبش الفداء.

[178] Op. Cit., 21.

his Adam's apple: "The Adam's apple moved in his neck, rising and falling. It has a pointed snout, like a lump in his throat he tries to swallow in vain. The apple of sin was ordained to have stopped in Eve's throat, not Adam's. This is what his dead grandfather told him" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 48).[179] In this example, al-Saᶜdāwī draws attention to the fact that both boys and girls are taught from an early age to recognize structures of authority based on gender identity. The Lord has always been told that the burden of sin falls upon Eve and not Adam; therefore he is not guilty of sin when he cheats.[180] In the image, al-Saᶜdāwī imagines the sensually perceptible Adam's apple in a man's throat with the apple symbolizing the fruit Eve picks from the tree of knowledge. The comparison is an example of *istiᶜārah* here because although it relies on the union of two entities drawn from separate categories, a fruit and a part of a man's anatomy, the shared attribute is based on an intellectual comparison between the apple itself and the perceived sin it represents in the scriptural tradition. Thus, without actually mentioning Eve's "sin," the Adam's apple in al-Saᶜdāwī's expression nonetheless is a symbol of her transgression.

When the Lord first envisions his former lover, he recalls that as a performer "she appears upon the high stage. Her body shakes within the dancer's costume. She shakes like a silver fish or a mermaid. […] He glances at her with the corner of his eye without moving his head. She winks at him with half an eye, with the edge of her eyelid so that no one could

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[179] تحرّكت في عنقه تفاحة آدم. صعدت ثم هبطت. لها بوز مدبّب، كالغصّة في حلقه يحاول ابتلاعها دون جدوى. تفّاحة آثمة كان المفروض أن تتوقّف في حلق حوّاء لا آدم. هكذا قال له جدّه الميت.

[180] This passage is an example of how al-Saᶜdāwī appropriates her own framing of several religious traditions relevant to the Egyptian cultural experience. In this case, the Lord comes from a Muslim background and he recalls that his grandfather, father, and his former (male) teachers have done their own revisionist history pertaining to Qur'ānic tradition. For example, although in each of three references to the fall of Adam and Eve (see al-Baqarah: 2:35-39, al-ᶜAraf 7:19-25, and Ṭāhā 20:120-121) both take and eat the fruit together. After they eat from the tree in Ṭāhā it reads: "The Lord chose him, so He turned to him and guided (him)" (Ṭāhā 20:121). From this passage, the Lord learns from his mentors that God only forgives Adam and that Eve must carry the weight of the sin. In this way, al-Saᶜdāwī demonstrates how the men in her novel, and presumably in reality as well, have appropriated the narrative of scripture to justify their misogynistic abuse of women. Thus, al-Saᶜdāwī seems to justify her own revisions of these traditions by following the example of her male characters.

decipher its mysteries" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 46)[181]. The Lord is captivated by his mistress; she shakes like a silver fish or a mermaid igniting his lust for her in an example of *tashbīh* meant to emphasize the physical nature of his attraction. She also speaks with her eyes, deviously to hide her seductive advances from all others except the Lord. Under the dancer's seductive spell, the Lord believes himself to be innocent, and of course as in all things, it is the woman's fault he fell into sin. But his wife is savvy:

له زوجة لا تغمض لها عين. يغسل جسده بالماء والصابون خمس مرّات قبل أن يعود إليها. ترمقه في الظلمة حين يدخل على أطراف أصابعه. يعطيها ظهر ويرقد وجهه للحائط. لكن أنفها يمتدّ ليشمّ سرواله الداخلي قبل أن يخلعه. عيناها مقلتان سوداوان. نار سوداء تلسع قفاه وهو نائم. صوتها ريح ساخنة. يا ساقط!

> He has a wife who doesn't close her eyes. He washes his body with water and soap five times before returning to her. She stares at him in the darkness when he comes in on his tip toes. He offers her his back and lies down with his face to the wall. But her nose reaches out to smell his underpants before he takes them off. Her eyes are black, black fire stinging the back of his neck as he sleeps. Her voice a searing wind, she yells, 'Fallen!' (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 46-47).

His wife's anger is palpable in her appearance. In two examples of *tashbīh* comparisons between objects drawn from separate categories with similarities based on their shared physical attributes, the fire in her eyes stings the back of his neck and her voice is a searing wind as she condemns him for his sin. In the first example, she glares at her husband and her stare burns like fire emphasizing her rage. In the second, it is the tone of her voice which burns like a searing wind in her condemnation. In both cases al-Saᶜdāwī unites each sensually perceptible entity, the heat

[181] تظهر فوق المنصّة العالية. جسدها يترجرج داخل بدلة الرقص. تنتفض كالسمكة الفضيّة أو جنّية البحر. [...] يرمقها بطرف عينه دون أن يحرِّك رأسه. تغمز له بنصف عين. شفيرة لا يفكّ طلاسمها أحد.

of the fire or the wind with the woman's eyes and voice, based on the level of intensity they represent in this contentious moment. In this scene the Lord and his wife also exemplify the circular thinking that allows a man to blame his wife and his mistress for his own moral failure. The idea itself is deeply ingrained in the men that populate the novel, and the Lord is shocked to hear his wife speak to him in this way:

اخترقت الكلمة أذنيه كالقذيفة. ساقط؟ كلمة غريبة لا تخرج من فم امرأة للرجل إلّا إذا كان طفلاً وهي التي ولدته. صوتها يشبه صوت أمّه. تخرج طرف لسانها وهي تنطق حرف السين. [...] استقرّت الكلمة كالرصاصة في مؤخرة رأسه. تنزلق كالبلية وتدور حول نفسها. ساقط؟ في كتاب النحو (في المدرسة) سقط فعل ماضٍ، والمؤنّث ساقطة، والجمع ساقطات. ليس في اللغة جمع مذكر، وليس في التاريخ أو الكتب السماوية. آدم لم يكن ساقطاً. الرجل لا يسقط إلّا في الإنتخابات، أو معركة حربية، أو في امتحان المدرسة وهو تلميذ.

> The word punctured his ears like a bomb. 'Fallen?' A strange word that doesn't come from a woman's mouth towards a man unless he was a child and she had given birth to him. Her voice resembled his mother's voice. It came from the side of her tongue as she pronounced the letter '*seen*'. […] The word was fixed like a bullet in the back of his head. It slipped like a marble and revolved around itself. 'Fallen?' In the grammar book in school *saqaṭa* [he fell][182] was a verb in the past tense, and the feminine *sāqiṭah* [scrap],[183] and the plural *sāqiṭāt* [fallen woman, harlot].[184] In the language there is no masculine plural, and it does not exist in history or in the holy books. Adam was not fallen. Man did not fall except in elections, or in battle, or as a student in a school exam (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 47).

182 سقط
183 ساقطة
184 ساقطات

In this citation al-Saᶜdāwī creates several vividly stimulating examples of comparative imagery based in *tashbīh* which unites the word "fallen" (ساقط) with other sensually perceptible entities where the similarity is based either on an intellectual concept or a shared characteristic between objects representing separate categories. Initially, she offers an example which compares the word "fallen" as if it is like a bomb hitting his ears. The meaning in this case is clear from the sentence in isolation; the word rendered in the masculine singular shares the bomb's characteristic of having the power capable of destroying the foundation of the Lord's perception of gender roles. Next, al-Saᶜdāwī draws an intellectual comparison between the Lord's wife and his mother with the basis of comparison reliant on the idea that a woman speaks only to her son in this way. Then, al-Saᶜdāwī adds two more intellectual comparisons where the word is like a bullet lodged in his head and revolving around like a marble torturing his psyche. The violent imagery al-Saᶜdāwī creates here is appropriate in these expressions because they underscore the shock with which the Lord receives his wife's criticism. He considers her to be out of place. She is acting inappropriately and her behavior is beyond the bounds of his learned expectations. This citation suggests that the Lord's confusion is linked to his grammatical knowledge of a distinction culturally engrained in the language. A man falls in an exam or an election, a woman falls into sin.

In fact the nature of al-Saᶜdāwī's imagery is especially appropriate in the immediate context because in response to his wife's accusations the Lord reverts to violence: "He lifted his hand high in the air to deliver a blow. She was faster than him. Her hand raised to his heart, and her body was more agile. She flew away in the air like a butterfly. […] He gazed into the emptiness searching for her. She melts away in the darkness like a drop of water dissolves into

the sea" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 47-48).[185] In context, the Lord's violent reaction mirrors the general behavior of other male characters in the novel. The fact that his wife has the capacity to escape is also contextually appropriate by comparison to other female characters because they all flee from abusive men in their lives. The comparison between the Lord's wife and a butterfly is a common reference to this particular motif in al-Saᶜdāwī's novel. As will be apparent below, the butterfly image emerges in reference to female characters empowered by their resistance to patriarchy. The image is an example of *tashbīh* on its surface; the Lord's wife floats away preferring to be free, choosing to be guided by the wind in opposition to being restrained by a man. When juxtaposed to other expressions comparing female characters to butterflies, the expression is more appropriately distinguished as an example of *tamthīl* because the larger context of the narrative suggests a broader significance for this particular image. Al-Saᶜdāwī also describes the Lord's wife disappearing like a drop of water into the sea. This expression is a moderately complex *tashbīh*. The Lord no longer has authority over his wife, she chooses a different path, he loses sight of her, and his effort to grasp her is as futile as an attempt to grasp a handful of water.

In line with a number of other parallels evident among characters in the novel, the Lord is not the only man in the novel to commit adultery. Jannāt's husband Zakariyā also strays from his marriage. The common routine in Jannāt's marital home has her waiting for her husband for hours, "and if he showed up he was in a hurry to eat. After eating he is in a hurry to sleep. Without as much as an embrace, or even a quick embrace, like those who swallow food without chewing. […] Before dawn rises, she sees his underpants on the floor balled up around the sin

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[185] رفع يده عالياً في الهواء ليناولها الصفعة. كانت أسرع منه. يدها كانت مرفوعة قبله. وجسمها أكثر رشاقة. تحلّق في الجو كالفراشة. [...] يحملق في الفراغ باحثاً عنها. ذابت في الظلمة كما تذوب قطرة الماء في البحر.

(*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 122-123).[186] Zakariyā is distant, preoccupied and disinterested in his wife. The expression "like those who swallow food without chewing," is among the more complex examples of a *tashbīh* comparison in the novel. The obvious aspect of the comparison is between the nature of his quick embrace, and a person who quickly swallows food. The point of comparison is an intellectual one because in addition to the sensually perceptible quickness of the embrace or swallowing, the key to the similarity is that neither individual appreciates the value of what they have. Like the eater lacking enjoyment in the quality of his food, Zakariyā embraces Jannāt in such a way as to overtly suggest that he is not interested in appreciating her.

