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The Fear of the Other: The Palestinian and Israeli Literary Works as a Model

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Abstract Literature has always manifested the tenor of different times. Literary works portray the psychological, social, political, and humanistic concerns of the past and present, and they speculate about the future, as well. This article studies fear in the Palestinian and Israeli literary works. We particularly focus on aspects, forms and levels of fear in such works. The article raises and tries to provide answers to questions about the ways fear affects writers: What stirs fear in the writers? Does trepidation determine the writer’s choices? Does it have negative/positive effects on the product? Is the writer afraid of the occupier, politics, society, customs, collective norms or traditions? How do writers read the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis? Do writers’ assumptions and perceptions contribute to inflaming or extinguishing the long-lasting conflict? Does fear affect literary creativity? I surveyed selected works from the Palestinian modern literature and its Israeli counterpart, focusing on the novel. I then studied the element of fear in these works using the analytical descriptive approach, which has proven to be effective in this type of studies, together with the psychological approach to the study of literature. The analysis suggested that the literary works by the two parties to the conflict do not distinctly reduce the reader’s fear; rather they do fuel the already-existing fear. Since literature is a mirror of life, the inherent prejudices against the other-the Palestinian against Israeli and vice versa-have made writers incorporate fear in their works. Keywords: Literature, Story, Novel, Poetry, Comparative Literature

Introduction The culture of fear suggests a collective mental state that drives individuals to remain cautious in expressing their opinions and to expressly say contrary to what they believe in. The culture of fear is also a term applied to everyday life: in the street, in the workplace, and even at home. The culture of fear destroys the power of people, turning their enthusiasm and motivation into nonentity, creating a lifeless mass of flesh with no special worthiness, and eventually changing people into things. Undoubtedly, authoritarian regimes always seek to incite fear in the public, but the issue is beyond the powers and influence of tyrants. The climate of fear has grown in scope and infiltrated many of civil society institutions and political opposition parties, particularly in the Arab countries. Of course, fear is an innate emotion and sometimes it is rational and appropriate. Indeed, fear is a very basic human emotion; and those who do not experience fear at all are only the dead. Fear forced George Eliot to write using a male pen name and kill the female fictional characters. It is fear that also drove Virginia Woolf to avoid writing about the body and sexuality for fear of the ‘male’ censor. History cannot be written by trembling hands; there are real examples from the Arab region where fear appears as a ghost haunting parents and intellectuals. Examples are numerous: - Sayed Qimmani from Egypt (threatened with death); - Ahmed Al Nuaimi (executed in Iraq); - Mohammed bin Deeb from Qatar (imprisoned). According to Hisham Shabbal, a Moroccan writer, fear has haunted us for long; and now it has become an inseparable part of our character (Shabbal, 2014).

RSUIJCG Vol. 3 No. 1 (January - December 2016)

[8]

“The novel is the best war...Since all wars have failed, why not trying the novel?” Edward Said. Thomas Brosig, a German novelist, explains how people can be made fearful. In an address before the audience attending the Cairo International Book Fair, Brosig said "We do know that you-Arabs-cannot outmatch us scientifically, technologically or culturally. However, we are afraid of you; and we have always been intimidated by you, albeit at a distance. There is palpable fear between the East and the West, and fear does also exist between the Arabs and the Persians” (Brosig, 2010). Anjo Sholtza, a German writer, said after a visit to Yemen in 1995, “I have never experienced fear as I did before I decided to go to Yemen.” In an exposition article, Sholtza wrote, “When writing, the Arab writer envisions two readerships: those frequenting the mosques and those in state censorships positions (Holtza, 2008). In a reflection on the role of writers in reforming societies, Maxim Gorky wrote “The great writers are those who can inspire their readers in furtherance of the main goal of emancipating themselves from the powers of brutality and lies... We will never be able to emancipate ourselves unless we learn how to love human beings... One day, people will realize that the most wonderful, the highest creature in the world is the human being.”

