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Abstracts

These two issues of al-Karmil are dedicated to our colleague, Professor Shimon Ballas. He worked as a lecturer for decades in the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Haifa, and is considered one of the pioneering novelists in Israel. These issues contain articles on several aspects of Arabic language and literature; they also include articles on Shimon Ballas' literary work.

The first article is by Aharon Geva-Kleinberger and Ward Aqil; it is entitled "Obsolescence versus Observance: Olive Harvest Lexical Terms in Galilee". Lexically, the domain of agriculture is one of the most threatened, in Arabic as well as in other languages. Within this domain the obsolescence of terminology, namely the death of a vocabulary which has been used for centuries, is felt especially in olive cultivation which is typical of the Galilee region where olive tree and olive oil cultivation have been known for the past five millennia. This article reports on the collection of extant lexical information in the local Galilee Arabic dialects, and the search for etymological derivations that sometimes return to older origins such as Hebrew and Aramaic. The purpose was to preserve these terms before everything descends into the limbo of forgotten things, especially in the setting of mass modernization and new techniques of collecting olives. The paper shows the relation of language to anthropology. Data were drawn from dialectological fieldwork in some prominent Galilee villages where olive gathering plays an important role in the livelihood of many of its inhabitants. It is also a social activity that is inexorably dying, as is a whole world of words, methods, tradition and culture.

In his article " 'What will Bagdad Look Like Without Jews': The Trauma of Immigration in *Iya* by Shimon Ballas", Hanan Hever discusses the novella "Iya", which is included in Shimon Ballas' collection *Signs of Autumn* (Ballas, 1992: 50-9). *Iya*, short for Zakiya, is a Muslim Iraqi nanny whose close intimacy with the Bagdadi Jewish family of Sara and Shmuel constitutes her identity to the extent that she might be called an "Arab" who is also a "Jew", thus "an Arab-Jew". Jewish immigration from Bagdad to Israel becomes a testing moment for this Arab-Jewish identity: their leaving threatens a crucial component of *Iya*'s Arab-Jewish identity, and the novella portrays this moment of identity-fracture.

Rima Abu Jabir's article "The Visual Poem in Modern Arabic Poetry in Terms and Illustration" deals with the *visual poem* in modern Arabic poetry, and its interaction with modernist European poetry. For centuries, the term 'form' in Arabic poetry has referred to the elements of 'rhythm,' 'rhyme,' 'diction,' and 'meaning,' which form the traditional structure of the poem. However, since the beginning of modern poetic experiments, the term, 'form', has witnessed a historical development and conceptual change, and has also gained new indications, which refer to the physical appearance of the poem as its printed manner on paper. Its external appearance is now an integral component together with its other elements. The study points out that the visual poem is one that is written and is intended to be "read" and "seen." In other words, it is written both for the ear and the eye so that one may enjoy the poem audio-visually. The fact that texts differ in their extent of employing visual techniques led the author to put forward a three-dimensional division of the poetic patterns, which helps her in the treatment of this type of poem

Arin Salamah-Qudsi's article, "Notes on Women's Positions and Roles in Early Sufism" looks into the position and roles of women in the period between the tenth and twelfth century by focusing on the Sufi and non-Sufi writings of that period. Remarkably, the ascetic approach in which misogyny was a key feature flourished side by side with what we can call the "mystic approach" in which female beauty had been seen as a manifestation of the divine beauty. New interesting data are provided by al-Sulamī's *Dhikr an-niswa*. While presenting the scholarly reservations dealing with such a document, the hagiographical material supported by Sulamī could no longer be restricted to its "literary" value. This work, among others that need to be re-examined carefully, portrays diversified realities of the situation of women in early Sufi Islam. Evidences about a certain degree of freedom to meet with Sufi teachers and travel for the sake of Sufi knowledge were not rare in this concern. By presenting his heroines as wives, sisters and mothers of renowned Sufi males, al-Sulamī has attempted to bring the high position of Sufi women to the fore. This purpose is to be differentiated from the common scholarly argument according to which Sulamī's basic aim was to praise Sufi men by praising their female relatives.

In Ghalib Anabisa's article, "The Anecdotes of Qarqūsh between Folklore and History: A Reading in the Manuscript of *al-Fāshūsh fī ḥukm [or ahkām] Qarqūsh* ascribed to Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī", Anabisa publishes a new edition of the manuscript

ascribed to Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī's (d. 1505) [Landberg, no. 258]. He also examines the character of Qarāqūsh as perceived in this manuscript. Modern scholars have regarded this character from a humorous aspect, others from a social point of view. In this article, the Qarāqūsh anecdotes are dealt with not only from their literary aspects, but also from several other angles, especially in view of the fact that the hero, Qarāqūsh, was a real historical character.

"Convergence and Divergence between Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī and Secular Humanism" is the article written by Clara Srouji-Shajrawi. It aims to clarify the rationalistic basis of ar-Rāzī's rejection of religion and prophecy. His philosophy is shown to agree, in many points, with the Secular Humanist declaration of 1980. This justifies the study of ar-Rāzī's thought in a modern context. Both ar-Rāzī and Secular Humanism are skeptical about supernatural claims; they stand for freedom from religious control, and are committed to free inquiry, moral education from childhood, and a pluralistic/democratic society. All this can be accomplished without the need for religion, prophets or Imams. Because of his attitude towards religion and prophecy ar-Rāzī was accused of heresy and most of his philosophical writings were destroyed. The study is based for the most part upon *A'lam an-nubuwwah (The Signs of Prophecy)* which mirrors the debate that took place in Rayy around 930-932 between two opponents: the Ismā'īlī Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī and the well-known physician and philosopher, Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī. Reference is also made to *Rasā'il falsafiyya*, collected and ascribed to Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī by Paul Kraus. Ar-Rāzī's philosophy is presented as a call for a virtuous life of justice and knowledge, and of eschewing evil. His criticism of the religious establishment does not prevent him from being a true believer in God. The debate between the two Rāzīs can be understood, from the perspective of our millennium, as reflecting a conflict between an enlightened minority, striving toward a secular state, and a majority ensnared by the dream of a pure religious state. The unfolding of the current events (revolutions) in the Arab countries may determine which approach will predominate.