In one incident, Jannāt reacts to catching her husband cheating on her: "Her scream echoed in the night long, drawn out like the scream of her grandmother, and her mother when she cried. A single cry reached her ears like the roar of the waterfall. Like a million voices making silence in the night. All of them dead, and all of them cheering" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 77).[187] In this citation, al-Saᶜdāwī creates a complex *tamthīl* in the space of several sentences. Jannāt's voice is compared to the voices of her mother and grandmother to emphasize the notion that they have all endured infidelity from their husbands. This fits well within other motifs in the novel that suggest that all men and all women are the same with regard to historically defined gender roles. The comparison between Jannāt, her mother, and her grandmother in this citation is a comparison between the intensity apparent in the sound of their voices, and not necessarily a comparison of their shared femininity. It actually compares each of them intellectually in reference to their mutual experience with cheating husbands. The expression goes on to suggest that Jannāt's cry is a single cry like the roar of a waterfall. This comparison is between the

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186 وإذا أتى تعجَّل الأكل. بعد الأكل يتعجَّل النوم. بلا عناق أو مع العناق السريع. كمن يبلع الطعام دون مضغ. [...] قبل الفجر تنهض. في القاع ترى السروال مكوّراً حول الإثم.

187 ودوّت صرختها في الليل طويلة ممدودة تشبه صرخة جدّتها، وأمّها حين كانت تصرخ. صرخة واحدة تمتدّ في أذنيها كهدير الشلّالات. كملايين الأصوات تصنع صمت الليل. الكل مات. والكل يهتف.

millions of drops of water making up the torrent of the waterfall and the millions of voices of women suffering the indignity of a cheating spouse. Therefore, this particular aspect of the citation cannot be read in isolation because it would be meaningless without contextual knowledge about the women in question, their personal experiences with infidelity, and an understanding of the motif that the same structures of patriarchy impact women over the generations. The phrase, "like a million voices making silence in the night," implies that although all of these women are crying in the night for the same reason, their cries only produce silence. Their pain goes unnoticed, and it is passed down to their daughters and granddaughters from generation to generation.

Jannāt's cries are answered by Zakariyā's predictable assertion that, "'the man doesn't fall, except in elections my dear" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 77).[188] Zakariyā is a man and like all other men in the novel he is influenced by the patriarchal culture that raised him, and he has the support of his fellows including the men from Jannāt's side of the family. In response to Zakariyā's assertion about men only falling in elections, Jannāt's grandfather "shakes his head as a sign of his approval. He sits in his military uniform, a medal upon his chest. His face is square like Zakariyā's, white like the color of a sheet. The hair on his head had fallen out, except for the gray tuft rising above his ears like a feather. His neck stretched forward in an acute angle, like the neck of a turkey" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs,* 78).[189] In an instance when two men are shown as agreeing on the nature of their perceived authorities and privileges over women, the same basic description of the godlike man resurfaces, and in this case the god man is rendered in his old age.

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188 الرجل لا يسقط إلّا في الإنتخابات يا سيدتي!

189 ويهزّ جدّها رأسه علامة الإيجاب. جالس داخل بدلة عسكرية. فوق صدره نيشان. وجهه مربّع يشبه وجه زكريا. أبيض بلون الملاءة. شعر رأسه تساقط، إلّا ذؤابة رمادية تتطاير فوق أذنه كالريشة. يمدّ عنقه إلى الأمام بزاوية حادّة، كعنق الديك الرومي.

Al-Saᶜdāwī's introduction of Jannāt's grandfather is not random in this scene. He, too, has a history of infidelity. Enduring her own humiliation, Jannāt's grandmother,

> تخرج سروال جدّها من سبت الغسيل، تمسكه بإصبعين اثنتين. الإبهام والسبابة. كأنما تمسك صرصاراً ميتاً. تلقيه في الطشت. تصبّ عليه الجاز. ترتفع ألسنة اللهيب في الحمّام، حمراء طويلة تتلوّى كذيول السحالي. وتسمع صرختها من وراء الباب. طويلة كالصفّارة، ممدودة بامتداد الليل.

> took her grandfather's underpants from the clothes basket, grasping them with two fingers: the thumb and the index finger, like a dead cockroach. She throws them in the washtub, and pours gas on them. Long, red tongues of flame rise in the bathroom squirming like lizard's tails. She heard her screaming from behind the door. Long, like a siren drawn out into the night (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 121).

In the first image, her grandfather's underpants contain the evidence or proof of his sin and in this example of *tashbīh* the comparison al-Saᶜdāwī draws is based on the revolting physical characteristics the soiled underpants and the dead cockroach share. This protest leads again to one of al-Saᶜdāwī's repeated images of lizard's tails, this time in the form of flames rising in the bathroom as Jannāt's grandmother burns her husband's underpants. The lizard tail image appears, as will be seen below, in several examples throughout the novel and they are often, as is the case here, associated with incidents involving physical, mental and sexual abuse. Finally, al-Saᶜdāwī describes Jannāt's grandmother's voice as ringing out like a siren in the night. In this example of *tashbīh* the point of similarity al-Saᶜdāwī draws is one of intensity between the loud, high pitched siren and a woman's voice proclaiming her outrage throughout the neighborhood.

With these examples, al-Saᶜdāwī again reasserts the notion that these experiences are universal in the lives of her female characters. The incident she recalls between her grandparents

relates to Jannāt's own marriage. Even if his blatantly immoral behavior is based on an age old double standard, Zakariyā is going to stick with what he has always known. He considers Jannāt to be "a fallen woman like her mother and her grandmother. All women are whores, deficient in intelligence and religion. Just like his father said. They are the allies of Satan at the gate he opens to hell. Just like his grandfather said. The origin of evil and the reason for sin as introduced in the Bible. Their cunning is strong, as God said in his precious book (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 130).[190] In similar references al-Saᶜdāwī establishes the basis for the development of this primary motif. These lessons in gender superiority and inferiority impact men and women with lasting effect. Recalling her childhood grammar lessons, Jannāt remembers conjugating the verb "to fall." In her mind, "the familiar word rings in her head, as if she had heard it her entire life. In school she had heard Shaykh Basyūnī say that 'he fell' is a verb referring to an event in the past, and the feminine is 'she fell.' Furthermore, she is 'fallen' like her mother Eve" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 28).[191] This example requires little analysis in retrospect with the previous discussion. Jannāt in this case is an everywoman character, specifically Eve; and therefore, her experience is linked to the original everywoman in the Abrahamic scriptural tradition. Jannāt serves as al-Saᶜdāwī's universal test case for the contradictory and abusive nature of traditional misogynistic social structures evident in a variety of manifestations of gender inequality in Egyptian society.

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190 ساقطة كأمّها وجدّتها. كل النساء ساقطات. ناقصات عقل ودين. هكذا قال أبوه. حليفات الشيطان والباب الذي يفتح على الجحيم. هكذا قال جدّه. أصل البلاء وسبب الخطيئة كما جاء في الإنجيل. كيدهنّ عظيم كما قال الله في كتابه الكريم.

191 ترنّ الكلمة في رأسها مألوفة. كأنما سمعتها طول العمر. في المدرسة كانت تسمع الشيخ بسيوني يقول سقط فعل ماضٍ. والمؤنّث سقطت. فهي ساقطة مثل أمّها حواء.

4f: Jannāt kills her husband

Through al-Saᶜdāwī's continued development of her character, Jannāt is eventually empowered in a moment of violence that ensues from an argument about her husband's infidelity. Before he can strike her with a knife, "through the glass she saw his hand reach toward the table. The sharp blade flashed like lightning beneath the light of the moon. The light fell upon her face like the flash in the picture, pale like the color of death in her white dress" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 129).[192] The flash of lightning and the flash in the picture appear here as examples of *tashbīh* on the surface. At first glance, they seem to evoke an image of the light hitting the knife's blade like lightning or the flash from a camera. Instead, they are more appropriately classified as examples of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl*. A deeper reflection upon context reveals that they are both linked to several references related to Jannāt's shock therapy "treatment" in the asylum. Additionally, al-Saᶜdāwī describes her face as pale, white like a corpse in a wedding dress. This comparison is an example of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl* which is comprehensible with reference to a broader contextual moment. The white dress and death are not the basis of the comparison here. Instead, a woman's death is compared to her wedding day. Al-Saᶜdāwī borrows the word "dress" (فستان) in this expression as an *istiᶜārah* comparison with a burial shroud as the missing referent. In another example of this theme, the asylum guards are summoned to restrain Jannāt and, "They tie her hands and her feet with ropes, and in a wedding dress, they lay her down in a box. Between her hands they place a bouquet of flowers. They carry her on their shoulders and march with her to the road" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 166).[193] In this

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192 من خلال الزجاج رأت يده تمتدّ نحو المنضدة. لمع النصل الحادّ كالبرق تحت ضوء القمر. سقط الضوء على وجهها مثل الفلاش في الصورة. شاحب بلون الموت داخل فستانها الأبيض.

193 ربطوا يديها وقدميها بالحبال. أرقدوها في الصندوق داخل ثوب الزفاف. وضعوا بين يديها باقة ورد. حملوها فوق الأعناق وساروا بها في الطريق.

scene Jannāt is deceased and resting in a coffin, carried away to be buried, wrapped in her shroud.

Earlier in the novel, al-Saᶜdāwī establishes the context for these instances of *istiᶜārah* by comparing a wedding day to a funeral, and the wedding dress to a burial shroud. As she thinks of her former husband and their wedding day, Jannāt recalls her image in a picture: "She is standing next to him in a wedding dress, white with the color of a burial shroud. Between her hands is a bouquet of flowers, one pale white rose hangs down lifeless free from any blood. And the Beachwood bed is wide, spacious enough for death" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 19).[194] In this expression both the "wedding dress" (ثوب الزفاف) and the "shroud" (الكفن) are explicitly mentioned, and as close attention to subsequent context reveals, the comparison between these objects is rooted in *tamthīl*. They are both objects derived from the same category; they are textiles, but the point of comparison is intellectual which suggests that a woman's wedding dress is appropriately described as a burial shroud. Additionally, in the next sentence al-Saᶜdāwī begins to develop a specific context for the image of blood that she sustains throughout the entire novel. In this instance there is a link between the proof of a woman's virginity and the lifeless, bloodless rose; instead of validating a female's "womanhood," marriage is linked with her death. Finally, in the last sentence of this citation, the reference to the marital "bed" (السرير) which al-Saᶜdāwī describes as "spacious enough for death" is also borrowed in an example of *istiᶜārah* rooted in a *tamthīl* with reference to the image of Jannāt's coffin in the previous citation.[195]

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[194] وهي واقفة إلى جواره داخل ثوب الزفاف. أبيض بلون الكفن. بين يديها باقة ورد تتدلّى منها وردة شاحبة البياض خالية من الدم. والسرير من الخشب الزان عريض يتّسع للموت.

[195] Op. Cit., 166.

Later on in the novel, al-Saᶜdāwī revisits several of her themes as they relate to Jannāt's reflection on another picture of a bride and groom she remembers hanging on the wall in her father's house:

فوق الجدار صورة تشبه صورة أمّها ليلة الزفاف. لكن الفتاة في الصورة لا تبتسم. من حولها ثوب أبيض بلون الكفن. بين يديها باقة ورد شاحبة. كالباقات فوق الأضرحة. إلى جوارها رجل طويل عريض، كتفاه محشوتان. يرتدي بدلة عسكرية. فوق صدره نيشان. أنفه غضروف كبير.

