



Investigating Intertextual Elements in Naguib Mahfouz's Novel "Khan al-Khalili" (1946)

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Abstract

Intertextuality can generally be defined as the effect and presence of previous texts in the structure of the present one; it actually shows the internal relationships of a literary text with all other related texts. There is a consensus that no texts are a complete creation of their authors; rather, they are constructed through a process that links the textual elements of the related texts with the writers' creativity. In literary genres, intertextuality is employed to play a crucial role. Thus, the writers, un/deliberately, appeal to intertextual elements, elaborate them in their artistic career and creativity to produce the intended text. The study addresses the problem that some readers' unawareness of intertextuality results in misunderstanding and misinterpreting a text filled with intertextual elements. The study aims at investigating the intertextual elements in Mahfouz's novel Khan al-Kahlili (1946). The hypothesis this study puts forward is that a reader who is well-acquainted with the functions of intertextual elements is more capable of comprehending and interpreting intertextual texts. As for the analysis of data, the study has adapted Genette's model of intertextuality (1997), namely, explicit and implicit intertextuality. It is found that intertextuality is an important and useful device for both the text producers and readers. It is also detected that the phenomenon of intertextuality is utilized by writers of literary genres for various purposes such as: communicative, aesthetic, stylistic and rhetorical purposes.



إستقصاء عناصر التناس في رواية نجيب محفوظ "خان الخليلي" (١٩٤٦)

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المستخلص:

يمكن تعريف التناس بصورة عامة بأنه تأثير النصوص السابقة وحضورها في بنية النص الحالي. إن التناس في حقيقة الأمر يظهر علاقة النص الأدبي مع جميع النصوص الأخرى ذات الصلة. هناك إجماع على أنه لا توجد نصوص بأكملها من إبداع مؤلفيها، بدلا من ذلك، فإنه يتم تأليفها وتكوينها من خلال عملية تربط النصوص السابقة مع إبداع الكُتّاب. يتم استخدام وتوظيف التناس، في النصوص الأدبية، للعب دور حاسم ومهم. إذ إن الكُتّاب، بشكل متعمد أو غير متعمد، يستندون على عناصر التناس، يهذبونها ويطورونها بشكل فني وإبداعي كي يقدموا النص المقصود. تتناول الدراسة الحالية مشكلة سوء فهم وسوء تفسير بعض النصوص لعدم وعي بعض القراء لفكرة التناس. تهدف الدراسة إلى تقصي عناصر التناس في رواية محفوظ "خان الخليلي" (١٩٤٦). إذ تفترض أن القارئ الذي يكون على دراية جيدة بوظائف عناصر التناس هو أكثر قدرة على فهم النصوص المتناسعة وتفسيرها. لتحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها، تبنت الدراسة نموذج جينيت للتناس (١٩٩٧)، وهو التناس الصريح والضمني. ووجدت الدراسة أن التناس هو أداة مهمة ومفيدة لكل من كُتّاب النصوص والقراء. وكذلك أكتشفت بأن ظاهرة التناس تُستخدم وتوظف في النصوص الأدبية لأغراض متنوعة مثل: التواصلية والجمالية والأسلوبية والبلاغية.



1. Introduction

Undoubtedly, when people speak or write, their words usually intertextualize with, in some way, other previous texts (Gee, 2011: 29).One of the most important phenomena in literature, translation and linguistic studies is intertextuality. Intertextuality can generally be defined as the effect and presence of previous texts in the structure of the present one; moreover, it actually shows the internal relations of one text with the other relating texts (Booker, 1996; Halliday, 2003: 361). According to De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981:10), intertextuality concentrates on the factors that facilitate the utilization of a text dependent upon knowledge of previous texts. They explain that intertextuality includes “the way in which the production and reception of a given text depends upon the participant’s knowledge of other texts”.