Literature Review The issue of fear has always garnered much attention from Western historians. The concept was first brought to light by a study conducted by the contemporary French historian Jean Delumeau, who explored the history of religious mentalities. His study was a survey of two major works on the concept of fear in the West from the 14th century to the 18th century. The first work was The Great Fear of 1789, written by Georges Lefebvre in 1932. Lefebvre engraved all that he could on the French Revolution in that book. The second work was Lucien Febvre’s article on the sense of security published in ESC Journal. The successive, ensuing tribulations that plagued Europe from the 14th century to the 18th century (the Hundred Years’ War between France and England (1337-1453); the Black Death, which resulted in the deaths of an estimated 25 million Europeans; the Ottoman expansion in Eastern Europe; the French-Italian war in 1494; the popular uprisings between the 14th and 17th centuries; the eight religious wars (1562-1598); the serious economic crisis that hit France and led to the spread of poverty in the country; and the plagues that ravaged France and Europe between 1620 and1640) had all incited the ‘millennium terror’ and the belief that humanity was nearing the end of the world. At the time, the fear of death, diseases, famines, foreigners and the unknown haunted the Europeans and became a symbol of the loss of hope, security and safety. The fear was further fueled by the 1789 French Revolution, with people intimidated by looting, murder, torture, rape and arson. Between 1978 and 2013-concurrent with publishing Jean Delumeau works-a number of studies were released on fear. The concept was approached by writers from different disciplines: history, sociology and anthropology, and some studies approached the concept from different perspectives, namely psychology analytical psychology, behavioral sciences and neurosciences. In 1989, Gregory Bateson published part of his book Angels Fear: towards an Epistemology of the Sacred, which was later completed by his daughter Mary Catherine Bateson. The author’s departure point was the controversial question “Why are we still again in need of religion?” In his book Year 1000, Year 2000: in the footsteps of our fears (2000), Georges Duby, prefaced by Jacques Le Goff, used contemporary examples to understand the fear in the Middle Ages. According to the author, those who lived 8 or 10 centuries ago were not more

RSUIJCG Vol. 3 No. 1 (January - December 2016)

[9]

or less concerned than we are. They experienced the most tragic crises: fear of poverty, fear of the other, fear of epidemics and fear of violence. In her book History of food fears: from the Middle Ages to the dawn of the 20th century (2002), Madeleine Ferrières studied the Western food trends and found that the fear of food shortage, of starvation, of having rotten food, of toxics and of imported materials existed in the West for different ages. The author believes that this is the reason why the West created, with great caution and prejudice, an independent diet in early 20th century. The second part of Madeleine Bertaud’s book The Big Fears was devoted to the proceedings of the International Symposium which was held in Nancy, France between September 30 and October 3, 2003. The second part of the book was a compilation of the literary studies on attitudes as groundwork for discussing fears (fear of the devil, fear of disasters and fear of the other) through literary works featuring imagination, tales of travel, legends of Robert the Devil and legends of Jean de La Fontaine, fear of the wolf and works adapted from historical events. In his book Fear: The history of a political idea, Corey Robin (2006) traces the political history of fear and its role in shaping politics, not only during exceptional events, such as September 11 attacks. According to Robin, it is a shame when one experiences fear, recognizes it and underestimates its impact, preferring the seemingly most rational explanation for the behavior of the leaders and the citizens. Robin explains how fear has become a fundamental pillar of power, even in liberal democracies. In his book Writing fear at the time of religion wars, Bernard Mathilde (2010) discussed the way writers and historians with political or religious agendas, who lived between 1562 and 1598, would incite fear in their readers through suggestive writings. During the civil wars that tore France in the second half of the 16th century, fear resulted in massacres and fueled hatred.

Analysis The Jews fear of Palestinians / Arabs A novel has many voices in the sense that the narratives are not exclusively produced by the author, who uses characters to conceal his true beliefs. Using characterization, the novelist hides behind the words of the characters, making them say what s/he would have liked to say. There are common statements frequently used by the Israeli Jews, such as "Today, I will not leave the house because I know that Arabs visit the homes they were displaced from. I am afraid that the owner of this house comes from the camp. I do not know how to receive him when he comes. Should I offer him some drink? If he said that he would return to his home, I'd definitely tell him: Get out of here!” (Natour, 2015). The meaning is crystal clear: Israelis are afraid of being humane. For them, inhumane life with fear is much better than humaneness without fear! Fear is particularly dangerous when it is collective, though with various degrees depending on individual experience. Fear adversely impacts the economic aspects of people's lives. People might be scared of losing the viable resources that help them survive, especially food, clothing and shelter. The most serious apprehensions are phobias incited by fears of being exposed to famine or lack of clothing in hot or cold weather. People nowadays are more afraid of the future than of the present moment. Many scientists and scholars are always afraid of making mistakes or falling behind their peers, typical for parents who are always concerned about the health and future of their children. Commenting on Haaretz news story which revealed the decision by Israel’s Ministry of Education to remove the book Borderlife (the book tells a love story between an Israeli woman and a Palestinian man) from the school curriculum, Israeli writer, Dorit Rabinyan, said that the decision was ridiculous. Talking to the media, Rabinyan said the book mainly