> There is a picture on the wall similar to the picture of her mother on her wedding night, but the woman in the picture is not smiling. The white dress around her is the color of a burial shroud. Between her hands is a bouquet of dead flowers, like the bouquets over graves. Next to her is a tall man with broad, tight shoulders. He is wearing a military uniform, a medal upon his chest. His nose is a large piece of cartilage (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 122).

The woman in this image who looks like Jannāt's mother is her grandmother. In the development of her various themes regarding marriage and infidelity, al-Saᶜdāwī's image of Jannāt's grandmother evokes her everywoman character and the appearance of her grandfather satisfies the corresponding everyman description. In this image al-Saᶜdāwī also reinforces the contextual information necessary to build her other subsequent images by comparing the dress with the shroud, and the wedding with the funeral.

Deeper meanings emerge from al-Saᶜdāwī's depiction of Jannāt's violent altercation with her husband. Although Zakariyā is convinced that only women "fall" through infidelity, he notices his reflection in Jannāt's eyes as he attempts to murder her and sees his face for the first time: "the nose is a broken snub, like the Sphinx. And the small circular eyes are yellow like the

eyes of a lizard, and his black complexion like the face of the Devil" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*,129-130).[196] Linked with all previous descriptions of men and gods, Zakariyā is only now realizing his guilt. In this instance it is especially relevant that in this recognition of guilt he naturally associates himself with Eve and the Devil in the garden. This time he is the Devil; his eyes are like a lizard's eyes. He is corrupt. He is the cause of evil in the world and not Jannāt or Eve. In this moment he hesitates, Jannāt gets hold of the knife and she curses him like her grandmother curses her grandfather. He is a fallen man. In his attempt to respond to this charge,

انفرجت شفتاه ليردّ عليها لكن صوته لم يخرج. أراد أن يقول كأبيه وجدّه إن الرجل لا يسقط وإن ذهب لامرأة أخرى. لكن المرأة ساقطة بالطبيعة، وإن ارتدت الحجاب وتلفّعت بالفضيلة. كان يظنّ أنها غير كل النساء، وأنه الرجل الوحيد في حياتها، الوحيد بلا شريك، وأنه يفقدها إلى الأبد. لكنه يفقدها الآن. حبّه لها يتضاعف لحظة الفقدان.

> His lips opened to reply to her but no sound came out. Like his father and his grandfather he wanted to say that the man does not fall even if he goes to another woman. But the woman is fallen by nature, even if she wore a veil and was covered in virtue. He thought she was different than all other women, and that he was the only man in her life, the only man without a rival, and that he is losing her forever. But he is losing her now. His love for her is multiplied in the moment of loss (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 130-131).

There is a *tamthīl* expression apparent here in the notion that a woman in a veil is "covered in virtue." The veil physically conceals a woman's identity with the presumption that her wearing of the veil is a deliberate effort to guard her honor. The sensually perceptible veil figuratively covers the woman in virtue. It is only at this moment that Zakariyā regrets his actions and thinks of asking Jannāt's forgiveness.

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[196] الأنف مكسور أفطس. كأنف أبي الهول. والعينان صغيرتان مستديرتان، لونهما أصفر، كعيني السحلية، وبشرته سوداء كوجه إبليس.

As Jannāt is about to kill her husband in self defense,

ارتفعت يدها في الهواء. ثم سقطت السكين فوق القرص الذهبي. انشقّ القرص نصفين. وتناثرت حروف الإسم الثلاثي كذرّات الرمل. انشقّت الدرع الحديدية من تحت القرص. ودخل النصل في قطعة كالحجر لها شكل القلب. خرج منها يلمع تحت ضوء القمر. نظيفاً أبيض، بلا قطرة واحدة من الدم.

> She raised her hand in the air. Then the knife fell upon the golden disc. The disc broke in two halves, and the letters of the three names were scattered like grains of sand. The iron shield beneath the disc broke, and the blade penetrated a lump like a stone in the shape of the heart and stuck out and glowed in the light of the moon, innocently white, without a single drop of blood (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 132).

In this citation there is an example of *tashbīh* evident in the comparison between the letters of Zakariyā's name and grains of sand. In the comparison between these two sensually perceptible entities the similarity is intellectual. The letters of his name on the shattered medal scatter like grains of sand with any meaning they may have held fading away in obscurity.[197] This is similar to the previously cited reference to the ancient Egyptian king who died like his horse and decayed into nothing.[198] The knife hits his heart, which al-Saᶜdāwī describes as a cold, hard, unfeeling lump like a stone. This expression can be read as an example of *tamthīl* with the phrase "a lump like a stone" (قطعة كالحجر) which serves as a substitute for "heart" (القلب). In this case, the comparison is not based on the sensual nature of both the heart and the stone. A heart does not share the same physical characteristics of being cold, hard and unfeeling unless the

[197] Budge points out that in ancient Egypt a man's name, "was a portion of a man's most special identity, and it is easy to see why so much importance grew to be attached to it; a nameless being could not be introduced to the gods, and as no created thing exists without a name the man who had no name was in a worse position before the divine powers than the feeblest inanimate object" (Budge, 192). Killing her husband, Jannāt also erases his name condemning him to non-existence.

[198] Op. Cit., 6.

comparison is based on an intellectual attribute evident in the physical characteristics of these entities. The comparison is apparent between the stone's physical characteristics and the heart's emotional capacity to be cold, hard and unfeeling. The reference to blood in this citation is an example of *istiᶜārah* as well because it calls to mind the association of blood and honor under investigation in the next portion of this chapter. It is ironic that the stone is "innocently white" (نظيفاً أبيض) under the moonlight by comparison to the guilt of a white sheet on the wedding night. The proof of Zakariyā's dishonor is apparent in his cold, bloodless heart which makes this an *istiᶜārah* comparison between the sensually perceptible blood and the intellectual concept of the purity it traditionally represents. He does not bleed because he is guilty of adultery. This same standard is imposed upon women who are expected to demonstrate their virtue by bleeding on their wedding night with the absence of blood being a sure sign of her having "fallen."

4g: Honor, Blood and the Hymen

The expectation that a woman should guard her virginity until marriage while men are considered, as a manner of speaking, free to sow their royal oats is among the most ubiquitous of double standards evident in patriarchal cultures where gender inequality is assumed, as it is in al-Saᶜdāwī's novel. This is evident in al-Saᶜdāwī's previously established concept that men believe they bear no fault when they stray in marriage. The fault, according to these men, belongs to their wives, who fail to keep their interest sexually, or the fault lies with their mistresses who seduce them. The fault may also lie with Eve and the lizard, as the originators of evil in the world. As the primary subject of this traditional pressure imposed upon women, Narjis grows up

like Jannāt, and presumably most young girls in the cultural environment of al-Saᶜdāwī's novel who are consistently reminded that,

> فالشرف هو العرض، والعرض أغلى من الأرض. يتوارثه الرجال أباً عن جدّ. لا يمكن لأحد أن يمسّ شرف الآخر وإن كان من الإنس أو الجنّ. الدم وحده يغسل العار إذا ضاع الشرف، والدم وحده يثبت وجود الشرف في ليلة الزفاف. تأتي الداية بإصبع له ظفر طويل. تفضّ بكارة العروس. تتلقّى الدم فوق بشكير أبيض. تطلق النسوة الزغاريد. تدقّ الطبول. تنتفخ صدور الرجال والأزواج. يرفعون أنوفهم حتى تلامس السقف. فالشرف شرف الذكور. والأنثى ليست إلّا الدليل.
>
> Honor is dignity, and dignity is more valuable than land. Men inherit it father from grandfather. No one can touch another man's honor, neither man nor *jinn*. Blood alone washes away the shame if honor has been lost, and blood alone proves the existence of honor on the wedding night. The midwife comes, and with a long nailed finger she breaks the bride's hymen. She obtains the blood upon the white towel. Cheerfully the women ululate, pounding on drums. The chests of the men and husbands swell as they raise their noses to the ceiling. Thus honor is the honor of the male, and the female is nothing other than evidence (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 36-37).

If read in isolation, the first sentence is arguably an example of *tamthīl*. Honor and dignity are valuable like land, even more valuable. As instances of *istiᶜārah*, the terms "honor" (الشرف) and "dignity" (العرض) in the citation represent the "hymen" (غشاء البكارة). The hymen is the physical symbol for a woman's chastity. It is a woman's hymen, the evidence of her virginity, which is more valuable to a man than his land. It is a strange concept that although the hymen is the property of a man, the burden of maintaining its integrity until marriage falls solely upon the

woman. The blood apparent on the wedding night is simultaneously considered proof of the virility of the woman's husband and the honor of her father.

Considering the importance of the integrity of the hymen on a woman's wedding night, in her text, *Mothers and Daughters in Arab Women's Literature: The Family Frontier*, Dalya Abudi explains that the confirmation of a woman's chastity is a highly ritualistic practice:

> The wedding night is the critical moment when the family honor is proven. The act of defloration, especially when performed by the groom (rather than the midwife, as in rural Egypt), testifies to the virginity of the bride and the virility of the groom. […] The blood stained gauze or sheet must be produced either immediately or on the following day for inspection by the families of both bride and groom. Defloration is practiced mainly among the poor urban and rural strata of contemporary Arab society. However, the existence of flourishing clinics that provide artificial virginity to women at a high cost indicates that the rite occurs also among the higher social classes (Abudi, 43).

Abudi distinguishes between modern practices among the upper classes which are, in many cases, understood to be fraudulent because a woman may be able to undergo surgery to provide "artificial" virginity. For women in rural areas and the urban poor the traditional practice is still widespread. Abudi also reflects upon the absurdity of these traditions:

> The consummation of marriage on the wedding night in traditional families, especially from the lower classes, puts the young bride in an awkward, frightening, and painful situation. Her first sexual encounter is a semi-public event in which she has to prove her virginity to a husband whom she hardly knows and who is frequently much older than she. With little preparation for what is awaiting her, the bride is expected to fulfill her

> sexual duties and satisfy her husband's desire. […] The absurdity of the situation is heightened by the violence, blood, and exhibitionism that accompany the sacrifice of the hymen. What is supposed to be an intimate, romantic experience frequently turns into a traumatic event that leaves physical and emotional scars (Abudi, 71-72).

This is the case for Narjis on her wedding night. After she has failed this test of her chastity, the obligation to protect her honor falls upon her shoulders, but al-Saᶜdāwī emphasizes that the dishonor is shared by her father:

> كانت ليلة حالكة السواد حين خرج البشكير نظيفاً أبيض، لا تلوّثة قطرة واحدة. وانكمش حلّاق الملك في مقعده. تضاءل عنقه وأصبح كالسمسة. في الليل نهض. فتح الصندوق الخشبي حيث ترقد العدّة. أخرج الموسى. [...] في الصباح وجدوه راقداً ومن حوله دم كثير يغرق البشكير الأبيض. وعاد إليه شرفه كاملاً.

> That night it was pitch-black when the towel appeared clean, white, without the stain of a single drop. And the king's barber cowered in his chair. His neck shrank, becoming like a sesame seed. In the night he got up. He opened his wooden trunk where his kit had been set. He took out the razor. […] In the morning they found him lying down, surrounded by a lot of blood covering the white towel. And his honor was fully restored to him (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 36-37).