Terminologically speaking, intertextuality was first coined by Kristeva (1960s), though some believe that the very origins of the concept go back to Ferdinand de Saussure’s and Bakhtin’s ideas (Ahmadian and Yazdani, 2013: 157). On her part, Kristeva confirms that no text can ever be entirely free of other texts (Hawkes, 1977:144; Mcguire, 1980:79). On his part, Bazerman supports Kristeva’s idea of intertextuality by stating that: “We create our texts out of the sea of former texts that surround us, the sea of language we live in. And we understand the texts of others within that same sea” (2004 : 83). Although intertextuality is part of all text types – journalistic, scientific, philosophical, historical, and religious texts , most studies on textology and intertextuality have focused on literary texts.In such texts intertextuality can be traced via a number of intertextual elements such as quotations, references, proverbs, allusions. The present paper attempts at investigating intertextual elements for the purpose of comprehending the intertextual meaning of a text.The more you perceive the intertextual elements , the better you understand and interpret the text , especially the literary one .

2. Intertextuality and Creativity

One of the critical issues that is needed to be discussed in relation to intertextuality is creativity. For Eliot (1964) creativity has a pivotal role in writing literary genres such as composition, poetry and novels. He asserts that any literary work actually has two sides: personal as well as universal. In other words, a work of literature is in fact made out of the personal ideas and convention which determine its value and universal appeal. Consequently, past to some extent



influences present, and present affects the past. That is, the relation between them (i.e. past & present) is complementary rather than differential.

Linguistically speaking, Formkin et al. (2010: 42) have refuted Barthes and Kristeva's narrow view of intertextuality; that all texts are actually the echoes of previous read and written texts. This view simply undermines any creative impulse in human beings. They explain that creativity is a unique feature of human's language. Creativity actually determines "the basic units of language that can be used to create infinitive forms of novel sentences that are not heard or said before"(Ibid).

By the same token, Formkin et al. (Ibid: 289) have argued that "no matter how many words you know of a language, no one speaks in isolated words". Novelists can keep in their minds lots of literary words, but they in fact cannot memorize all literary images and expressions. What matters is the way in which authors of literary works use intertextuality and its elements in order to produce their own statements and constitute new connotations as if the intertextual element is creatively and appropriately used. Hence, intertextual elements in the hand of a novelist or poet can be used effectively to add new values to texts (Hussein, 2013: 35).

3. Genette's View of Intertextuality

According to Genette (1997: xviii), intertextuality can simply be defined as "a relation of co-presence between two or more texts, that is to say, eidetically and most often, by the literal presence of one text within another". Intertextuality is conceived of by Genette as consisting of two types: explicit intertextuality, that is to say, the explicit presence of elements of texts in a given text like quotations - particularly direct quotations-, references, proverbs, songs, sayings and poetry; and implicit one, like those hidden elements of other texts in which the writer gives some clues, like allusions.

3.1 Explicit Intertextuality

This type of intertextuality can be traced by quotations, references, proverbs, songs, sayings and poetry. This kind of intertextuality can easily be noticed by readers, in other words, readers do not pay much effort in order to detect this kind of intertextuality.

3.1.1 Quotations



Being ready-made texts, quotations can be considered as the most commonly used element of intertextuality in various literary genres such as stories, poetry and novels. Quotations can simply be defined as the overt recalling up of texts that are presented in between quotation marks (Genette,1997: xviii). Accordingly, direct quotation can basically be defined as referring to the exact words of other texts in a given text; and it is usually be detected by quotation marks or italics.(Bazerman, 2004:88). On the other hand, indirect quotation can simply be defined as the utilization of someone else's words: It reports on what a person said without using the exact words of the speaker (Nordquist, 2019).