RSUIJCG Vol. 3 No. 1 (January - December 2016)

[10]

deals with this fear. "Removing from the curriculum a book that deals with the Israeli fear of mixing with Arabs and Arab neighborhoods-in which we live-because of its central idea is unquestionably ridiculous" (Paninan, 2016). In saying this, Rabinyan admits that Israel is a complex place. In his remark on that decision by the Ministry, Sami Michaeli, an influential Israeli Sephardic writer, says "This is a black day in the history of Hebrew literature." O.B.Yehoshua, an Israeli nationalistic author, says the book is “excellent and deep,” adding that those who reject the book must be uneducated. According to Yehoshua, “the book illuminates a system of conflicting ideas: integration or separation on the one hand, and a common destiny or escape, on the other. Once again, Rabinyan has proved that reliance on love remains unavailing.” In the Israeli curriculum, indigenous Arabs are depicted as nomads who came from the desert. The curriculum also uses biased terms whenever it refers to the Palestinian Arabssometimes describing them as thieves and uncivilized (Voda, 2002). In most Israeli textbooks, the Jew is described as the bringer of civilization, while the Arab is primitive and uncivilized. Examples of such discourse are not uncommon: - According to a study by the Israeli author, Eli Voda-who insightfully analyzed the Israeli educational books-textbooks in Israel have succeeded in forging preconceived ideas about Arabs, particularly using terms like ‘impostors’, ‘uncivilized’, ‘thieves’ and ‘impossible to live with’ (Voda, 2002) - The books portray Arabs as socially reactionary and warring tribes that perform uncivilized traditions (Skov, 2016). - The Arabs are tall and broad-shouldered; their eyes flash with anger; their faces are harsh; and they have tapered mustaches that look like two horns (Ferrer, 2002). - Arabs do not deserve to live in this country because they are "the enemies of civilization and human progress (Stanislavski, 1991) Can Arabs read the Israeli or Hebrew literature without subjectivity and prejudice? Can they read an Israeli novel and enjoy its narrative, style, language, plot and characterization without fear? On July 23, 2016, the Guardian published a report by Peter Beaumont from Jerusalem on the anger among the Israeli far-right wingers over Israel Army Radio’s inclusion of one of Daewish’s poems, ID card, in an educational segment. Beaumont said that though Darwish is one of the most influential Palestinian literary figures, his work has been denounced by Israel’s far-right defense minister, Avigdor Lieberman, as equivalent to Hitler’s Mein Kampf. In Amos Oz’s novel "Hannah and Michael," the Arab is completely absent, and in his novel "Love and Darkness", there is the Arab clothes shopkeeper who saves Oz from loss and fear in a darks room under the staircase. The Arab also appears a second time as a child with a slash in the head who tries to show off in front of Oz’s sister and Oz’s "rich, educated family", which accepts the other. The novel "Hannah and Michael" takes place between 1948 and 1956, the period which saw the Tripartite Aggression on Egypt and the war of attrition. In the novel, those two wars were distant, taking place in a place far from Israel, but they adversely impacted the life of the ordinary Jew. The two novels, especially "A Tale of Love and Darkness," depicted the spilled blood, destruction and havoc often perpetrated by Arabs against the Jews, which produced fear, hatred and hostility. "A Tale of Love and Darkness" tells the story of Oz and his family, starting from their life in Rovno, Ukraine, where they were subjected to persecution by Russian nationalists, communists and then the Nazis, i.e. different episodes of suffering and fear.