In his article, "Shimon Ballas as a Translator of Palestinian Literature," Mahmoud Kayyal examines Shimon Ballas' translations of modern Arabic literature into Hebrew, especially those of Palestinian literature. The importance of this translation project stems from being a pioneer in the field of openness of Israeli society about Palestinian culture. But Ballas' activity took place in a period dominated by the dominant Zionist discourse denigrating the existence of the Palestinian people. As a result, Ballas was

pressured somewhat to be in line with this discourse, both in terms of the positions highlighted in the introduction to his book, or in terms of the quality of literary works that Ballas chose to translate. However, his policy of translation testifies that he did not give up entirely on the possibility of these translated works being accepted as literary texts in Hebrew culture.

"A Note on the Situation of Yathrib after the Hijra" is Michael Lecker's article. Samhūdī tells us in his History of Medina that shortly after his arrival at Medina, the Prophet Muḥammad "found" a large piece of land in the town of Zuhra. The former owners of this land who lived in Rātij and Ḥusayka (see the map provided in the article) had been expelled before his arrival. The people of Zuhra (*ahl Zuhra*), who became Muḥammad's neighbors, included the Jewish tribes Naḍīr and Thafilaba ibn al-Fityawn. (The latter tribe presumably participated in the so-called Constitution of Medina). Zuhra, located between Upper Medina (al-°Āliya) and Lower Medina (as-Sāfila), was reportedly home to three hundred (i.e. "numerous") Jewish goldsmiths. These crucial facts are absent from Muḥammad's medieval biographies. But they must be taken into account when studying Muḥammad's relationship with the Jews between the *hijra* and the Battle of Badr.

The article on "The Fable of Tamīm ad-Dārī: His Abduction by the Jinni and his Return" by Yehoshua Frenkel (with linguistic notes with Moshe Cohen) shows that this fable fits well into the social milieu of the Mamluk society. The hero, Tamīm ad-Dārī, had been a simulacrum among Muslims since the late Umayyad period. The tale of this admired persona and his meeting with the al-Jassāsah and ad-Dajjāl was transmitted by several Ḥadīth collectors and spread to remote corners of the Muslim World. In the Mamluk period a new stratum was added to his hagiography. In popular stories of that period, Tamīm plays the role of the narrator and tells of his adventures and wanderings in remote lands and islands. Two versions of *qīṣṣat tamīm* are appended to the article.

The English and French Section contains three articles. The first is "Autobiographical Scrambling in the Novels of Shimon Ballas" by Françoise Saquer-Sabin. In his novels, Shimon Ballas works out a narrative strategy which creates an infinite number of variations on a fragmented identity. The persistent question of autobiography and in particular of the writing of autobiography, lies at the heart of his fictional project.

Three novels provide the basis for this study: *A Locked Room* (1980), *The Other One* (2005), and *The End of the Visit* (2008). The article tries to show how the process of this fragmentation of identity is organized, as a kind of kaleidoscope within which the narrative materials intersect, overlap, and mingle. The relationship with writing and with language crystallizes the structural instability of the protagonist in search of an identity whose scattered fragments he is unable to re-assemble. Hints and clues distributed throughout the novel modestly suggest the possibility of an autobiographical reading.

The second article "Between Arabness and Zionism: Iraqi-Jewish Writers in Arabic in the 20th Century" is by Reuven Snir. Snir examines the emergence of the literary writing among the Jews of Baghdad during the 1920s, guided by an Arab-Iraqi vision embedded in the slogan "Religion is for God, the Fatherland is for everyone." As a result of the escalation of the Jewish-Arab conflict in the Middle East, the majority of Iraqi-Jewish poets and writers emigrated to Israel during the beginning of the 1950s where gradually most of them stopped writing in Arabic while others shifted to Hebrew writing. The article shows that these cultural processes were due not only to political and national circumstances but also to the aesthetic and cultural norms both of Arabic-Muslim and Hebrew-Jewish cultural systems. Furthermore, the Andalusian vision of cultural cooperation and religious tolerance which had emerged in Baghdad was the product of a very limited period, a very confined space and a very singular history.

The last article in this section is "On Shimon Ballas' *First Person Singular*", written by Robert Elbaz. This paper deals with the ways in which Shimon Ballas' *First Person Singular* transgresses the basic ideological presuppositions behind the Western autobiographical tradition. This deconstruction of the prevalent Rousseau-like autobiographical model, which has constituted the very model to all autobiographical writings since the middle of the Eighteenth Century, had already been achieved at the level of the titology of the book; it is no mere chance that Ballas gave the title, *First Person Singular*, to his autobiography. For above all, what matters, according to the writer, is the discursive position of the enunciating subject, which makes of the autobiographical text not so much the reflection of an individual life –and it remains to be defined what an individual life amounts to –certainly not the solipsistic endeavors of the autobiography a la Rousseau— but of the subject positions that the

narrator has adopted throughout his writing career. *First Person Singular* remains a living historical document that unveils quite a few truths about the socio-political and historical dimensions of Israel since 1948.

This section includes a review written by Joseph Sadan on Yosef Tobi's book *Between Hebrew and Arabic Poetry: Studies in Spanish Medieval Hebrew Poetry*.