3.1.2 References

Generally speaking, the words 'reference' and 'refer' are frequently used in any language; they usually refer to human beings, linguistic expressions, as well as things in the outside world (Abbott, 2010: 2). Semantically speaking, a reference can basically be defined as a word that is used for naming and labeling things, in other words, there is a signifier which stands for any word in the language and a signified which denotes the object in the external world. In this regard, references are considered as the essential elements of semantics (Palmer, 1976: 17 - 29). Furthermore, from a pragmatic point of view, a reference can be used by a speaker or writer to talk about something, that is to say, to express a proposition by “using the symbolic conventions of the code to key us into a context of shared knowledge” (Widdowson, 1996: 62).

Concerning our topic,(i.e. intertextual references), they can simply be defined as the names of famous figures, historical, social, and religious events as well as well-known geographical places. It is noteworthy that well-known figures must be like presidents of countries, heroes of battles and famous religious characters etc. Although references appear explicitly in essays, poems, plays and novels, the reader still needs to be familiar with the object (i.e. the reference) referred to in order to arrive at its purpose in the new text (Guerra, 2013: 60).

3.1.3 Proverbs

The study of proverbs is called paremiology and can be dated back to Aristotle (Dabaghi, et al, 2010: 807).On their parts, Kindstran (1978) and Russo (1983) state that the definition of a proverb has caused problems for scholars over centuries. Many attempts (to define a proverb) have been made from Aristotle to the present time, ranging from philosophical considerations to lexicographical definitions (cited in Meider, 2004:2). In the same vein, Meider (1984: 119; 1994: 24) defines the proverb as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains



wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation". On the other hand, Mollanazar (2001: 53) explains that the proverb can be defined as "a unit of meaning in a specific context through which the speaker and hearer arrives at the same meaning"; while Norrick says that "The proverb is a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning"(1985:78).

3.1.4 Sayings

Hornby et al.(2010: 1361) state that a saying can basically be defined as "a well – known phrase or statement which expresses something about life that most people believe are wisdom and truth". It is noteworthy that sayings are characterized by brief and memorable expressions and these characteristics make them as easy as possible for everyday utilization. Thus, they are used as stylistic devices for condolences, courtesy and praising.

3.1.5 Songs

Hornby et al.(2010: 1470) say that a song can simply be defined as follows: "a short piece of music with words that you sing". On their part, Sari et al. (2019: 93) define songs as one of the means of language to communicate or send a message to the listeners or readers. Songs can be divided into three sorts: folk, love, and pop songs (Hornby et al., 2010: 1470).

3.1.6 Poetry

Wordsworth (1805: X) defines poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility". On his part, Nemerov (2019) explains that poetry can be defined as a kind of "literature that evokes a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience or a specific emotional response through language chosen and arranged for its meaning, sound, and rhythm".

3.2 Implicit Intertextuality

Implicit intertextuality can be defined as the presence of covert elements of previous texts in the present one (Genette, 1997). It obviously seems that this type of intertextuality needs a good background knowledge in order to be discovered. Researchers of this field have focused their efforts on a significant and very interesting element, namely, allusion.

3.2.1 Allusion



Diyanni and Rompf (1995: 1215) define allusion as "a reference to something outside the story proper, often to a historical fact or literary work" . On her part, Rasheed (2018: 1) states that allusion is "a linguistic phenomenon that is usually considered as an implicit reference to a person, event or to another work of literature, social, or political art". Allusive expressions are considered as cultural-bound elements, that is to say, "they are expected to convey meaning that goes beyond that of the mere words used" (Himood, 2010: 567).

4. An Overview on Khan al-Kahlili Novel (1946)

Khan al-Khalili - one of the Cairo old neighborhood - was written by Mahfouz in (1946) to portray the differences between the past and present of Cairo neighborhoods real life while the German bombs mercilessly fell on different places of the city (Le Gassick, 1992: 3). In this regard, critics working in the realm of novels often consider such kind of writings as social or realistic novels (Abdel-Hady, 1996: 28).