In the *tashbīh* comparison between his neck and a sesame seed, the comparison is intellectual between these two sensually perceptible entities indicating that in his shame Narjis' father cannot hold his head up. In isolation, this citation is simply a reference a father's reaction to the shame his daughter has brought down upon the family. As the narrative progresses, however, the question of just who is responsible for this guilt reasserts itself. On her wedding night the assumption is that Narjis is a harlot and that she is fallen. By the end of the novel, however, it is

clear that she has endured sexual abuse at the hands of all of the men who have ever held authority over her from her grandfather to the director. In a similar way that al-Saᶜdāwī uses repetition to create the link between man and God, all of the men in Narjis' life are described in such a way that it is obvious she is the victim of sexual abuse. Seen in this light, her father's suicide better reflects his own guilt for his role as one of several molesters from her childhood. Additionally, in another example of the fact that women are taught from an early age that they are inferior, even though Narjis is innocent on her wedding night, she is haunted by her upbringing and accepts the dishonor as her own.

Al-Saᶜdāwī offers evidence of this conditioning by describing a moment when, visiting her father's grave, Narjis professes her innocence and claims that,

لم يمسسها بشر، ولا عفريت من الجنّ، في الحلم أو في اليقظة، وأنها منذ الطفولة كانت تحكم إغلاق النافذة بالترباس، وتسدّ الشقوق في الجدار أو الباب، وتغلق أذنيها فلا تسمع همس إبليس ولا حفيف الهواء. ركبتاها أيضاً كانت تغلقهما كأنما بالترباس. لا يمكن لإنس أو جنّ أن يفتحهما.

> No man had touched her, and no demon among the jinn, in a dream or awake, and that since childhood she tightly closed the window with a lock, and she plugged the cracks in the wall and the door. She closed her ears and did not hear the devil's whisper or the rustle of the wind. Her knees were also closed as if they were locked. No man or jinn could open them (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 38).

Narjis believes that she is innocent, but in several later references to her conscious and unconscious minds, it is clear that she is the victim of abuse. This moment at her father's grave is al-Saᶜdāwī's attempt to suggest that Narjis has repressed her memories of the abuse. The "Devil's whisper" (همس إبليس) in this citation is a reference to the voices Narjis hears in the night

during her childhood. Al-Saᶜdāwī eventually makes it clear that this reference to the Devil's whisper is a phrase borrowed in an example of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl* for the voices of her grandfather, her father, a husband she hardly knew, and eventually her boss at the asylum. Developing the context for this conclusion, al-Saᶜdāwī describes all of these men as looking the same and sharing the same voice when they come to her at night, the devil's voice. The similarity in this case is more closely defined with reference to Narjis specifically and goes beyond al-Saᶜdāwī's effort to identify men with gods. As a child, she copes with this persistent abuse by blocking it from her mind. Although she tends to suppress these memories, from her earliest childhood until her role as the Head Nurse at the asylum, Narjis is abused by every man she has known.

The conclusion that Narjis is indeed the victim of abuse is emphasized by the following citation that links the indignity she suffers in her role as Head Nurse at the asylum with her history of abuse as a child. Similar to another general motif that all men are the same, the asylum director assumes the role of the "every abuser" in Narjis' adult life. Like all other men in her life he has chosen her to satisfy his sexual desires without her consent. As the Director stands at the door of her room ready to have his way with her, Narjis tries to hide under her covers like she did as a girl to avoid the all too inevitable encounter as the images of other men in her life come to her mind. She visualizes the Devil: "He was wearing her dead grandfather's robe, and her father's red fez. His head is large and square like the head of the Director. His neck is long and bent forward like a turkey. In his hand is Shaykh Basyūnī's cane, twisting in the air like a serpent. […] Between his lips is a black pipe bent forward like the horn of the Ibis or an elephant's trunk" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 88).[199] In addition to al-Saᶜdāwī's standard depiction of

[199] يرتدي جلباب جدّها الميت. وطربوش أبيها الأحمر. رأسه كبير مربّع كرأس المدير. عنقه طويلة تلتوي إلى أعلى كالديك

the man-god, in this citation the director is explicitly compared to each of the other men responsible for molesting Narjis. Since her childhood the scenario has been the same, with these men coming to her in the night. As a child she attempts to lock herself into her room, not daring to get up to use the bathroom for fear of encountering one of these god-man-molesters:

فهو لا يستقرّ إلّا في ذلك المكان. تحبس البول في جسدها طوال الليل. عقلها الباطن يقظ و لا يمكن أن تبلّل الفراش وإن غابت في النوم. في الصباح ترتدي مريلة المدرسة. ينام عقلها الباطن وهي تمشي، وعقلها الظاهر ينفصل عن جسمها. [...] بينها وبين جسمها حاجز كاللوح الزجاجيّ. والناس حين يرونها سائرة في الطريق يتوقّفون. ينظرون إليها كأنما من خلال الزجاج. تراهم يبحلقون نحوها بعيون ضيّقة نصف مغمضة. تغطّيها طبقة من الماء. والعالم كله يموج من وراء الماء كأنما هو غير حقيقي. وهي تحمل جسماً غير حقيقي تحاول أن تخفيه عن الأعين.

> He never lingers except in that one place. She holds back the urine in her body through the night. Her interior mind is attentive and she cannot wet the bed even as she is sheltered in sleep. In the morning she puts on her school uniform. Her interior mind sleeps as she walks and her visible mind separates from her body. […] Between her and her body there is a partition like a pane of glass. When people see her walking in the street they stop and look at her as if through the glass. She sees them staring in her direction with narrow eyes half open. She conceals herself behind a screen of water and the entire world swells from behind the water as if it is not real. She carried her imaginary body and tries to hide it from people's eyes (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 88-89).

In this example, the terms "her interior mind" (عقلها الباطن) and "her visible mind" (عقلها الظاهر) are references to Narjis' subconscious and conscious minds respectively. At night her subconscious mind protects her from the abuse her body endures, and in the daytime she conceals her

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الرومي. في يده عصا الشيخ بسيوني. تتلوّى في الهواء كالثعبان. [...] بين شفتيه << البايب >> أو غليون أسود، يلتوي إلى الأمام كقرن أبيس أو زلومة الفيل.

conscious mind's recognition of that abuse by separating it from her body in order not to betray the necessary repression she struggles to maintain in order to integrate with people in public with some measure of normalcy. This repression is symbolized with the reference to the "pane of glass" (اللوح الزجاجيّ) which serves as a "partition" (حاجز) between her conscious mind, in its knowledge of the abuse, and the outside world. Al-Saᶜdāwī also describes Narjis' effort to conceal her sense of shame as if she is behind a "screen of water" (طبقة الماء), and she describes Narjis' body as "unreal" (غير حقيقي) all in the service of her effort to indicate that as a girl Narjis must repress her conscious knowledge of abuse.

In her development of this reflection on Narjis' history of abuse, al-Saᶜdāwī describes how as a girl Narjis convinces herself that the Devil is the source of her shame:

أرادت أن ترى الله دون أن تصعق. ودون أن تصطكّ أسنانها. وأن تسمع صوته بدلاً من صوت إبليس. وكان إبليس يوسوس لها بالليل...تخفي رأسها تحت اللحاف. تضغط الوسادة فوق رأسها. تقرأ آية الكرسي. تستنجد بالله أن ينقذها. لكن الله كان يتركها وحدها لإبليس. يسري صوته في أذنيها طوال الليل. ممدوداً بامتداد الظلمة. يهمس بصوت ناعم كصوت أمّها. يمشي في عروقها دافئاً كالدم. ولا شيء ينقذها من إبليس إلّا النوم. وفي الصباح تمشي وهي تخفي صدرها بحقيبة الكتب. والعيون تتّسع حين تراها في الطريق. كأنما يسمعون معها إبليس في الليل. أو كأنما لا يحقّ لها المشي، أو أنهم يملكون الطريق، وهي لا تملك منه شيئاً.

She wanted to see God without being shocked, without her teeth chattering and to hear God's voice instead of the Devil's. The Devil whispered to her in the night. She hides her head under the quilt, squeezing the pillow over her head. She recites the verse of the Throne, calling for God to save her. But God left her alone with the Devil, whose voice circulated in her ears through the night, drawn out through the expanse of the darkness. He whispers in a soft voice like her mother's voice. It moves in her veins like warm

> blood. Nothing can save her from the Devil except sleep. And in the morning as she walks she covers her chest with her bag of books. Eyes widen as they see her in the street as if they had heard the Devil speaking with her. Or as if she had no right to walk and that they owned the street, and she owned nothing of it (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 90-91).

Narjis' role as the Head Nurse at the asylum makes the first line in this citation especially relevant because of the reference to the electroshock therapy she exposes her patients to. The shock in this case is the abuse she suffers, and she feels that it is as if God has abandoned her. Narjis recites the "verse of the Throne" (آية الكرسي) when she is visited by her abuser because of the suggestion therein that God never sleeps in his protection of the faithful, but this reference is clearly evidence of al-Saᶜdāwī's cynicism regarding the nature of religious instruction. Although Narjis is doing what she has been told by seeking God's protection, this appeal to the divine is useless and ironic because in essence she is calling upon the god-men in her life to intervene in the abuse they are perpetuating upon her. Providing further evidence of al-Saᶜdāwī's cynicism toward religious instruction, when Narjis does find occasion as a child to feel contentment, these feelings are short lived: "She feels it under her left breast like a tumor, amassed like sin ever since Eve and the lizard" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 91).[200] The implication remains that women are to bear the burden of sin, and Narjis must bear the burden of her shame alone.

Expanding on Narjis' struggle to account for her shame, al-Saᶜdāwī pens the following citation:

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[200] تحسّه تحت نهدها الأيسر كالورم. متراكماً كالإثم منذ حوّاء والسحيلة.

يتراكم الذنب تحت الضلوع كاللحم. وعليها أن تعيش الإثم. لا توبة ولا كلمات من الربّ. تحمل جسمها فوق روحها كالعبء، يتأرجح بين الحقيقة والوهم. [...] تعيش في عالم لا تعرفه. داخل جسد لا تملكه، يملكه أبوها أو الحكومة أو جدّها الميت، أو رجل آخر غريب الملامح نسيت اسمه، يمسك يدها في الصورة، واليد الأخرى تمسك وردة ميتة.

> The guilt amasses beneath the ribs like meat and it rests upon her to live with the sin. There is no repentance and no words from God. She carried her body upon her soul like a heavy burden, teetering between reality and illusion. […] She lives in a world she doesn't know. She did not own her body, it was owned by her father, or the government, or her dead grandfather. Or another man with strange features whose name she did not remember, grasping her hand in the picture, and with the other hand grasping a dead rose (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 92-93).

In the first sentence, Narjis' guilt is like the meat on her ribs in an example of *tashbīh* which compares an intellectual concept, her guilt, with a sensual object, flesh. The point of comparison in this image is also intellectual in nature relying on the notion that like the flesh beneath her ribs, Narjis' guilt is concealed and growing inside her body. As al-Saᶜdāwī continues with the citation, the weight of her guilty flesh is a burden she must carry as a physical expression of her emotional pain. In the final half of the citation, al-Saᶜdāwī indicates that Narjis understands that she does not own her body, that it is the property of all the god-men in her life. The dead rose in the final sentence is an example of *istiᶜārah* evocative of other similar references to marriage, death, and a bloodless wedding night.