RSUIJCG Vol. 3 No. 1 (January - December 2016)

[11]

Amos Oz is probably Israel's most influential literary writer. He has received many honors and awards, and more than once he was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature. Oz was identified with the Israeli Labor Party, a center-left party, and was close to the party’s leadership. Oz believes in Zionism and advocates a two-state solution to the PalestinianIsraeli conflict. Some Arabs are unjustifiably afraid of reading the Israeli literature and its teachings, believing that translations of Hebrew works into Arabic might produce sympathy for the Israeli cause. Author Salman Natour says the Israelis are not intimidated by Arab and the Palestinian weapons, as Israel is a powerful country militarily, politically and economically. Rather, they are afraid for their military myths, their blind belief in their generals and their love for dictators that drive the Israelis like a herd to the war, and instead of saying ‘no’ to the war, they chant and yell for blood. Natour also says that Israel has military capabilities that give the country an edge over all its rivals, but the Israelis are developing this massive military machine and spend on it at the expense of their children's milk. Rather than being scared of this military power, the Israelis are always worried about it, and they are always ready to sacrifice for it (Natour, 2015). The Jewish fear of Arabs is always wrapped with racist narratives against the Arab who is always ‘betrayer’, ‘disloyal’, ‘filthy’, ‘sex-obsessed’, ‘uncivilized’ and ‘avenger’. This distorted Zionist culture is a representation and remnant of the colonial racism that has characterized Zionism since the early nineteenth century. Palestinian fear of the Jew Can the Israelis read the Palestinian literature without subjectivity and prejudice? Can they liberate themselves from prejudgments and false beliefs? Can they read a Palestinian novel and enjoy its narrative, style, language, plot and characterization without fear? Nations are different in perceiving fear. In some countries, the culture of fear is so manifest that the entire nation is plagued with it, which explains the massive setbacks those societies suffer during sharp transitions. The culture of fear grows within a climate of collective misrepresentation that is implanted in families, educational institutions and mainstream societal organizations. In his poetry, Reyad Beidas portrays Palestinians on the horns of a dilemma-afraid for their homeland and scared of strangers (the Jews). This has produced in the reader a deep sense of fear and panic. It has also made the reader evoke images of every unfamiliar thing so as to urge the audience to reject reality and fight for changing it (Shaker, 2012). Darwish also seems afraid of the Israelis-who imprisoned him when he lived in Haifa. He was not afraid of them when he was a child, as he recited before an Israeli military court a poem in which he held the Israelis accountable for the plight of his people. As he grew older, however, he started to develop fear from the Israelis. In an interview in 1982, after the exodus of Palestinian resistance from Beirut, Darwish said that he had hid his true character when the Israeli soldiers approached him. He also said that he left Beirut because the Israelis entered the city. Palestinians, like others, feel afraid of nature, poverty and the loss of precious things, such as homeland and mother. They are also afraid for their children and for themselves. The fear perceived by the Palestinian writers is induced by bitter experiences, such as wars imposed on them, dictators, British Mandate and the Israeli occupation which displaced the Palestinians from their homeland. The suffering in the exile and under the Israeli occupation has weighed heavily on their psychology, making them afraid of the past, the present, the future and the unknown. In the Palestinian literary works, fear is triggered by different sources: religious authority, social system, political authority and Israeli occupation. Some writers (see Shqeir, Nabrisy

RSUIJCG Vol. 3 No. 1 (January - December 2016)

[12]