Regarding the settings and the main characters, the events of this novel happened in September 1941 and extended till August 1942, that is to say, it took twelve months during the second world war happened between the German forces and the British forces. As far as the main characters are concerned, the writer recounted the story of 'Akif's family who lived in al-Sakakini neighborhood, then moved to Khan al-Khalili seeking for safety and stable life. The family consisted of the elderly parents and their only two sons. Ahmed, a forty years old, was a bachelor man. He worked as a post office employee. Rushdi, the younger son, worked as a bank employee in Assiut governorate. Another main character was Nawal, a beautiful young girl, who lived in a flat in front of 'Akif's (Bhuiya, 2014: 143).

During air-raids, the people living in the buildings ran quickly to the shelters. Ahmed saw Nawal there and felt attracted to her. Meanwhile, Rushdi returned and visited his family. He also saw Nawal and seemed to have mutual feelings. They started meeting each other and planned for their future. At the end, Ahmed became more engaged with his neighborhoods' affairs in order to suppress his love for Nawal. On the other hand, Rushdi felt sick. He was diagnosed as having Tuberculosis¹ and he was admitted for treatment at a faraway hospital. After that,

1) Tuberculosis (henceforth TB) can basically be defined as "an airborne infectious disease caused of the Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex ". TB often affects the lungs and if it is neglected by the patient, he to great extent will face death (Pai et al., 2016: 1).



Rushdi passed away, 'Akif's family moved to another quarter and Nawal still unmarried (Bhuiya, 2014: 143).

5. Methodology

This paper attempts at examining some texts that comprise intertextual expressions taken from Mahfouz's novel 'Kahn al-Khalili' (1946). The selected texts that are supposed to be intertextualized with prior sentences will be analysed according to Genette's model (1997), namely explicit and implicit intertextuality. Further, the data will be submitted to the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Accordingly, the quantitative approach can basically be defined as a means that is used for making an accurate data collection (Creswell, 2002: 13). On the other hand, the qualitative approach can be defined as a means of data collection that is commonly dependent on interpretation, that is to say, data basically needs several explanations (alhojailan, 2012: 39).

6. Data Analysis and Discussion

As stated earlier, the data chosen for the present study has been taken from Mahfouz's novel 'Khan al-Khalili' (1946). Intertextuality is divided into two main types: Explicit intertextuality and implicit one. It is worth mentioning that the quantitative approach gives the reader a precise view of the data collected, thus table 1 and figure 1 show the total numbers and percentage of intertextuality in the novel under focus.

Table (1) Total Numbers and Percentage of Intertextual Elements in Mahfouz's (1946)

Intertextual Elements	Number of Intertextual Elements	Percentage
Quotation	18	26.48%
Reference	20	29.41%
Proverb	5	7.37%
Saying	6	8.82%