Al-Saᶜdāwī also establishes several examples of comparative imagery in reference to the guilt Narjis associates with her menstrual cycle. In school Narjis hears when,

يدقّ الجرس وتنتهي الحصّة. تظلّ في مكانها جالسة تخشى أن تنهض، فإذا نهضت واقفة أحسّت الخيط الدافىء يمشي فوق ساقها ناعماً كذيل السحلية [...] وفي البيت تنكفىء فوق الحوض في دورة المياه. تغسل المريلة والسروال. تغسلهما المرّة تِلْوَ المرّة، ثلاثين مرّة. ولا يمكن أبداً أن يختفي الأثر، أو يزول الإثم، وإن التهبت يداها من الدعك. تكوّر السروال في يدها. تخفيه وراء ظهرها كأنما هو الدليل. تخشى أن تعلّقه فوق حبل الغسيل فتراه عين. تحفر له في الأرض حفرة كالقبر. تدفنه وتهيل عليه التراب، ثم تختبىء في غرفتها تحت الغطاء، كمن اقترفت جريمة. تحتضن الوسادة، وتغنّي لها بصوت هامس كالهواء.

> The bell rings and the class ends. She stays in her place sitting in fear of getting up, because if she stands upright she'll feel a warm thread smoothly moving down her leg like a lizard's tail. […] And in the house she retreats to the basin in the bathroom. She washes her apron and trousers. She washes them again and again, thirty times. But the trace of blood and the sin never disappear, even if her hands swell from scrubbing. She balls her trousers in her hand to hide them behind her back as if it is evidence. She is afraid to hang them on the clothes line for all eyes to see. She digs a hole like a grave in the earth for them. She buries them and heaps soil on them. Then she hides herself in her room under the bedspread, like someone who has committed a crime. She hugs the pillow and sings to it with a voice like the whispering wind (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 94).

Initially, al-Saᶜdāwī offers another reference to the "lizard's tail" (ذيل السحلية), which is elsewhere associated with the flames emerging from the fire her grandmother lights to burn the evidence of guilt on her husband's underpants.[201] In this case the image of the lizard's tail is evidence of the guilt Narjis feels in her embarrassment as the trickle of blood, also described in an example of *istiᶜārah*, like a warm "thread" (الخيط) runs down her leg. These two scenes are also associated in the fact that Narjis, like Jannāt's grandmother, retreats to the bathroom in order to erase evidence

[201] Op. Cit., 121.

of her sin, and she burns her hands in the effort. In the second half of the citation, al-Saᶜdāwī describes Narjis as digging a hole like a "grave" (القبر) where she hides her sin under heaps of soil before hiding herself as if she is guilty of a "crime" (جريمة). Finally, she tries to soothe herself by singing to her pillow with a voice like the "wind" (الهواء). In each of these examples the emphasis is to link Narjis and her guilt in an *istiᶜārah* comparison with the image of Jannāt's grandfather. She does not understand her own body, she associates her blood with evidence of her sin, and seeks to hide her shame from public scrutiny.

As the primary focus of al-Saᶜdāwī's development of the association between blood and honor, Narjis is taught from an early age to be wary of responsibility to maintain the physical evidence of her chastity. Regarding her anatomy, Narjis recalls an incident from her childhood: "Her body trembles when her mother comes into the bathroom with her. She searches within her body for the most treasured thing a girl possesses. Something not seen below the abdomen, like tracing paper it tears apart in a gust of wind, or glass that breaks at the slightest blow. […] It burns like the head of a match. And then it is over forever" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 95).[202] In this citation, al-Saᶜdāwī creates several examples of *istiᶜārah* which refer to the hymen. Narjis' mother searches for evidence that her hymen is intact, telling her daughter it is the "most treasured" (أعز) thing she possesses, it is like "tracing paper" (الورقة الشفّافة), or like "glass" (الزجاج), and that it will burn like a "match" (عود الكبريت). In each of these expressions there is no explicit reference to her hymen, but the connection is clear. In each of the last three terms, al-Saᶜdāwī draws the point of comparison between sensually perceptible objects; and the basis for the similarity is in the fragility each entity possesses. Like other young girls, Narjis learns these analogies for her anatomy from her mother in order to stress that this possession must be guarded

[202] رتعد جسدها حين تدخل أمّها معها الحمّام. تفتّش بين ثنايا جسمها عن أعز ما تملكه البنات. شيء غير مرئي أسفل البطن. كالورقة الشفّافة تمزّقه نفخة هواء. ينكسر الزجاج لأقل خبطة [...] يحترق كرأس عود الكبريت. وينتهي إلى الأبد.

diligently. Linking this reference specifically with Narjis, al-Saᶜdāwī further contextualizes the guilt she feels as a result of her abuse.

Al-Saᶜdāwī stresses several factors which contribute to the trauma Narjis carries into her adult life. Much of this trauma is associated with the guilt of her sin:

منذ تعلّمت النطق وهي تستغفر الله على الذنب العظيم، تدركه بجسمها وعقلها عاجز عن الإدراك. كالورم تحسّ الإثم بإصبعها، ينمو تحت الضلوع كالدم الساخن يتدفّق في العروق. أو عود كبريت مدفون في ثنايا اللحم، يقطعه حلّاق الصحّة بالموسى، وتغرق الملاءة بالدم. تدرك أنه الذنب المعلّق في السماء إلى الأبد. أو العار لا يمسحه إلّا الدم.

> Since she learned to speak she asked God's forgiveness for the great sin, a sin her body understands but her mind is unable to comprehend. Like a tumor she feels the sin with her fingers, growing under her ribs like warm blood flowing in the veins. Or like a match buried within the flesh, like the flesh the barber cut off with the razor, flooding the sheet with the blood. She realizes that it is a sin suspended from the heavens forever, or a disgrace that cannot be washed away except with blood (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 100).

In this example, al-Saᶜdāwī compares Narjis' guilt with a tumor, spreading inside her body like the blood in her veins. This image is similar to al-Saᶜdāwī's previous comparison suggesting that her guilt is like the flesh growing inside her.[203] In both cases these images emphasize Narjis' effort to conceal her guilt from the outside world. In this citation, al-Saᶜdāwī also repeats the comparison between Narjis' hymen and the match and refers to the "flesh" (اللحم) the barber cut with a razor in an example of *istiᶜārah* referring to the removal of her clitoris. With all of these references al-Saᶜdāwī reveals the tragic aspects of Narjis' upbringing in order to criticize the

[203] Op. Cit., 92-93.

structures of patriarchy that manifest in the pervasive physical and emotional oppression of women.

Beyond her broad development of this motif as it pertains to Narjis, al-Saᶜdāwī's effort to associate the image of blood and the notion of honor appears in her descriptions of Jannāt too. Jannāt, however, is a much stronger character than Narjis in terms of her resistance to societal conventions. For example, in the following image al-Saᶜdāwī describes an incident where Jannāt receives a beating in school:

تنهال العصا الخيزران فوق يديها و ذراعيها. تسمع اللسعات في الهواء. لا تشعر بالألم. ترى العلامات الحمراء فوق اللحم تتلوّى كذيول السحالي. قطرة دم تسقط فوق البلاط. تلمع تحت الضوء كالقرص الذهبي. تمسحها بكعب حذائها وترفع رأسها. تمشي بين صفوف التلميذات والتلاميذ. طويلة القامة ممشوقة الجسم. يحملونها فوق الأعناق. رأسها يلامس السماء.

> Incessantly the bamboo rod falls upon her hands and her arms. She hears the stings in the air. She feels no pain. She sees the red marks upon her flesh squirming like lizard's tails. A drop of blood falls upon the tiled floor. It shines under the light like a golden disc. She wipes it up with the heal of her shoe and raises her head. She walks tall, and slender between the rows of girls and boys. They carry her upon their shoulders, her head touching the sky (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 161).

The lizard tail image reappears in this citation, but instead of it referring to any guilt Jannāt feels, as in the case of her grandfather and with Narjis, al-Saᶜdāwī associates it with a source of pride. The drop of blood on the floor shines like the "golden disc" (القرص الذهبي). With this reference, al-Saᶜdāwī makes a clear connection to the medals worn by the various men she describes in positions of authority. This expression is an example of *tamthīl* because both the spot of blood

and the medal are explicitly mentioned in the space of two sentences; and the point of comparison is intellectual because for Jannāt, this spot of blood that drops from her body as a result of the beating she endures represents an honor she has earned. Jannāt does not regret her persistent search for knowledge and holds her head high as the rest of the children triumphantly carry her out of the classroom upon their shoulders. This is obviously a different use of the blood and honor symbolism al-Saᶜdāwī applies to Narjis. In this instance, Narjis earns her "badge" of merit just like the men in the novel and she is similarly proud of her achievement.

Al-Saᶜdāwī describes honor as it relates to Jannāt in a way that distinguishes her from most other female characters in the novel, with the exception of Iblīs's mother and Eve. Jannāt is introduced as she enters through the gates of the asylum escorted by a police brigade:

> من بين المصراعين المفتوحين اندفع جسمها الممشوق بحركة غير مألوفة لبنات حوّاء. [...] تحرّكت نحوها عيون الرجال والنساء وثبتت فوق عينيها المفتوحتين على العالم كالنافذتين لا يطرف لهما جفن، الرموش طويلة مرفوعة مستعدّة للمقاومة حتى النهاية. [...] شعرها كثيف أسود يطيّره الهواء فوق وجهها. تقذفه وراء ظهرها كالفرس الجامحة.

> Her slender body shot through the open gates with a movement uncommon among the daughters of Eve. […] The men's and women's eyes moved toward her and fixed on her eyes open to the world like a window without blinking. Her long eyelashes were raised ready to fight to the end. […] Her thick black hair was blown by the air upon her face. She throws it behind her back like a wild horse (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 7).

In this, her initial appearance, al-Saᶜdāwī describes Jannāt as being uncommon among women. This in and of itself is threatening to the established patriarchal order. In the final sentence of this citation, Jannāt tossing her hair back is like a wild horse. This example of *tashbīh* compares

the physical characteristic she shares with the horse, with the operative term being the use of the adjective "wild" (الجامحة). Jannāt and the horse are entities al-Saᶜdāwī draws together from different categories where the point of similarity is a shared characteristic of independence. Like the horse, Jannāt is wild, unrestrained, not cowering in front of anyone, and proudly holding her head high in the presence of men. During the tumult of Jannāt's arrival and the violent suppression of the rebellion her pride has instigated, all of the women are scrambling to avoid the blows from the male nurses' canes, with the exception of one woman, the Head Nurse Narjis who recognizes Jannāt: "This wild movement she had seen before, like a free horse that no one owned" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 9).[204] The *tashbīh* image of Jannāt as the wild horse is repeated here but in this expression she is "free" (الحرّة), she is "not owned" (غير مملوكة) by anyone. This image is repeated later in the novel as Jannāt remains defiant through the indignity of the treatment she receives at the asylum. To her general description of Jannāt, al-Saᶜdāwī adds that she was born with an unusual condition leading her grandmother to complain, "This girl is a devil. Her eyes have been open since she was born" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 72).[205] This is the first indication in her life that she is different. As a result of this apparently ominous affliction, after Jannāt's birth her grandmother "made her mother wash away the blood and the sin. Birth, in her grandmother's Bible, was a sin not forgiven by God except with sorrow and pain. In the night she saw her mother standing behind the window, her eyes filled with sorrow and pain" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 72).[206] This reference reinforces al-Saᶜdāwī's reflection upon the role women play in maintaining the patriarchal order. It also returns to the lingering relevance of al-Saᶜdāwī's version of the story of Eve in the novel. In this example, specifically situated in the Biblical

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204 هذه الحركة الجامحة رأتها من قبل، كالفرس الحرّة غير مملوكة لأحد.