and Mowasi) pictured the fear of social and religious authorities. Others (see Dahbour and Nabrisy) saw the Israelis as the main source of threat. Other sources of apprehension are not uncommon. Some Palestinian writers were afraid of nature and supernatural powers, particularly during their childhood (see Abdul-Latif Aql and Dahbour). The fear of adults, especially the father and the teacher, was also evident (see Abdul-Latif Aql and Dahbour). After all, the writers are humans and they might develop apprehension. The source of fear in writers is multitude: the authoritative fathers and teachers as well as the political, social and religious authorities. For literature, this fear has positive and negative implications. It might muzzle their voices, but at the same time it could drive some of them to a confrontation with the authority. The hard-line, unenlightened religious and social authorities intimidate writers, and perhaps writers see such authorities as more intimidating than the Israeli occupation, which considers a word as a threat. Such a threat, however, can be underestimated, as it may become just a word for purification and purgation of emotions The majority of writers tend to hold fast to the assumptions they communicate in their works. When they are threatened and intimidated, they stand faster. However, they admit that fear relatively impacts their creativity, and that they would have been more creative had they enjoyed more freedom of expression (Al-Osta, 2009). In a study of the Zionist literature, Kanafani finds that all Israeli narratives have a line of symmetry. First, the hero is immigrant from Europe, fleeing a nightmare. Second, the hero or heroine falls in love with someone who is not a Jew, and of course non-Arab (This coordinated plot is used by the novelist to advocate the Zionist thought). Third, Arabs are depicted as mere individuals with no collective culture, and usually they are mercenaries, uncivilized, and they always seek to take revenge against the Jews who came to civilize those primitive Arabs. Fourth, to justify their refusal of integration in their communities in the Diaspora, the Zionist writers always reiterate the story of alleged massacres and persecution against the Jews. Fifth, the Jewish hero is infallible, strong and able to solve any problem; i.e. having supernatural powers; hence the excessive ethnic vainglory in the Zionist literature (Kanafani, 57-65). Fear of the future The fear of life entails the inherent fear of the other, of the future, of the unknown as well as of surprises that might be life-threatening, unpleasant and painful. Fear is the feeling of loneliness and vulnerability in front of a massive power that threatens our very existence or things that we love. Fear has different levels, and each level is delineated by the way the individual perceives fear. In a poem, Muhammad Ali Taha wrote: On my own old fear My deaf, spotted, optimistic fear Fear which, like a pen, lives with me Surprises me like an earthquake Haunts me, but I don’t know what it is (Taha, 2015). Another manifestation of apprehension is fear of the future, especially the unknown future of the generation to come-a generation with "excellent marks, good health and a dead-end” (Qasem, 1987). Fear of death / calamities Mahmoud Darwish, an influential Palestinian intellect, is afraid of calamities/ death. He was also afraid for his youth, the Palestinian people, the revolution and the Palestinian dream. He communicated that fear in his poem “We fear for dreams”, in which he says that wePalestinians-are afraid of dreams and for dreams. Fear in the Palestinian literature and Israeli literature has different forms: the Jews fear of Arabs, the Arabs fear of Jews, the Jews fear of the Nazis, the Jews fear of Jews, the German fear of Jews, and the Palestinians fear of Jews. After all, literature is a representation of

RSUIJCG Vol. 3 No. 1 (January - December 2016)

[13]

human and social issues-an attempt to depict the relationship between the two nations-the Arabs and the Jews-living on the same land. Perhaps these manifestations of reciprocal fear do not only exist between Arabs and Jews; some are remnants of the Jewish community life in Germany during the Nazi regime. This has been expressly stated, and sometimes implied, by different characters in Zionist literary works. This behavior, this reciprocal fear, is natural given the different thoughts, ideologies and principles. It is the product of different goals, customs and traditions as well as conflicting perceptions of morality. Since the factors that have shaped the Arab character are those very factors that have formed the character of the Jews-though each party with peculiar contexts-it is no wonder then that fear is characteristic of our and their literary works. Other forms of fear Darwish is afraid of the inadequacy of his poetic lexicon; he is also afraid that one day he can’t write. Abdul-Latif Aql is afraid of different things: authoritative father, authoritative teacher, poverty and nature.

Conclusion 1) Sami Mikhail he said Israeli people full fear with high tempered of freighting wars Haterness and the borders in not worry for cooperation (Mikhail, 2015). Wars and the borders in not useful for cooperation (Mikhail, 2015) he is a famous writer from Iraqi roots he supports strongly Palestinians issue without hesitation, he wants to liberate Israeli people from fear. He is addressing opinion to any people of the Arab region 2) Amos DZ (1939): he said make peace not lone (OZ, 2006). OZ is afraid of two national on the same land, it looks like two families are bicker in one house OZ, Amos, interview with charlerose. (OZ, 2011) 3) A.B. Yehoshua (1936), he said in an interview with haariz new paper. That (half of Israeli people live with fear. They dream with childhood land (Yehoshuo, 2006) 4) But Shmuel Agnon (1888-1970) obtained the Heobtaind the Nopil prize in 1966. He is afraid of god. 1. Mahmoud Darwish: multi-faceted fear. 2. Abdul-Latif Aql: fear of the future. 3. Saud al-Asadi: fear of not seeing homeland. 4. Mo’en Bsiso: fear of dictators. 5. Walid Abu Bakr: The publisher’s fear of uncompromising religious and ideological authorities (e.g. publishing Laila Al-Atrash’s novel The ports of illusion) that sometimes delete some terms and words, not for aesthetic purposes, but rather for political reasons.

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