Song	3	4.41%
Poetry	3	4.41%
Allusion	13	19.11%
Total	68	100%

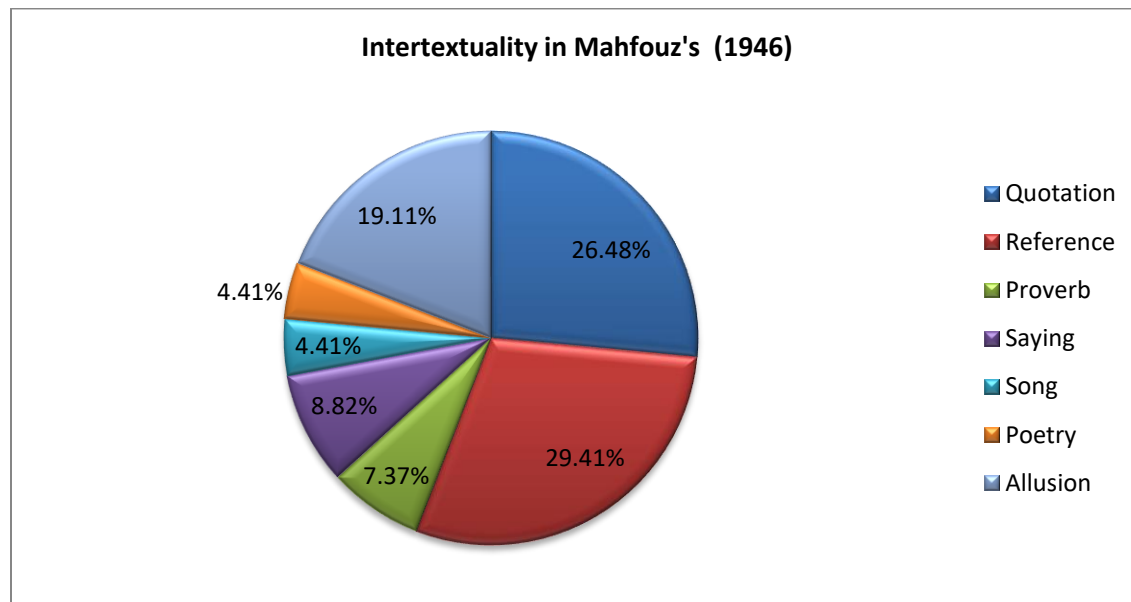


Figure (1) Percentage of Intertextual Elements in Mahfouz's Novel 'Khan al-Khalili' (1946)

6.1 Explicit Intertextuality

A. Quotation



- Mahfouz (1946:7): " حيث رأى عن كئيب العمارات الجديدة تمتد ذات اليمين وذات الشمال "

When he closely saw the new buildings extending on the right and on the left.

Obviously, the underlined text ذات اليمين وذات الشمال intertextualizes with the Quranic Verse:

{وتحسبهم أيقاظاً وهم رقود. ونقلبهم ذات اليمين وذات الشمال} [الكهف: ١٨]

"Thou wouldst have deemed them awake, whilst they were asleep, and We turned them on their right and on their left sides " (Ali, 1946: 733).

Thus, the message of the novelist will be decoded as this alley has high and new buildings which are not existent in the old alley in which Mr. Ahmed and his family lived before the second world war. Accordingly, intertextuality is used for sparkling the text. It is also employed here by the novelist as a rhetorical device, namely, for exaggeration.

B. Reference

- Mahfouz (1946: 12): "وفيما وراء ذلك تملأ الفضاء المآذن والقباب وقمم الجوامع وأسوارها، تعرض جميعاً صورةً من الجو للقاهرة المعزية".

And behind that, the space was filled with high minarets, cupolas, in addition to the tops and walls of Masjids, they all show a view from above for the Mu'izziyah State of Cairo.

The scenario here is about Ahmed A'kif's first impression about the new neighbor Khan al-Kahlili, which is supposed to be a safe place because it is in the center of the old Cairo, whereas, other neighbors were heartlessly attacked with bombed by air raids; and how old it is! This actually reflects the history of the city -i.e. Cairo- which is one of the oldest Islamic capitals in the history. This city was firstly ruled by 'Amr bin al- 'Aas -may Allah be blessed with him- who is one the Prophet's -peace be upon Him- companion. As far as the Mu'izziyah State is concerned, it began in 969 A.D. and ended in 1171 A.D. One of the most important thing happened during this period is the building of al-Azhar which is considered as one of the significant education places around the world (Shikh al-Eid, 2014:178).As far as the function of intertextuality is concerned, it is clearly used for tessellating the text. Furthermore, it is used to add a historical dimension to the



text, in other words, all the historical images would be invoked by the reader about Cairo since it was firstly ruled by Islam until the present time.

C. Proverb

- Mahfouz (1946: 59): "بغير شك إلا أنك شاب وستكسب بالعمر حكمة حقيقية، ألم تسمعهم يقولون: أكبر منك بيوم يعرف أكثر منك بسنة! - مثل قديم أيضاً!، - وحكيم!، لا حكمة في الماضي!، رباه!"