205 هذه البنت شيطانة. منذ ولدت وعيناها مفتوحتان.

206 ثم جعلت أمّها تغتسل من الدم والإثم. كانت الولادة في إنجيل جدّتها ذنباً لا يغفره الله، إلّا بالأسى والألم. وفي الليل ترى أمّها واقفة خلف النافذة. عيناها مليئتان بلأسى والألم.

tradition known to Jannāt's grandmother, al-Saᶜdāwī recalls that among the consequences of Eve's transgression she is condemned to suffer in childbirth. Once again, blood is a key as it is evidence of a woman's sin and must be washed away.

In another of al-Saᶜdāwī's examples of how women participate in the maintenance of their own oppression, Jannāt remembers her grandmother's warnings about avoiding things, such as riding bicycles, which may compromise the integrity of her hymen. She says to Jannāt, "'A girl's honor is delicate like a cigarette paper'" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 30),[207] and in response to this Jannāt recalls that, "Whenever a cigarette burned between her grandfather's or her father's lips, and he tossed the extinguished stub away she imagined that she was that stub burning in the ashes" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 30).[208] This image is similar to other reference regarding the fragility of the hymen previously examined in relation to Narjis' upbringing.[209] Each of these comparisons is an example of *tashbīh*; they are comprehensible as independent expressions which draw a point of similarity based the physical characteristics they share. Glass, tracing or cigarette paper, or the head of a match stick are all fragile; once they are broken, torn or burned, they are gone forever. Al-Saᶜdāwī designs theses images to emphasize the instruction young girls receive about the importance of this part of their anatomy and their responsibility to guard it until marriage. In the defense of al-Saᶜdāwī's elder female characters and the realistic tendency they represent, their participation in these rituals involving a young girl's education with respect to her hymen are culturally ingrained. Al-Saᶜdāwī comments on this phenomenon in *The Nawal El Saadawi Reader*:

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[207] شرف البنت رقيق مثل ورقة السيجارة.

[208] كلما احترقت سيجارة بين شفتي جدّها أو أبيها، وأُلقيت عقبها في المطفأة تصوّرت أنها تلك العقب المحترقة داخل الرماد.

[209] Op. Cit., 95.

> People in our countries are nurtured on fear. They feed on it the moment they are born. Fear of the Father, the Ruler, of God, are all combined. From a very early age, children are taught to fear punishment or Hell, or the father's displeasure, which can end in their being thrown out of the home. Women fear divorce, fear to be left alone without shelter, or a future, or security of any kind. Students fear their professors' whims and are taught to cringe lest they be failed, or given bad marks or refused access to higher studies. Writers are afraid of being dismissed from their jobs, for in developing countries the establishment rules with a heavy hand over all areas of intellectual and artistic creation. Obedience is considered the highest of virtues everywhere, in the family, at school, in religion, morals, administrative systems, and political institutions (*Reader*, 205).

This "culture of fear" could explain why female genital mutilation occurs in Christian and Muslim communities in Egypt to this day, not necessarily as a function of either of those religious traditions, but because of social conditioning with roots in ancient Egyptian civilization. Under these circumstances, a mother believes that if her daughter or granddaughter is not mutilated in this way, or she fails to properly guard the honor of her hymen, she will be considered unmarriageable and she will have little chance of finding security in her adult life.[210]

Al-Saᶜdāwī's juxtaposition of Jannāt and Narjis is much deeper than the similar upbringings they experience and the vastly different personalities they represent as adults. Prior to Jannāt's first electroshock therapy, Narjis, in her capacity as the Head Nurse of the asylum, is poised to inject Jannāt with a sedative. From her bed Jannāt sees the shadow of the needle and

[210] In *The Hidden Face of Eve*, describing her own experience with female circumcision, al-Saᶜdāwī writes, "I did not know what they had cut off from my body, and I did not try to find out. I just wept, and called out to my mother for help. But the worst shock of all was when I looked around and found her standing by my side. Yes, it was her, I could not be mistaken, in flesh and blood, right in the midst of these strangers, talking to them and smiling at them, as though they had not participated in slaughtering her daughter a few moments ago (*Eve*, 8).

recalls the knife with which she kills her husband: "upon the wall is a long pointed blade like a knife" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 17).[211] This comparison between the knife and the needle is an example of *tamthīl* because the point of similarity is not based on the physical or sensual characteristics linking the two objects and because comprehending its meaning ultimately requires reference to a broader contextual knowledge which al-Saᶜdāwī establishes later in the novel. The key to the comparison is intellectual and rooted in the similar role that Narjis shares with Zakariyā in Jannāt's life. The injection mirrors the incident where Jannāt murders her husband in self defense. Narjis also plays the traditional role of the husband in a symbolic reference to breaking the hymen. The result of the injection leaves some blood that Narjis tries to clean: "she rubbed her arm with a piece of cotton, over and over again to stop the blood. A single red drop remained fixed on the sleeve of the white gown" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 17).[212] This is an *istiᶜārah* comparison between the spot of blood left by the injection and the blood stained cloth meant to legitimize a marriage by authenticating the purity of the woman. As will become clear in the following section, the relationship between Narjis and Jannāt is much deeper than al-Saᶜdāwī is ready to reveal earlier in the novel.

4h: Narjis as a God-Man

In one of the most interesting twists in the thematic arch of her narrative, al-Saᶜdāwī includes Narjis as a notable addition to her well developed association between men and gods. The first indication al-Saᶜdāwī offers to suggest that Narjis is like a man implies that she is a lesbian. As the Head Nurse at the asylum, al-Saᶜdāwī initially describes Narjis standing behind

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211 ترسم لنفسها فوق الجدار نصلاً طويلاً مدبّباً كالسكين.

212 تدعك ذراعها بقطعة القطن. مرة بعد مرة حتى توقّف الدم. بقيت قطرة واحدة حمراء عالقة بكمّ الجلباب الأبيض.

the Director as she scrutinizes Jannāt: "Her eyes steal a glance at the woman's bare feet. […] Her white shirt is loose, it opens wide and her long neck rises from it, brown like the trunk of a tree emerging from inside the ground. Her eyes are wide, filled with a fixed stare of madness" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 11).[213] It is interesting here to note how the Head Nurse sizes Jannāt up starting at her feet and working her way up her legs, mirroring the gaze of a man looking upon a woman he is attracted to. By the end of the novel, it is clear that Narjis is indeed a lesbian and that she and Jannāt have a long standing relationship dating back to their childhood. This subtle introduction to Narjis is relevant at this stage in the analysis of the novel's imagery because it is ultimately an example of *istiᶜārah* based in *tamthīl* and serves as the first of several references to Narjis possessing male characteristics.

Although it is not obvious early in the novel, the relationship between Narjis and Jannāt is eventually clear; and al-Saᶜdāwī aids in preparing for this revelation by the repeated use of butterfly images. In the first example of al-Saᶜdāwī's butterfly motif, she describes Jannāt's fond memories of her mother singing her to sleep:

> وتسقط في النوم كأنما تغرق في بحر دافىء. تسبح كالسمكة ثم تفرد جناحيها وتطير فوق الماء. كالفراشة تصفّق بجناحيها تحت أشعة الشمس. والسماء زرقاء صافية. تجري فوق العشب بغير حذاء. سنابل القمح تتراقص مع الهواء. رائحة زرع أخضر في أنفها. وهي تجري لا تتوقّف. من خلفها صوته يطاردها...كلمة واحدة تنطلق في ظهرها كالرصاصة: يا ساقطة!
>
> And she falls into sleep as if she is sinking into a warm sea. She swims like a fish then she spreads her wings and flies above the water. Like a butterfly she flutters her wings below the rays of the sun and the clear blue sky. She runs barefoot through the grass.

[213] عيناها تختلسان النظر إلى قدمي المرأة الحافيتين. [...] قميصها أبيض فضفاض، له فتحة واسعة يطلّ منه عنقها الطويل، أسمر اللون كجذع شجرة يخرج من بطن الأرض. عيناها واسعتان تملأهما نظرة ثابتة كالجنون.

> Spikes of wheat dance in the wind. She smells the green plants, and runs without stopping. Behind her she is chased by his voice. A single word shoots into her back like a bullet: Fallen! (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 27).

There are two straightforward *tashbīh* images in this citation describing the comfort and sense of freedom Jannāt feels sleeping in her mother's embrace. She is like a "fish" (السمكة), and a "butterfly" (الفراشة) and the point of similarity al-Saᶜdāwī intends is Jannāt's satisfaction relative to being free and unrestrained. Al-Saᶜdāwī ends this tranquil scene from Jannāt's childhood with an appearance from her husband, Zakariyā, who chases her down cursing her. The word fallen hits her like a "bullet" (الرصاصة) in another example of *tashbīh* meant to signify the very opposite emotion apparent in the first half of the citation. In her relationship with Zakariyā, Jannāt is not free. By contrast, al-Saᶜdāwī repeatedly evokes the butterfly image specifically in reference to Jannāt's relationship with Narjis.

In order to establish the connection between Narjis and the god-man image, al-Saᶜdāwī makes reference to a picture on her wall showing her receiving a national medal of honor. Recalling the moment she reaches for the medal, she describes the man who presents her with the award. She remembers that his "chest is solid inside the iron armor. Rising from his chest are shining badges and medals. The neck bends upward like a turkey and upon it sits a square face, gray like the stones of the muqaṭṭam hills east of Cairo, fixed in the air like the Sphinx (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 86).[214] This is another example of al-Saᶜdāwī's standard depiction of a man, but in recalling this image she sets up a distinct connection between this depiction and Narjis. At the moment she accepts her medal and an awkward but deliberate handshake from the general,

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[214] والصدر عريض صلب داخل درع من الحديد. تعلوه أوسمة ونياشين تلمع. وعنق يلتوي إلى أعلى كعنق الديك الرومي ومن فوقه الوجه المربّع. رماديّ بلون حجر المقطّم. ثابت في الهواء كرأس أبي الهول.

she recalls: "a brief moment like a flash, or a bolt of electricity. And at this moment the flashes of light fall upon her and the picture appears in the papers. Her face appears white, the color of burnt magnesium in the flashbulbs, as her bare white teeth appear in a smile, her mouth open wide, crooked" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 86).[215] In this moment, when she is accepting public recognition for her honorable national service, she undergoes a sort of shock therapy allowing her to ignore the shame of her past, and enter, partially, into the masculine realm. Her smile twisted to one side is the clearest link to all previous descriptions of men in positions of power. Additionally, Narjis wears her medal much like Zakariyā does. Within this frame she is directly associated with men in general and specifically with Jannāt's husband. In this way she is almost male, but not quite.