Without any doubt, but you are still a young man, and in the future you are going to acquire a real wisdom, have not you heard people say that a person who is one day older than you is a total year wiser!-Nonsense, it is just an archaic proverb too! - But it contains wisdom!- There is no wisdom in what has gone!- Oh my God!

The conversation here is between Ahmed 'Akif, who loved his Islamic and Arabic traditions, and Ahmed Rashid, who fell in love with western cultures, modernity and he was extremely influenced by Marx and Freud's doctrines. Being older than Ahmed Rashid and having good knowledge in various disciplines, particularly in literature, Ahmed 'Akif tried to strengthen his ideas by using poetry, sayings and proverbs. As far as the function of intertextuality is concerned, it is employed here as a stylistic strategy to achieve a desired semantic force. Further, it is used as a decisive element to strengthen someone's point of view in the conversation.

D. Saying

- Mahfouz (1946: 125): "العيد غدا فلنؤجل السكر إلى غدا!- لا تؤجل عمل اليوم إلى غد!"

Tomorrow is the Eid, so let us delay having plastered till tomorrow!. Do not delay today's work till tomorrow (Allen, 2008: 173).

The conversation here is between Rushdi and his friend. This was the first meeting for Rushdi after being a bank employee in Assiut² governorate. So, he was eager for gambling and drinking. He was asked about his patience of being far away from such meetings where he could gamble and drink wines a lot. His answer was: Assiut also had its own meetings. As far as the function of intertextuality is concerned, it is used here as a mosaic to tessellate the text. Further, it is employed

2) One of the biggest cities in Egypt and is considered as a home to one of the largest Coptic Catholic churches in the country.

here as a satirical device to add an ironical sense to the given text. This saying is used by the Arab community in particular as a persuasive device to convince the hearer to do something that he wants to procrastinate. It also indicates that although the speaker uses a statement of a command “Do not delay something till tomorrow”, the use of the saying in question has mitigated its impact as an impoliteness act .

E. Song

- Mahfouz (1946: 42): "هل يستطيع نونو أن يراوغ القدر، أو يؤجل قضاء الله؟! ... الم تسمع صالح عبدالحى وهو يغني نصيبك في الحياة لازم يصيبك".

Do Nono have the ability to escape from his fate, or he can delay?! Have not you heard Salah Abd al-Hayy's song “whatever your share of life may be, that is the way it is” (Allen, 2008: 58).

The conversation here is between Mr. Nono and Ahmed 'Akif. After settling the flat in the new quarter Khan al-Kahlili, Ahmed 'Akif wanted to see his neighbors and be aware of their characters. The first meeting was with Mr. Nono, the calligrapher. They talked about the war and the air raids which forced 'Akif's family to move from its old alley to Khan al-Kahlili which was thought to be safer than the old one. Mr. Nono stated that he never went to the bomb shelter and he did not even know the way to get there. He added that he neither can escape from his exact fate nor can he delay it. Then, he recited Salah Abd al-Hayy's song. As far as the function of intertextuality is concerned, it is employed here as a stylistic device to strengthen someone's point of view. Further, it is also used as a satirical device having an ironical sense to the text.

F. Poetry

- Mahfouz (1946: 57):
- "ألا ترى أن العدة أمضى سلاح نواجه به غير الدهر؟!"
- فهز رأسه موافقاً وقال وكأنه يستكثر أن ينفرد الآخر ولو بهذا القول المبتذل:
- ولذلك قال ابن المعتز: إن للمكروه لذعة هم فإذا دام على المرء هانا."

“Don't you think that habit is a weapon with which we can face anything except fate itself?

Ahmad nodded his head in agreement. Not wanting the other to outdo him, even with such a trite phrase, he said: Here's what the poet Ibn al-Mu'tazz has to say on



the subject: Adversity brings a sting of distress; should a man suffer it for a while, it lessens" (Allen, 2008: 78).