After this connection is firmly established, Narjis hears Jannāt call out to her by name in the asylum. Narjis retreats to her room and begins to call on her memory where she sees two girls "playing hopscotch in the school courtyard, running between the green plants following the butterflies" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 33).[216] This is the first indication that Narjis and Jannāt are in fact childhood friends and al-Saᶜdāwī's first use of the butterfly analogy to connect them. Although she initially refuses to admit it, Narjis does remember Jannāt and regrets her role in delivering the medical treatment compelled by the state. In one example where she expresses her regret, Narjis recalls a memory of Jannāt as a younger woman: "But she walked with her head up as if she was the king's daughter. Her abundant black hair spreads around her like the lion's mane. She tosses it behind her back with her hand like a wild horse that no one owned. And for the feast she wears an orange dress that fills with the air flying around her like the wings of a

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[215] في حركة خاطفة كالبرق، صاعقة كالكهرباء. ففي هذه اللحظة تسقط عليها كشافات الضوء. وتظهر الصورة في الصحف. يبدو وجهها أبيض بلون الماغنسيوم المحروق في الفلاش. أسنانها بيضاء عارية في ابتسامة أو انفراجة واسعة في الفم، على شكل اعوجاجة.

[216] طفلتان تلعبان الحجلة في فناء المدرسة. تجريان بين الزرع الأخضر وراء الفراشات.

butterfly" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 97).[217] Al-Saᶜdāwī develops these connections between Narjis and Jannāt not only to situate Narjis in the image of a man but also to evoke another reflection on the nature of tragedy. Women like Narjis and Jannāt are not free to enjoy their love for each other, as this is completely out of the question within the boundaries of the patriarchal system.

Al-Saᶜdāwī makes it clear that in the cultural environment she describes there is no chance for Jannāt and Narjis to enjoy a life together. In a confrontation that leads her to make the first independent decision in her life, Narjis admits her attraction to Jannāt in the presence of her boss. The Director then calls her a fallen whore and smacks her face. At this moment her world falls apart. As she flees from the scene, she drops the constraining physical signs of her socially defined womanhood. She abandons her shoes, her veil, and her corset. She pulls off her medal and discards it, followed by her needle and whistle and all that defined her as the Head Nurse. As she shed her previous identity and her years of sadness, "She ran like a white butterfly. Flapping her wings she flies away. Next to her there is another white butterfly. They soar together in the air, laugh like children and embrace" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 137).[218] Although at this point Jannāt is deceased, she is the second butterfly in the image and for a brief moment both are free: "Suddenly a sound booms like a bullet from a gun, and the butterflies tumble to the ground. […] A green leaf glistens under the light and trembles. From above drops fall slowly, drop after drop, red, the color of blood. The drops are audible to the ear, beat after beat, dropping steadily like the beating of a heart" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 137).[219] This final image brings

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[217] لكنها كانت تمشي مرفوعة الرأس، كأنما هي بنت الملك. شعرها غزير أسود يتطاير حولها كشعر الأسد تقذفه خلف ظهرها بيدها كالفرس الحرّة لا يملكها أحد، وفي العيد ترتدي ثوباً برتقالياً يمتلىء بالهواء، والكرانيش تتطاير من حولها كأجنحة الفراشة.

[218] وهي تجري كالفراشة البيضاء. تصفِّق بجناحيها وتطير. إلى جوارها فراشة أخرى بيضاء. تحلِّقان معاً في الجوّ. تضحكان بصوت الأطفال وتتعانقان.

[219] وفجأة يدوي الصوت كطلقة الرصاصة. تتهاوى الفراشتان إلى الأرض. [...] ورقة شجرة خضراء تلمع تحت الضوء وتنتفض. من فوقها تتساقط قطرات بطيئة. قطرة وراء قطرة. حمراء بلون الدم. مسموعة بالأذن. دقّة وراء دقّة.

together several of the images al-Saᶜdāwī creates in her development of the relationship between Narjis and Jannāt. In this instance, in their moment of freedom, they are immediately shot down as a symbol of the impossibility of their relationship within the boundaries set by patriarchy. Al-Saᶜdāwī also appropriately renders this final image of blood as proof of the love that these two women share.

4i: Rape

In addition to the incidents involving the abuse Narjis suffers, al-Saᶜdāwī describes a number of disturbing incidents involving molestation and or rape, the ultimate expression of violence in a man's attempt to assert his authority over others. In one example of such an incident occurring in the asylum, the Lord calls upon Nafīsa to prove her chastity and loyalty to him alone and she does not resist:

لم تفتح عينيها لترى ما يحدث. أحسّت جلبابها يرتفع. أصابعه تزحف فوق جسدها. توقّفت الدقّات تحت ضلوعها. تمتمت بآية قل هو الله أحد الله الصمد. وفجأة أحسّت شيئاً يلسع كالنار. يده الضخمة أصبحت فوق فمها تكتم أنفاسها، وصرختها أفلتت في سكون الليل تدوّي.

> She did not raise her eyes to see what was happening. She felt her gown being lifted. His fingers crawling upon her body. The pulsing stopped beneath her ribs. Under her breath she recited the verse which says, 'He is the one and everlasting God.' Suddenly she felt something sting her like fire. His huge hand was upon her mouth muffling her breath, but a scream escaped and rang out in the silence of the night (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 66-67).

في إيقاع منتظم كنبض القلب.

The primary reference to rape in this case is what she feels that stings her like "fire" (النار), in an *istiᶜārah* reference to the Lord's violation of her body. Although she possibly has the will and the strength to resist his advances, her apparent willingness to submit in this case is a reflection of a power relationship and not an indication of her consent, rendering al-Saᶜdāwī's use of the term "fire" particularly effective. Additionally, the reference to her gown being lifted is also relevant as it connects this incident to several others like it in the development of a broader *istiᶜārah* comparison rooted in *tamthīl* which unites several characters suffering under the same humiliation. There is also irony evident in the idea that while being violated by the Lord, she calls on him/god to protect her.

In another instance of abuse, Jannāt is the victim; and the reference to her dress being lifted serves as al-Saᶜdāwī's anchor connecting these scenes:

كانت هذه هي طريقة العقاب في المدرسة. وتقف ووجهها ملتصق بالجدار وذراعاها مرفوعتان. لا يمكن أن تهبط ذراع وإن أحسّت أن ثوبها يرتفع من الخلف، يزحف بين ردفيها شيء كالإصبع. ينتفض جسدها، وفي الإنتفاضة تسقط ذراع من ذراعيها، فتهبط فوقها العصا الخيزران. ترفع ذراعها بسرعة إلى أعلى، ترفعها عالياً بيدها الأخرى حتى تلامس السقف.

> This was the method of punishment in the school. She stands with her face to the wall and her arms raised. She cannot drop an arm, even as she felt her dress being lifted from behind and something like a finger creeping between her buttocks. Her body trembles, and with this trembling she drops an arm and the bamboo cane falls upon her. She raises her arm quickly even higher, so high along with her other hand it is as if they are touching the ceiling (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 31).

Not only is she being victimized by her teacher, but in her resistance the cane only lands on her with more force. In this way the structures of authority and the potential for abusing that authority are reinforced by the threat of punishment.

Al-Saᶜdāwī describes another incident when Nafīsa is detained by the police after striking a soldier with a rock and resisting his demands for her to produce her brother Iblīs. In police detention she is molested and, just like Jannāt, "she feels his finger moving up her right leg, gently like the lizard's tail" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 146).[220] One distinct connection between these two incidents is obviously the presence of the finger creeping up her leg, but the lizard tail image also appears in this reference as al-Saᶜdāwī offers another identifying characteristic of abuse. With the inclusion of this reference in several examples of sexual impropriety on the behalf of men, ranging from infidelity to molestation and rape, the lizard tail image unifies these examples of exploitation in power relationships among the novel's primary characters.

While enduring this abuse in the police station, Nafīsa recalls the beatings she sustained at the hands of Shaykh Masᶜūd: "She hears the sound of the bamboo cane stinging the air. And the air stings her naked backside. Red marks appear upon her body, twisting like lizards' tails" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 146).[221] During these beatings, Nafīsa never turns around to look her teacher in the face. This detail also provides a narrative link between these various incidents. Prior to her incarceration at the asylum, with her mother dead and brother taken away, Nafīsa is alone and begins working as a prostitute:

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220 تحسّ إصبعه يمشي فوق ساقها اليسرى. ناعماً كذيل السحلية.

221 تسمع صوت العصا الخيزران تلسع الهواء. والهواء يلسع ردفيها العاريتين. علامات حمراء ترتسم فوق جسدها، تتلوّى كذيول السحالي.

متخفّية تحت الغطاء لا تطلّ عليهم. [...] يخفون عيونهم وراء زجاج أسود. يجلسون في غرفة الإنتظار يتلمّظون. أنوفهم منتصبة الشعيرات، تهتزّ مع الهواء، كشوارب القطط تتشمّم الشواء. يموؤون تحت يديها بالوجع. يغرز أحدهم أسنانه في عنقها من الخلف، تقضم قطعة لحم.

> She hides herself under the bedspread so as not to face them. […] They hide their eyes behind dark glasses, sitting in the waiting room smacking their lips. The hairs in their nostrils stand erect, trembling in the wind, like the whiskers of cats hunting for grilled meat. They meow below her hand in pain. One of them drove his teeth into her neck from behind gnawing on a piece of meat (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 150-151).

In this citation the men seeking sexual gratification at Nafīsa's expense are described like animals in an easily discernible example of *tashbīh*. They smack their lips in anticipation, hunt like cats in pursuit of her "meat" (لحم), and one man bites into her neck. Again, as is evident repeatedly and with Nafīsa specifically, one key to al-Saʿdāwī's effort to connect these incidents is Nafīsa's refusal to look these men in the face.

Iblīs as a child also suffers as the victim of rape. In the following example of such an assault, the nature of the incident is made more obvious when juxtaposed with the incidents involving his sister Nafīsa:

يختبىء منه في الجرن. يتكوّر حول نفسه كالجنين بين أعواد الحطب. يكتم أنفاسه والدقّات تحت ضلوعه تتوقّف. [...] ذراع طويلة تمتدّ. لها أصابع خمس. تقبض عليه كأنما هو دجاجة. يرفع عنه جلبابه من الخلف. يشدّ السروال الأسمر من الدمور. يسقط ضوء القمر فوق ردفيه المرتعشين. ظهره للضوء ووجهه الناحية الأخرى. يخاف أن يستدير. يخاف أن يحرِّك رأسه ناحيته أو يرفع عينيه إليه. كان كبيراً. أكبر منه، يرتسم ظلّه فوق الأرض طويلاً، وهو طفل يتعلّم القراءة.

> He hides from him in the trough, curled up around himself like a fetus between the sticks of firewood. He holds his breath and the beating under his ribs stops. […] A long arm reaches out. It has five fingers. It grasps him as if he was a chicken. His robe is raised from behind and his course brown underpants are pulled down. The light of the moon falls upon his trembling backside. His back is to the light and his face in the other direction. He is afraid to turn around. He is afraid to move his head to the side or to raise his eyes to him. He was big, bigger than him. His long shadow appeared on the ground, and he was just a child learning to read (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 112).

In the context of previous imagery of men in authority all resembling each other and having been made in god's image, this incident reflects the sexual assault of Iblīs at the hands of the same "everyman" or God himself. Initially, Iblīs hides from Shaykh Masᶜūd curled up like a "fetus" (الجنين) only to be snatched up like a "chicken" (دجاجة). In each of these references al-Saᶜdāwī creates a *tashbīh* image between Iblīs and these two terms signifying his innocence, weakness, and accessibility as a piece of meat available for consumption. In addition to this reference to the chicken, there are at least two other connections to the humiliations his sister endures. Like is sister, Iblīs is afraid to turn around. This similarity constitutes the basis for an instance of *istiᶜārah* comparing Iblīs with Nafīsa. His robe is lifted from behind, just like his sister. They are both abused by men in positions of authority over them. In this case the abuser is also a point of similarity. In the final sentence of the passage, al-Saᶜdāwī reiterates Iblīs's innocence, identifying him as a child just learning to read, which is especially relevant because his attacker is his own teacher.

Although there is little to suggest that something other than rape is the subject of this passage, to confirm the nature of the attack al-Saᶜdāwī offers a description of an incident that

occurs shortly afterwards. Iblīs is back in school, being prodded with a stick in the ribs by Shaykh Masᶜūd, who is compelling him to recite from the Qur'ān. In what appears to be a deliberate mistake meant to out the Shaykh as his abuser, Iblīs recites, "you who lust for men instead of women, you are an intemperate people" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 112-113).[222] This reference is clearly evidence of the rape described earlier as well as Iblīs's effort to rebel against the law. Additionally, al-Saᶜdāwī offers a description of the marks on Iblīs's back from his beatings at the hands of Shaykh Masᶜūd which are "long and twisting like the tails of lizards" (*Jannāt wa Iblīs*, 114).[223] In each of these vivid portrayals of abuse, al-Saᶜdāwī provides several points of reference in the reinforcement of her themes related to the abusive power of relationships and gender inequalities inherent in patriarchal systems of cultural organization.

4j: The Question of Unity

Among the three novels examined in this study of comparative imagery, al-Saᶜdāwī's *Jannāt wa Iblīs* provides the best example of textual unity. Nearly all of her images contribute in some way to a broader reading of the novel as a whole. Whether a single image is created in the service of a primary motif, or a series of images are developed in a single expression, al-Saᶜdāwī clearly makes an effort not only to draw vivid comparisons through her use of imagery but to tie those images together with meaningful effect. Among her most successful primary motifs is the god-man image. Al-Saᶜdāwī incorporates this image in her description of Narjis in order to complicate the nature of gender identity otherwise firmly entrenched within the cultural environment providing the backdrop for her novel. Her combination of imagery drawn from

222 إنكم لتأتون الرجال شهوة دون النساء بل أنتم قوم مسرفون.

223 طويلة ملتوية كذيول السحالى.

ancient Egyptian civilization, with the patterns of gender inequality apparent in the modern era is another successful aspect of the unity within this primary motif.

Additionally, the unity of composition apparent in her juxtaposition of the scriptural narrative involving Eve's temptation at the tree of knowledge with the development of characters like Jannāt and Iblīs effectively challenges the traditional misogynistic insistence that the burden of sin must fall upon women alone. With reference to Jannāt's unashamed pursuit of knowledge, al-Saᶜdāwī undermines the misogynist narrative her male characters proclaim which suggests what Eve does in this conventional story of the Abrahamic faiths was problematic.

Regarding the nature of truth in the claims her images make, al-Saᶜdāwī actually defines the boundaries of truth on her own terms without upsetting al-Jurjānī's rubric for the appropriate use of metaphoric language. Within the boundaries of truth defined by al-Saᶜdāwī, she creates a space for the acceptance of the notion that man created god in his image instead of the other way around by diligently contextualizing this controversial idea within a reasonable reflection on human history. Al-Saᶜdāwī also exposes the truth behind the fraudulent claims of the men in her novel that only women fall in the temptation of infidelity. Truth in this sense is a reflection of a morality contrasting with traditional definitions of right and wrong dictated by men who are more likely to abuse their authority than to use it for the benefit of society at large.

As it pertains to the unity of individual images, in developing the connection between blood and honor al-Saᶜdāwī confronts some of the most brutally offensive aspects of gender inequality inherent in traditional social structures rooted in patriarchy. She links several instances of sexual abuse with the successful repetition of specific imagery and exposes the failure of sanctimonious religious platitudes to regulate morality. Beyond these important

aspects of her narrative, al-Saᶜdāwī imposes a level of sensitivity to female agency otherwise repressed within the cultural context that frames her narrative.

Conclusion:

In the previous analysis of comparative imagery in Arabic literature the reliance upon for al-Jurjānī's particular manner of reading examples of *tashbīh*, *tamthīl*, and *istiᶜārah* was preferred in order to evaluate its continued relevance in modern Arabic literary criticism. His rubric for the identification, classification and analysis of comparative imagery in Arabic literature is still relevant in its application to contemporary criticism because of the unique structures and nuances of the language. Although each of the novelists considered in this study have undoubtedly been influenced by non-Arab ways of thinking, al-Jurjānī's theory of metaphor continues to be the most suitable approach to literary analysis of simile and metaphor in their novels because they were written in Arabic.

By comparison, traditional Western readings of metaphor are insufficient when applied to Arabic literature because of several theoretical assumptions accepted in the West contradict the tradition in Arabic literature established by al-Jurjānī. Reading examples of Arabic literature through the lens of traditional Western theories of metaphor is not inappropriate or unfruitful. It is certainly possible to apply such theories to readings of literature within any cultural context. Such an approach, however, requires an entirely different method of classifying instances of metaphor and simile through the application of a fundamentally non-Arab methodology. To render the examples considered in the current analysis of Arabic literature through the frame of traditional Western theories of metaphor would require a re-classification of the images based on a model unsubstantiated by the literary tradition that produced them. Had these novels been originally composed in English, an alternative approach reliant upon Western models of analysis would be sufficient, but this is not the case.

In his lament concerning the Western-leaning trajectory of "modernization" in Arabic literary culture, and also concerning his own role in that development, Adūnīs asserts: "I find no paradox in declaring that it was recent Western modernity which led me to discover our own, older, modernity outside our 'modern' politico-cultural system established on a Western model" (*Poetics*, 81). Adūnīs concludes that a deliberate effort to rediscover a decidedly Arabic methodology in the approach to literary criticism is needed in order to arrive at a suitable definition of Arab modernity which properly acknowledges the continued relevance of classical models in the modern era. Adūnīs continues by suggesting:

> The problematic of modernity at the present time thus becomes clearer at the level of language. What was the first sign of the presence of the Arabs and their creativity is being corrupted and degraded. The Arab of today is in the process of forgetting the fundamental element through which he knew existence, and which established his presence in history. He has lost the sense of language […] and appears ignorant of what has given him his identity, or of who he is (*Poetics*, 83).

As Adūnīs describes the current predicament of Arabic modernity, the prevalence of Western theoretical approaches to the analysis of contemporary Arabic literature also tend to overshadow if not entirely ignore suitable models of arguably "modern" approaches to the study of Arabic language and literature that do exist in the tradition. In fact, he asserts that by virtue of their moorings in conventional Arab sensibilities they are preferable to distinctly non-Arab approaches. As an example of the principle Adūnīs is espousing, al-Jurjānī is perhaps the easiest model to acknowledge. Whether students of Arabic language and literature from grammar school through the university level and beyond know it explicitly or not, al-Jurjānī's

methodology *is* the modern Arab approach to the analysis of comparative imagery. According to Adūnīs the solution to this challenge is clear:

> If we are to treat the problem of modernity, we must first re-examine the structures of Arab thought. To question modernity, Arab thought must question itself. Arab modernity can be studied only within the perspective of Arab thought, on the level of principles and actual historical developments, within the framework of its specific assumptions, using its epistemological tools and in the context of the issues which gave rise to the phenomenon and have resulted from it. To study it from a Western perspective would be to distort it and distance oneself from the real issues (*Poetics*, 83).

In his effort to advocate for a new understanding and articulation of modernity in Arab thought, Adūnīs is simply pointing out the obvious. Within this modern paradigm, the task of the scholar of the Arabic cultural tradition is not necessarily to reject the legitimacy of Western models, but rather to carefully avoid the ease with which the slide toward the West can occur. In order to establish a true sense of Arab cultural modernity, Arab thought must "question itself."

It is also necessary to consider the challenge confronting efforts to re-evaluate the legitimacy of classical models of Arabic thought in the modern era. In the West, scholars of Arabic face a particular set of roadblocks that must be overcome in order to direct their focus exclusively on models of Arab thought. With specific reference to the production and study of Arabic literature, this predicament of the scholar and artist is further compounded in the modern era because, as Roger Allen succinctly points out, the state of freedom to publish fiction in the Arab world "is restricted in varying degrees and by a number of methods, of which banishment, imprisonment, and censorship are merely the most overt. In societies in which the power of the

word is well understood and carefully monitored, novel writing becomes an act of adventure and courage" (Allen, 125). This reflection on the state of scholarship as it applies to Arabic literature is unique by comparison to the relatively liberal dispensation facing the Western scholar and artist. The novelists studied in the previous analysis are each in their own way representative of this fact. Although all three novelists have maintained periodic residence in the Arab world throughout their careers, Ḥalīm Barakāt is the only one of the three who still maintains active residence in the Arab world. Hudá Barakāt and Nawāl al-Saᶜdāwī have largely lived outside their countries of origin and reside in the West. It is not necessarily problematic that in the ever expanding milieu of global cultural studies that a multicultural approach to Arabic literature occurs in contemporary Arabic literary criticism. The tendency to prefer Western models of theory and analysis, however, is currently the predominant condition of the modern field as it applies to studies of Arabic literature. The tendency of many leading Arab writers and scholars to relocate to the West contributes to the use of Western models of thinking to the exclusion of legitimate and even superior Arabic alternatives.

Returning to Adūnīs and to the explicitly stated purpose of this project, the effort to reassert classical standards of Arabic literary criticism in the modern era should not automatically lead to charges of anachronism or cultural bias. In fact, arguably, a condition of anachronism and cultural bias already exists in favor of Western models whether the scholar or artist is physically located in the Arab world or in the West. The approach Adūnīs espouses is not a rejection or replacement for contemporary models of scholarship. Instead it is a legitimate alternative. It is a viable, productive and beneficial endeavor for any scholar interested in exploring the unique and richly rewarding experience of studying Arabic literature through the lens of standards established by some of the most respected masters of the language. As a result

of the superior quality of al-Jurjānī's scholarship and the proven relevance of his theories in the contemporary era, the traditional approach to the study of comparative imagery in Arabic is classically modern.

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