The conversation here is between Ahmed 'Akif and Ahmed Rashid who was working as a lawyer. They were proponents of two opposite views. 'Akif was very adherent of the old traditional and the Arab culture, whereas Rashid was very influenced by the western culture and extremely hated Arab culture. They were talking about the noise which was the main characteristic of Khan al-Kahlili. Rashid told to 'Akif that he be used to hear the noise, saying: "Habit is a weapon with which we can face anything except fate itself". So, 'Akif recited what Ibn al-Mu'tazz³ had said to condole himself. As far as the function of intertextuality is concerned, it is used as a mosaic to decorate the text. It is also used as a stylistic device for condoling -i.e. Ahmed 'Akif used it to condole himself-.

6.2 Implicit Intertextuality

A. Allusion

● Mahfouz (1946: 120): "ومن أقواله المأثورة في الغزل: لا يجوز لمن يتصدى للحب أن يعرقل جهاده بالحياء أو بالجزع أو بالخوف، إنس كرامتك إذا كنت في أثر امرأة. لا تغضب إذا عنفتك ولا تحزن إذا سبتك، فالتعنيف والسب من وقود الحب. وإذا ضربتك امرأة على خدك الأيسر فأدر لها خدك الأيمن وأنت السيد في النهاية!".

And among his famous sayings about love was: It is not permissible for the one who concerns with love to obstruct his striving by being cautious, upset, or fear. If you are running after a woman, do not think about honor. If she refuses you, do not be angry; if she curses you, do not be sad. Refusal and curses are really fuel for love fire. "If a woman slaps you on the right cheek, offer her the left one as well". You will be the master at the end" (Allen, 2008: 165).

The text here depicts Rushdi and his idea about dealing with love and women. After coming back home from Assiut, Rushdi was very upset because he did not use to live in Khan al-Kahlili. He thought about his group of friends who were living in al-Sakakini quarter. He also thought about the beautiful Jewish girls in that quarter. Meanwhile, he entered his new room and opened the window; he suddenly saw a fine-looking girl -Nawal- in the flat opposite to him. He, to a great extent, was relaxed and murmured to himself that for the first time something pleasant happened since he had entered this depressed quarter.

3) Abdallah ibn al-Mu'tazz (861 A.D. - 908 A.D.) was one of the Abbasid caliphs and well known as a poet. He worked as a caliph only for a single day and night.



The underlined text intertextualizes with the biblical verse in the book of Luke:

﴿ومن ضربك على خدك، فأعرض له الخد الآخر أيضاً﴾ [لوقا ٦ : ٢٩]

“If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also” (The Holy Bible, Luke: 6: 29).

Concerning the function of intertextuality, it is used here as a mosaic for tessellating the text. Further, it is employed as a brevity device to describe lovers and how to deal with a woman you might fall in love with her.

7. Concluding Remarks

Throughout the discussion of the selected data, the current study arrived at the followings. Firstly, it has found that Mahfouz has fruitfully used the intertextual elements in the novel under focus. Secondly, he successfully creates a connection between his novel and the Holy Quran, Prophetic traditions, the biblical verses as well as Arab's ancient heritage. Thirdly, it has noticed that the well-equipped reader with different cultures, knowledge, arts, etc. has the ability to decode the message of the novelist and this experience is urgently needed when the novelist hides the intertextual element - i.e. when he uses allusion-. Fourthly, the study has found that intertextuality is a useful technique employed by texts producers in order to be free from religious, cultural and societal restrictions. Fifthly, as for the explicit intertextual elements, the most frequently used element was references. The reason behind this high percentage is that a reference is considered as a straightforward device which is easily used to convey information, and thus, it establishes relationships between a linguistic item and the world. Accordingly, it is the reader's role to recognize and decode this relation. Finally, it has found intertextuality is a device which can be used for various purposes such as for aesthetic, stylistic, rhetorical and satirical purposes.



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